

June 20, 2006

DON'T PUT U.S. BUSINESSES AT A DISADVANTAGE TO  
OUR FOREIGN COMPETITORS –

COSPONSOR VIETNAM PNTR LEGISLATION

Dear Colleague:

We recently introduced **H.R. 5602**, which would **provide Vietnam with Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) status**. We believe this critical step will significantly strengthen economic and diplomatic relations with Vietnam, and we encourage you to join us in cosponsoring this important legislation.

Vietnam has the fastest growing economy in Southeast Asia. Its GDP has increased from \$31 billion to \$52 billion over the last five years, and **two-way trade between the U.S. and Vietnam has increased more than 400%**, to \$7.8 billion, since 2001.

Vietnam is now in the final stages of its World Trade Organization (WTO) accession process, which will further integrate Vietnam into the world economy. In its efforts to gain WTO membership, **Vietnam has negotiated an extensive bilateral market access agreement with the U.S. that will increase market access in Vietnam for U.S. farmers, manufacturers and service providers**. Once Vietnam joins the WTO, tariff rates will be bound and duties on over 90 percent of U.S. exports will be significantly reduced. Vietnam has also agreed to reduce barriers for U.S. service providers to operate in Vietnam, as well as to make significant commitments on the operation of its state-trading enterprise regime, to remove many non-tariff restrictions on imports, to improve intellectual property protection, to apply science-based sanitary and phytosanitary measures, to provide more transparency in the regulation of its economy, and to make many other changes to implement WTO rules.

Vietnam can accede to the WTO without the U.S. granting the country PNTR status. But **in order for the United States to benefit from the concessions Vietnam has made to become a WTO member, the U.S. must first grant PNTR status to Vietnam**.

If the U.S. does not pass H.R. 5602, **American farmers, manufacturers and service providers will be placed at a significant disadvantage to our foreign competitors** by not benefiting from Vietnam's WTO concessions *and* by not being able to bring disputes in front of the WTO.

H.R. 5602 currently has the support of 41 bipartisan cosponsors, and companion legislation in the Senate has nine bipartisan cosponsors.

Please show your support for the U.S. economy by contacting either Adam Peterman with Rep. Ramstad (5-2871) or Colton Campbell with Rep. Thompson (5-3311) to cosponsor H.R. 5602.

Sincerely,

JIM RAMSTAD

Member of Congress

MIKE THOMPSON

Member of Congress