

□ 1604

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. PINGREE of Maine) at 4 o'clock and 4 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken after 6:30 p.m. today.

ANDEAN TRADE PREFERENCE
EXTENSION ACT OF 2009

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4284) to extend the Generalized System of Preferences and the Andean Trade Preference Act, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4284

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF GENERALIZED SYSTEM OF PREFERENCES.

Section 505 of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2465) is amended by striking “December 31, 2009” and inserting “December 31, 2010”.

SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF ANDEAN TRADE PREFERENCE ACT.

(a) EXTENSION.—Section 208(a) of the Andean Trade Preference Act (19 U.S.C. 3206(a)) is amended in paragraphs (1) and (2) by striking “December 31, 2009” each place it appears and inserting “December 31, 2010”.

(b) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN APPAREL ARTICLES.—Section 204(b)(3) of the Andean Trade Preference Act (19 U.S.C. 3203(b)(3)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (B)—

(A) in clause (iii)—

(i) in subclause (II), by striking “7 succeeding 1-year periods” and inserting “8 succeeding 1-year periods”; and

(ii) in subclause (III)(bb), by striking “and for the succeeding 2-year period” and inserting “and for the succeeding 3-year period”; and

(B) in clause (v)(II), by striking “6 succeeding 1-year periods” and inserting “7 succeeding 1-year periods”; and

(2) in subparagraph (E)(ii)(II), by striking “December 31, 2009” and inserting “December 31, 2010”.

(c) REPORT.—Section 203(f)(1) of the Andean Trade Preference Act (19 U.S.C. 3202(f)(1)) is amended by striking “April 30, 2003” and inserting “June 30, 2010”.

SEC. 3. CUSTOMS USER FEES.

Section 13031(j)(3) of the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (19 U.S.C. 58c(j)(3)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking “February 14, 2018” and inserting “May 14, 2018”; and

(2) in subparagraph (B)(i), by striking “February 7, 2018” and inserting “June 7, 2018”.

SEC. 4. TIME FOR PAYMENT OF CORPORATE ESTIMATED TAXES.

The percentage under paragraph (1) of section 202(b) of the Corporate Estimated Tax Shift Act of 2009 in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act is increased by 1.5 percentage points.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CAMP) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

Mr. LEVIN. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4284. This bill extends two preference programs—the Generalized System of Preferences, known as GSP, and the Andean Trade Preference Act, known as ATPA—for 1 year. Without this extension, the two programs will expire in less than 3 weeks, on December 31.

Preferences, including GSP and ATPA, are important tools in U.S. trade policy. They are a means by which the U.S. can work with developing nations to help them capture the opportunities and to meet the challenges of trade and globalization.

Over many decades, the GSP and Andean programs have seen these results for developing nations: The GSP currently provides duty-free treatment to over 3,500 types of products coming into the U.S. from more than 130 developing countries. The program provides duty-free access to even more products from the 44 poorest, or least developed, countries. Last year, the GSP program facilitated \$31.7 billion in imports from all beneficiary nations. ATPA provided additional benefits to the Andean nations to help address their special circumstances, in particular, their efforts to fight the trade in narcotics. Under ATPA, imports grew from \$97 million in 1992, which was the first full year after enactment, to more than \$17 billion in 2008, including \$4 billion of nonfuel imports.

The programs have been crafted carefully so that they mirror the complementarities of trade between the developing nations and the United States. The needs of developing nations have been matched to the needs here at home. As a result, both programs have provided significant benefits here in the United States as well.

ATPA has developed an important market for U.S. textiles in the Andean region, and both ATPA and GSP have improved the sourcing options that many U.S. businesses, including many small and medium enterprises, use to remain competitive in the global mar-

ketplace. In recent years, for example, the majority of U.S. imports—75 percent—using GSP were imports used to sustain U.S. manufacturing, including raw materials, parts and components, and machinery and equipment.

