

What They're Saying:

"Now, More Than Ever, The U.S. Must Support Colombia"

*To Boost Our Economy And National Security, The United States
"Must Remain Committed To Open Markets and Free Trade"*

"President Uribe has stood strong against tyranny and terror. He's done everything we have asked him to do and more. He's told members of Congress that approving this agreement is one of the most important steps that America can take to show its support for Colombia. Now the Colombian people are waiting to see what our Congress will do. To demonstrate America's good faith, to stand by our strong friend, to send a clear signal that we appreciate our ally, the United States Congress must approve this free trade agreement."

– President George W. Bush, 7/22/08

"Democrats, To Their Shame, Have Lost Any Ardor For Free Trade"

The Washington Post: "It's time to set free trade free." "For months, the U.S.-Colombia free-trade agreement and the benefits it would bring to a host of American industries have been held hostage to politics – specifically, to the Democratic Party's need to mollify the labor unions that fund it." (Editorial, "Free At Last: Colombia's Dramatic Hostage Rescue Strengthens The Case For A Trade Agreement," *The Washington Post*, 7/14/08)

Investor's Business Daily: "A foreign country puts its men on the line to rescue American hostages and pulls off one of the greatest rescues in history. Might a little gratitude from Congress be in order?" "The best way to express our appreciation would be to correct another U.S. blunder by ending Congress' shutout of Colombia's free trade treaty." (Editorial, "And How Do We Thank Colombia?" *Investor's Business Daily*, 7/3/08)

The Wall Street Journal's Pete Du Pont: "...trade is good for America; it has increased jobs, incomes and available goods in our country." "Ms. Pelosi blocked a vote on the Colombia agreement because 'the president has made this a key part of his legacy.'" (Pete Du Pont, Op-Ed, "The Opposite of Progress," *The Wall Street Journal*, 7/23/08)

The Economist: "Only those blinded by ideology would deny that Álvaro Uribe has made Colombia a better place." "[T]he Democrats control Congress (where they are disgracefully blocking a trade agreement with Colombia mainly because of their distaste for Mr Uribe)." (Editorial, "Gracias And Good Night," *The Economist*, 7/3/08)

The Palm Beach [FL] Post: "[T]he rescue of 15 hostages from Colombian rebels was a hopeful story." "How about this for a good follow-up story: Congress passes the Colombia Free Trade Agreement? ... The two countries do about \$18 billion in trade, and the big winners are expected to be Midwestern states – because Colombia wants farm machinery – and Florida – because of proximity." (Editorial, "Rescue The Trade Deal," *The Palm Beach [FL] Post*, 7/5/08)

The Advocate [CA]: "If there is a future of economic growth for the nation, it is because we shall avidly participate in a growing global economy and not turn our backs on it." "Not only is America's economy vastly wealthier, but the world's poorest are beginning to see the benefits of a world trading system that rewards work and innovation rather than isolation and government restrictions on productivity." (Editorial, "More Trade Benefits The Nation," *The Advocate [CA]*, 7/12/08)

The State [SC]: "Colombia won respect last week with its stunning rescue of 15 hostages, including three U.S. citizens, who had been held by anti-government guerrillas." "The United States should do more than merely applaud. It should approve a trade agreement that House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has blocked, citing thin excuses. ... Colombian goods already enter this country duty-free; the pact currently blocked in Congress would open Colombia to U.S. exports." (Editorial, "Approve Trade Deal With Colombia," *The State [SC]*, 7/9/08)

The Daily News [WA]: "This is Economics 101." "Trade protectionism invariably costs more jobs than are protected. Most in Congress understand the benefits of expanded international trade, even though many may now find it politically expedient to rail against ... pending trade agreements. They also must know that there is no downside to approving the U.S.-Colombian Free Trade Agreement. The United States, in fact, is the net beneficiary in this trade agreement." (Editorial, "Trade Pact With Colombia Benefits State, Nation," *The Daily News* [WA], 7/16/03)

The News-Leader's [MO] Mona Charen: "The Bush administration staunchly supports Uribe, and has proposed a bilateral free trade agreement." "Unions and their poodles among the leadership of the Democratic Party have balked, throwing up one excuse after another to block the deal. ... If the Democrats succeed in scuttling the free trade agreement, they will be putting a finger in the eye of our best ally in the region – and handing Hugo Chavez a victory." (Mona Charen, Op-Ed, "Support Free Trade Agreement With Colombia," *The News-Leader* [MO], 7/11/08)

