



815 SIXTEENTH STREET, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20006

JOHN J. SWEENEY
PRESIDENT

RICHARD L. TRUMKA
SECRETARY-TREASURER

LINDA CHAVEZ-THOMPSON
EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT

LEGISLATIVE ALERT!

(202) 637-5090

October 27, 2005

The Honorable Charles B. Rangel
U.S. House of Representatives
2354 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Adam Smith
U.S. House of Representatives
227 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representatives Rangel and Smith:

I am writing to express the AFL-CIO's strong support for the Trade Adjustment Assistance Improvement Act of 2005, which we understand you will introduce today. We believe this legislation represents significant and much-needed improvement to the troubled Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program, whose original purpose was to compensate workers for the adverse impact of federal trade policies.

Over the past four years our nation's trade deficit has exploded, and millions of U.S. jobs have disappeared overseas. The Bush Administration has aided and abetted the dismantling of our nation's vital manufacturing and technology sectors through flawed international trade, tax, and investment policies that have destroyed good jobs.

At the same time, the Bush administration has failed to help workers who have fallen victim to its misguided trade, tax, and investment policies. This administration has undermined the existing TAA program, which provides retraining and income support to trade-impacted workers. The Bush Labor Department has been roundly criticized by the Court of International Trade for its erroneous denials of TAA income and training assistance. President Bush has sought over \$400 million in funding cuts for TAA in the past two years. And the administration has proposed block-granting TAA so that its special programs for the victims of our nation's trade policies would disappear.

The TAA Improvement Act charts a very different course by addressing some of the most serious flaws of the existing TAA program. This legislation includes significant improvements, such as increased funding; expanded eligibility; coverage of service sector workers; improvements to the Health Care Tax Credit; better outreach so that more eligible workers can access TAA; and better reporting so that information on TAA services and outcomes will be more widely available.

While even an improved TAA program is no substitute for good trade policies that keep good jobs in the United States and create new good jobs here at home, the TAA program must honor the promise made to workers since 1962: that the federal government will provide retraining, reemployment assistance, and income support to workers who have lost their jobs due to federal trade policies. We support the TAA Improvement Act of 2005 because it would help ensure that the TAA program honors that promise.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William Samuel". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "William" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Samuel".

William Samuel, Director
DEPARTMENT OF LEGISLATION