At the same time that they have been structured to foster increased trade, the preference programs have been shaped to encourage developing countries to implement the kinds of policies that are necessary for increased trade to achieve the goal of development. Specifically, the preference programs have incorporated key eligibility criteria, including conditions regarding respect of fundamental worker rights, the rule of law, basic rules protecting innovation and investment, and policies to fight corruption.

The preference programs confirm what many of us have been saying for a long time—trade must be shaped so as to spread its benefits widely. That is true whether we talk about unilateral preference programs or bilateral and multilateral trade agreements.

I do not mean to suggest, however, that our work is done when it comes to preference programs. Far from it. We need to ask whether the preference programs are working as well as they should. This requires taking a hard look at all aspects of the programs, including how present eligibility criteria are working. In addition to considering any improvements, we also need to look at whether there is a need to include additional eligibility criteria, including relating to the environment.

This also means taking a careful look at those countries that are in an especially vulnerable situation. One example is Cambodia, which has been hard hit by the global economic recession. As many of my colleagues may recall, Cambodia and the U.S. were partners in a pioneering project called Better Factories Cambodia. That project, which grew out of the U.S.-Cambodia Textile Agreement in the late 1990s, sought to promote labor standards through a trade agreement at a time when many in the world were demonizing such efforts as protectionism. The effort bore fruit, significantly improving the rights of and conditions for workers, which, in turn, can help expand other freedoms.

However, that industry is now under siege as a result of the global recession and of competition, including from China and Vietnam. According to testimony provided in a recent Ways and Means hearing, nearly 1 quarter—80 of 340—of all exporting factories have been shut down, and nearly 80,000 workers—most of them women—have lost their jobs in Cambodia. We need to know whether the preference programs are doing enough to help these enormous challenges.

The extension we are voting on today gives us the time we need to look carefully at these important issues. The Ways and Means Committee and the

Trade Subcommittee plan to hold hearings and to work with the administration next year in a comprehensive review of our preference programs. Today's bill also provides for a review, in the middle of next year, of the Andean Trade Preference Act and of all issues relating thereto with each of the countries covered by the act.

I want to take a moment to thank my Republican colleagues for working on this extension with Chairman RANGEL and me. I look forward to working with Ranking Members DAVID CAMP and KEVIN BRADY and with our other colleagues on both sides of the aisle to evaluate the preference programs over the course of next year as we together determine whether we can make them work better for all beneficiaries—for both the citizens of developing nations and for our citizens.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CAMP. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, let me be blunt. We can and should be doing much more to advance our trade agenda and to create much needed jobs for American workers.

This year, America's trade agenda has stalled, and it has had a chilling effect on our economy, on job creation and on global commerce, in some cases, even weakening our national security interests. The delay in considering the Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement alone has cost U.S. exporters and their workers over \$2.4 billion in unnecessary tariffs.

Last week, the President said there would be a renewed focus on trade next year. I welcome that commitment, and I stand ready to prepare our free trade agreements for congressional consideration. In the meantime, we still have valuable work to do. Although we are not dealing with any of our pending free trade agreements today, we are considering important trade programs which protect our own interests and which help advance developing nations—extensions of the Generalized System of Preferences and the Andean Trade Preference Act.

Make no mistake; the legislation before us is far from perfect, but it is a chance to ensure that the trade agenda does not slide further backward. By supporting this bill, we are sending a signal to the world that America is ready and willing to engage.

I am a strong supporter of our trade preference programs. These programs are vital, particularly as we struggle with the global recession and with the collapse in international trade. Allowing these preference programs to lapse would be a mistake that would encourage the rest of the world, which is already passing us by when it comes to new trade agreements, to increase their lead on us, and we cannot allow that to happen.

□ 1615

As I noted, this legislation should have been stronger to provide greater

certainty to American employers doing business in developing countries, something sorely needed in this economic climate.

I would have preferred to see a 2-year extension of that program instead of the 1-year extension before us, but I think we all agree that a 1-year extension is better than no extension at all.