Corpus Christi [TX] Caller Times: "But congressional Democrats have been using trade bills as handy punching bags for the economic woes of the United States." "Democrats, to their shame, have lost any ardor for free trade; it's been a long time since Bill Clinton made free trade the hallmark of his presidency. That's too bad for free trade, and even worse luck for American exporters. Colombia enjoys low-tariffs on its exports to the United States, but the trade deal would remove tariff for American exports to Colombia." (Editorial, "Colombia Pulled Off A Spectacular Rescue," *Corpus Christi* [TX] *Caller Times*, 7/8/08)

U.S. News & World Report's Michael Barone: "This rejection of an ally, the third largest country in Latin America ... is as disgusting as anything I've seen Congress do." "House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's rejection of the Colombia free-trade agreement, by changing House rules in a way that may have destroyed the fast track procedure by which the United States has secured free-trade agreements for more than four decades, seems to me to be the one truly shameful act of this Congress." (Michael Barone, Op-Ed, "Colombia's Commandos Perform Remarkably," *U.S. News & World Report*, 7/3/08)

"Democrats Controlling Congress Continue To Show Their Allegiance To Labor Unions Over The American People And The Good Of The U.S. Economy"

Colombian Minister Of Defense Juan Manuel Santos and Defense Secretary Robert Gates: "[T]o achieve lasting peace and stability, Colombia must have more foreign investment and free trade." "Congress's approval of the trade promotion agreement would establish a commitment to open markets that would increase growth and investment. Moreover, it would allow American products to enter Colombia duty-free." (Robert M. Gates and Juan Manuel Santos, Op-Ed, "Colombia's Gains Are America's, Too," *The New York Times*, 7/23/08)

New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg: "Protectionism only protects the few and only for a few years, and over the long run, it hurts us all. Trade on the other hand benefits everyone." "Consumers win because free trade leads to better products and lower prices, our economy wins because free trade creates natural incentives for American companies to become more innovative, and American workers win because free trade creates good-paying jobs in this country. If we want to improve America's standing and remain a nation of innovation and progress, we have to lead the way in breaking down barriers." ("Consumer Electronics Association Joins With NYC Mayor Bloomberg In Pro-Trade Rally," Press Release, 7/21/08)

Senator Lindsey Graham (R-SC): "I am convinced that the Colombia Free Trade Agreement is good for America." (Jeff Mason, "McCain Promotes Free Trade On Visit To Colombia," *Reuters*, 7/2/08)

Senator John McCain (R-AZ): "I just know that free trade is an important issue not just for Colombia but for the world and the US economy." "I think it would have very serious consequences if we rebuked our closest ally." ("McCain Lauds Bogota's Fight Against Drug Trafficking," *Agence France-Presse*, 7/2/08)

Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL): "Now, more than ever, the U.S. must support Colombia." (Casey Woods, "Hostage Rescue Revives Free Trade Agreement Debate," *The Miami Herald*, 7/8/08)

Representative Michael McCaul (R-TX): "Democrats controlling Congress continue to show their allegiance to labor unions over the American people and the good of the U.S. economy." "They have held up the proposed free trade

agreement, even though it would either lift or diminish tariffs on U.S. exports to Colombia and give American businesses the same free trading environment that Colombian businesses enjoy in the United States." (Rep. Michael McCaul, "Congressman McCaul Applauds Release Of Hostages, Urges Passage Of Colombia Free Trade Agreement," Press Release, 7/10/08)

House Ways and Means Committee Ranking Member Jim McCrery (R-LA), Rules Committee Ranking Member David Dreier (R-Calif.), Ways And Means Trade Subcommittee Ranking Member Wally Herger (R-Calif.): "While a dangerous precedent has been set by this action that threatens the competitiveness of U.S. workers, the Agreement is not dead yet." "Republicans in the House have repeatedly made clear that we will work with the Speaker on issues of her choosing so we can create the appropriate environment for a floor vote on the implementing bill. But if she fails to do so, there could be profound, negative consequences for U.S. workers, farmers, and exporters and the abdication of the United States' reputation as a responsible partner in the international marketplace." (Rossella Brevetti, "GOP Lawmakers Warn Next Year Is Not An Option For Colombia FTA," *Bureau Of National Affairs*, 7/18/08)

U.S. Ambassador To Colombia William Brownfield: "Indiana stands to benefit from congressional approval of the pending FTA with Colombia, and is well positioned to take advantage of this market." "In Colombia, Indiana export sales have jumped 220 percent since 2002, from \$22 million to \$70 million in 2007, making Colombia one of Indiana's fastest-growing export markets. An FTA would create unprecedented opportunities to further accelerate this growing and positive relationship." (William Brownfield, Op-Ed, "Indiana Would Be A Winner In Trade Pact With Colombia," *The Indianapolis Star*, 7/18/08)

"The Democratic-Led Congress Has Put Politics Above Our Nation's Security And Economic Interests"

U.S. Chamber of Commerce Director of International Policy Christopher Wenk: "Our key message is, trade is one-third of our economy, and you cannot overlook that." "So any actions to isolate ourselves from the rest of the world would have a devastating impact on our economy. ... For the most part, [free trade agreements] are more in favor of the U.S., because our markets are already so open." (Tom Barkley, "McCain's Trade Focus Seen As Strategy That May Pay Off," *The Wall Street Journal*, 7/1/08)

Consumer Electronics Association President and CEO Gary Shapiro: "When America competes in the global marketplace, our nation's economy and workers win." "The facts demonstrate that trade creates millions of American jobs and provides billions of dollars to our economy." ("Consumer Electronics Association Joins With NYC Mayor Bloomberg In Pro-Trade Rally," Press Release, 7/21/08)

Heritage Foundation Senior Policy Analyst for Latin America Ray Walser: "The liberation of these 15 hostages could not have been timelier, as the Bush Administration is seeking approval for a free trade agreement (FTA) between the U.S. and Colombia." "The levels of trust and confidence established between officials of Colombia and the U.S. will benefit further by returning the Colombia Free Trade Agreement to the floor for passage." (Ray Walser, Op-Ed, "A Victory for Uribe," *Latin Business Chronicle*, 7/1/08)

Woodrow Wilson International Center For Scholars Latin American Program Director Cynthia Arnson: "The Colombian government has never been stronger in military and, I would even say, in political terms than it is now." (Juan Forero, "Millions Rally For Colombian Hostages," *The Washington Post*, 7/21/08)

National Corn Growers Association President Ron Litterer: "The free trade agreements go a long way in supporting rural agriculture." "With Colombia's current tariff for corn at 68 percent, the Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement will have immediate duty free access to the country's market for 2.1 million metric tons of corn." ("Corn, Pork Producers Urge Congress to Support Free Trade Agreements," USAgNet, 7/10/08)

Medellin National Export Association President Luis Fernando González Usuga: "We are afraid of losing what we have built, afraid of what is starting to be a crisis of confidence in Colombia that is leading our clients to move elsewhere." "The U.S. has always talked about why Latin America needs free trade. Well, now we're true believers in Colombia. Why turn us away?" (Anthony Faiola, "Sustaining the Medellin Miracle," *The Washington Post*, 7/11/08)

U.S. Foreign Service Officer to Colombia (Ret.) Guy W. Farmer: "[C]ongressional Democrats, led by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi of San Francisco, are blocking a mutually beneficial free trade agreement with Colombia, our best friend and strongest ally in Latin America." "I hope Ms. Pelosi, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid of Nevada and other Democratic leaders will reconsider their frivolous opposition to the Colombia Free Trade Agreement in the wake of a highly successful rescue mission 10 days ago that freed 11 hostages, including a former Colombian presidential candidate and three American defense contractors without a shot being fired." (Guy W. Farmer, Op-Ed, "Colombia Is Winning Its War Against Terrorism," *Nevada Appeal*, 7/13/08)

League of United Latin American Citizens Florida State Director Bettina Aguilera: "[W]e all agreed unanimously that the democratic right thing to do was to approve the resolution to ask respectfully Madame Speaker Nancy Pelosi to place in a calendar vote the fair trade agreement for an up or down vote." (LULAC, "Fair Trade Agreement with Colombia Wins Support Today By LULAC During Its National Convention Held In Washington, D.C.," Press Release, 7/12/08)

LULAC Florida Council President Fabio Andrade: "As a Colombian American I ... hope that Madame Speaker Nancy Pelosi reconsiders and listens not only to LULAC but to our US Businesses and to the People and Government of President Alvaro Uribe a proven friend and ally allowing a vote for the FTA-Colombia." (LULAC, "Fair Trade Agreement with Colombia Wins Support Today By LULAC During Its National Convention Held In Washington, D.C.," Press Release, 7/12/08)

National Association of Manufacturers President John Engler: "The facts are indisputable: trade agreements work for America." "Every day that Congress continues to delay in passing the Colombia agreement, for example, costs U.S. manufacturers about \$2 million in additional import penalties they have to pay to sell U.S.-made goods in Colombia." (NAM, "Guess What? Manufactured Goods Trade With FTAs Moves Into Surplus For First Time," Press Release, 7/15/08)