

# AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR AND CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS



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## **LEGISLATIVE ALERT!**

(202) 637-5057

December 11, 2009

Dear Representative:

The American Federation of Labor & Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), supports a clean, one-year extension of the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) and the Andean Trade Preference Act (ATPA), as amended by the Andean Trade Promotion and Drug Eradication Act (ATPDEA), both of which expire at the end of this year. Failure to extend these preferences now will only further exacerbate high levels of unemployment in many developing and least developed countries around the world.

Our support for a short extension does not mean, however, that we are satisfied with the status quo. In 2010, the Congress must enact comprehensive trade preference reform, which could at last bring some order and consistency to the current patchwork of preference programs. For the AFL-CIO, a key part of any such a reform must be a substantial upgrade of the programs' labor eligibility criteria and petition processes. For too long, countries have continued to benefit fully from our preference programs even as basic workers rights were routinely denied in law and in practice. On November 17, 2009, we presented several practical ideas for reform before the House Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Trade. We would be happy to share and discuss those ideas at any time.

Sincerely,

William Samuel, Director  
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT