

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20508

JUL 26 2001

The Honorable Sander Levin  
Ranking Member  
House Ways and Means  
Subcommittee on Trade  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Levin:

Thank you for your recent letter supporting the U.S.-Vietnam Bilateral Trade Agreement.

I share your support for this historic agreement and look forward to its passage and implementation. Approval and implementation of this Agreement represent critical steps in the process of extending normal trade relations status to products from Vietnam, furthering U.S. economic and strategic objectives and opening a growing market to U.S. exports and investment.

As your letter noted, the United States signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on labor issues with Vietnam last November. The MOU offers a useful complement to the trade provisions that will help open Vietnam's economy and society.

I understand your support for a textile and apparel agreement incorporating a labor provision that would create incentives to expand trade. During my June 8, 2001, meeting with Vietnam's Trade Minister Vu Khoan, we discussed the possibility of negotiations on a bilateral textile agreement. I pointed out as well the labor-related trade incentives in the U.S.-Cambodia textile accord, noted your interest in that model, and offered to provide more information on that approach. Furthermore, I have drawn attention to a number of issues relating to human and religious rights in Vietnam.

I am interested in gaining more information about how the labor trade-incentive provisions in the Cambodian textile agreement are working. Over the next several months, I look forward to exploring with you and other Members of Congress the appropriateness of negotiating an incentive-based textile and apparel agreement with Vietnam.

Again, thank you for your support for this agreement.

Sincerely,



Robert B. Zoellick