Dear Majority Leader Reid and Speaker Pelosi,

Congratulations on your new leadership roles in the 110th Congress. As you know, Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) or “Fast Track,” expires June 30, 2007. Our organizations and membership strongly oppose reauthorization of Fast Track. We strongly urge you to not bring legislation granting new Fast Track authority to President Bush to the floor during the 110th Congress.

In recent history, Fast Track has only resulted in saddling the United States with destructive and widely unpopular trade agreements such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) and the World Trade Organization (WTO). By its very design, Fast Track cedes Congress’ constitutional power to regulate commerce with foreign nations, removing vital checks and balances the Founders wisely built into our Constitution to enable the body closest to the people – the Congress – to set our nation’s trade policy.

We urge you to take all possible actions to ensure that the Bush Administration is not provided with the authority to determine the direction and terms of our nation’s engagement with the global economy. There is no way to “fix” Fast Track, which only allows Congress any vote after agreements’ contents are decided by the Executive Branch and entered into by signing. Congress needs a new mechanism to authorize the Executive Branch to conduct negotiations that gives Congress a steering wheel and, when necessary, a brake, on the negotiation process. Fast Track’s expiration provides an opportunity for the new Democratic Congress to end the Administration’s disastrous trade agenda, and set a new course for trade policy based on our shared commitment to justice, fairness, and democracy.

Again, we strongly oppose extending the President Trade Promotion Authority. Additionally, our...
organizations and membership are very opposed to any future NAFTA/CAFTA type trade agreements, such as those proposed with Colombia, Peru and Panama. We stand ready to work with your new majority to create a new process for negotiating trade agreements that can result in agreements that meet our shared values. A new progressive model for trade can help working Americans, our environment, and our democracy thrive in this era of intensified globalization.

Sincerely,

Initial List of Signers:

Americans for Democratic Action
Communications Workers of America
Friends of the Earth
IATPAction
International Association of Machinists
International Brotherhood of Boilermakers
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
International Brotherhood of Teamsters
International Union of Painters and Allied Trades
National Farmers Union
National Family Farm Coalition
Public Citizen
SweatFree Communities
UNITE HERE
United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society
United Steelworkers of America