



Securities Industry Association

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October 19, 2006

The Honorable J. Dennis Hastert
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Bill Frist
Majority Leader
United States Senate

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Harry Reid
Minority Leader
United States Senate

Re: Securities Industry Support For PNTR Status For Vietnam

The Securities Industry Association strongly supports the passage of H.R.5602 and S.3495, the legislation granting Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) status for Vietnam. The United States and Vietnam concluded bilateral negotiations on Vietnam's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO) on May 14, 2006, and officially signed the agreement on May 31. We urge you to support its passage prior to President Bush's visit to Hanoi for the APEC Leaders' Summit next month.

Congressional approval of PNTR for Vietnam is necessary for U.S. companies to take full advantage of the benefits of Vietnam's WTO accession. With a young and vibrant population of 83 million, Vietnam is one of the fastest growing economies in the world. Vietnam's accession to the WTO will present great opportunities for American businesses, workers, and consumers. Financial services firms and their clients will particularly benefit from Vietnam's accession agreement. Upon Vietnam's accession, foreign securities firms will be able to open joint ventures with up to 49 percent foreign ownership. After five years, foreigners will be able to own 100 percent of securities firms and will be able to branch into Vietnam for some securities activities (asset management, advisory, and settlement and clearing services).

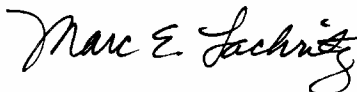
Moreover, WTO membership also compels Vietnam to abide by the full range of WTO agreements across the various economic sectors, thereby leveling the playing field and enabling American companies and products to compete more effectively.

Timely approval of PNTR is essential not only to U.S. business interests and the overall U.S. trade agenda, but also to U.S. foreign policy interests in Asia. It is important for the United States to demonstrate its support for Vietnam's reformers in their efforts to strengthen the rule of law and integrate Vietnam into the global economy.

With President Bush scheduled to visit Vietnam this November during the APEC Leaders' Summit, this is a critical time for the U.S. Congress to initiate a significant step forward in the U.S.-Vietnam relationship, and to strengthen America's commitment and leadership to open and fair markets. We respectfully urge you to support passage of PNTR for Vietnam prior to President Bush's visit to Hanoi for the APEC Leaders' Summit.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Marc E. Lackritz". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "M".

Marc E. Lackritz
President