

Supplementary Documents: Opposing Views on U.S. Trade Policy

President George W. Bush Excerpts from Speech in North Carolina December 5, 2005

And, finally, keeping this economy strong means welcoming opportunities that a global economy offers—not fearing those opportunities. And this country is home to about 5 percent of the world’s population, which means that 95 percent of potential customers live abroad. By opening up new markets for our goods and our farm products and our services, we will help our economy continue to grow and create opportunity for people right here in our country....

My predecessor worked to get China into the WTO. And one of the conditions was that the United States and other WTO members would take steps to prevent their markets from being flooded with cheap Chinese textiles. Last month, we reached an agreement with China to have them meet that obligation under the textile agreements. It’s an important agreement. It means that not only are we for free trade with China, but we expect China to be fair with American textile companies and American workers. This agreement adds certainty and predictability for businesses in both America and China.

Here’s what I believe. I believe free trade is good for jobs. I believe opening markets for U.S. products is smart to do. I know we’ve got to make sure we have a level playing field because when we have a level playing field, the American worker, the American entrepreneur, and the American farmer can compete with anybody, any time, anyplace.

The greatest opportunity we have to advance the goal of free and fair trade is through the Doha round of trade talks. The Doha trade round has great potential to boost jobs here in America. By reducing and eliminating tariffs and other barriers on industrial goods, and on farm goods—industrial goods like John Deere products, by the way—to end unfair subsidies, and open up global markets for our services. Trade ministers will gather in Hong Kong next week for a critical meeting. I told our Trade Representative, Ambassador Rob Portman, that he’s got to push for a bold and wide-ranging agreement. Opportunity increasingly depends on a free and fair trading global system, and our administration is going to continue to use our influence to bring greater opportunities for the American worker....

At the start of a hopeful new century, the American worker is the most productive worker that human history has ever known. At the start of this new century, we have proven that pro-growth economic policies out of Washington, D.C., do work, and can overcome some mighty obstacles. At the start of the century, we recommit ourselves to the notion that the more free people are, the better off your economy will be.

This great country of ours is a place where people can start out with nothing—and be able to raise a family, and own a home, or start a business. Through all my travels around the world, I’m always struck by how bright the future of America is. Our job in Washington is to keep that future bright and hopeful by making choices that reward hard work and enterprise. This economy is strong, and the best days are yet to come for the American economy....

Senator Bryon L. Dorgan (D-ND) A New Trade Policy: One that Supports U.S. Jobs and Family Farmers September 9, 2004

With the largest trade deficits in history, it is clear that our current trade policy has failed us. It's time for a new direction.

I propose two actions that we should take immediately.

First, for the next year, we should suspend all of the negotiations for new trade agreements and focus on fixing the problems in the trade agreements that already exist. Second, Congress should immediately pass legislation to shut down tax incentives that reward U.S. companies that move jobs overseas.

For nearly 20 years, American farmers and workers have been victimized by successive international trade agreements that did not deliver the fair competition in international markets that U.S. farmers and workers were promised. Our U.S. trade negotiators have systematically undercut our family farmers with agreements like the U.S.-Canada Free Trade Agreement, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and, more recently, the Australian Free Trade Agreement and the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA). In addition to all of these agreements, our negotiators have helped create the World Trade Organization, which consistently has done more to hurt U.S. farmers than to help them. On the eve of every trade agreement, our farmers are promised that the goal is to open foreign markets to allow them the opportunity to compete. But whether it is with Canada or Mexico or China or Europe or Japan, in market after market we see U.S. farmers shut out of opportunities to sell, at the same time all of these countries ship massive quantities of their agricultural products into our market.

And it is not just family farmers who are victims of this unfair trade: textile workers,

steel workers, auto workers, and so many others are living with the same cycle of failure in our trade agreements. These trade agreements ship American jobs overseas and open our markets to other countries' products. And, in addition, they offer an empty promise of creating fair competition for U.S. manufacturers trying to compete in markets abroad.

We need a fundamental change in trade and tax strategy that stands up for the interests of our farmers, our workers, and our American businesses. Therefore, I am calling on the Administration to take steps to address this problem. Here is my plan:

First, we ought to go back and fix the trade treaties we negotiated previously but have not worked or have been systematically ignored by our bilateral trading partners. The guiding principle of trade negotiations ought to be that any agreement we reach with other countries should be mutually beneficial. And we cannot give countries unimpeded access to the American marketplace to compete with American firms, when they allow the hiring of children to work for pennies a day in factories that are unsafe and that pump pollution into the air and water. Our trading partners must comply with basic labor, environmental, and safety standards.

In short, no new trade agreements, until we have gone back to fix the old ones in a manner that is fair to our country.

Next, we should end all tax subsidies in the Internal Revenue Code that reward U.S. companies that move U.S. jobs overseas. Tax incentives that relate to American jobs ought to be used to help those manufacturers who create and keep jobs in our country. Never again should one penny of taxpayers' money be spent to encourage the export of U.S. jobs.

No country will long remain a world economic power if it faces ballooning trade deficits and continues to export jobs. That is why we need a fundamental shift in trade strategy that supports—rather than undercuts—American farmers, workers and manufacturers.