I would also have preferred to see a continuation of the bipartisan provision in the current Andean Trade Promotion Act program that requires enhanced oversight over Ecuador's compliance with the eligibility criteria. Unfortunately, this legislation fails to recognize the serious questions that surround Ecuador's compliance with the eligibility criteria for this program.

The 2008 bipartisan extension of ATPA extended benefits for Ecuador but required the administration to issue a report on Ecuador's compliance with eligibility criteria. This report, released on June 30 of this year by the Obama administration, highlighted multiple concerns, which I share.

Specifically, the report raised questions about Ecuador's compliance with its international investment obligations. The report raised concerns about Ecuador's decision to increase certain import duties above their bound levels and impose quotas on imports. None of these issues have been resolved. In fact, they have gotten worse.

Despite failure by Ecuador to address the issues raised in the Obama administration report, the majority has inexplicably stripped out last year's reporting requirement. For all the talk from the other side about enforcement and compliance, this legislation fails to address legitimate concerns our workers and employers face in Ecuador. While the legislation requires reporting for all of the Andean countries, I am disappointed that the majority has decided not to engage in specific oversight of a country clearly falling short of our expectations.

As 2009 comes to a close, there will be many retrospectives on the year. One focus ought to be on whether Washington advanced a pro-growth, pro-job trade agenda. The answer is clearly "no."

We started the year with the passage of a new Trade Adjustment Assistance program, showing what can be achieved when there is a bipartisan, bicameral commitment. We should all be very proud of what we have done for workers who are trying to adjust to the global economy.

But until today, there has been absolutely no positive movement on the trade agenda since TAA. While I am encouraged the majority decided to extend two trade preference programs, the failure to make this legislation as robust as it could have been shows the need to return next year to the sort of bipartisanship that we saw on TAA. I urge the majority to make that happen, and I am committed to doing my part.

Madam Speaker, we owe the American people a better result. Today's legislation gives us the first opportunity to build on the President's words to us at the White House last week, in which he acknowledged the importance of trade in creating jobs, but it represents the bare minimum.

I urge my colleagues to support a robust trade agenda that creates opportunities for American workers. For that reason, I support passage of this legislation.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LEVIN. I now am privileged to yield 3 minutes to the very distinguished member of the committee and my colleague, Jim McDermott of Washington.

(Mr. MCDERMOTT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to urge the passage of H.R. 4284 to extend the general system of preferences and the Andean trade preference program for 1 year. I have called for an extension to our preference programs in the past. We need to make these programs long and stable. This extension is only for a year, and that's okay in this instance, because we need to force more action on broader preference reform.

In difficult economic times like today, developed countries sometimes decide to pull back. But I think that in a globalized economy we need to push forward on improving trade with poorer countries of the world.

Our preference programs have done enormous good for the poor of the world and for American business. Now we need to make them even better.

For development to really accelerate, we need to get more countries involved in trading more products. I have introduced a bill with the support of Chairman RANGEL and Congressman LEVIN that will go far in modernizing our preference programs for American businesses and the poor of the world.

Now, while there are details to work out, there is broad agreement that our trade programs need to be stable, they need to be simplified, they need to be more effective, and they need to help more people.

I think we agree that the stability of our programs is essential to them being effective. No one who has ever run a business would want to invest in a climate that is so unstable, that goes year by year, you are never sure can you plan on it next year. That simply is very difficult for businesses to deal with, and our programs, therefore, need to be long term.

Second, our programs are too complicated and too hard to use. Simplifying our programs and doing more to help our partners meet the important standards we set are keys to their success.

An interesting fact sort of clarifies it in your mind. Cambodia pays as much tariff on \$1.5 billion worth of exports in

the United States as does Great Britain on \$50 billion. Now, if you are trying to help Cambodia, you ought to think about those kinds of numbers. We need to address the capacity building. We all know that the wisdom of trade, not aid, is obvious. Preferences help our trading partners quite a bit. But without thoughtful capacity building, we can only help them so much. We need to pool these efforts together to help poor countries grow and to give American businesses more customers.

Finally, we need to find a way to strengthen the programs we have while at the same time helping more people. Trade is not a zero-sum game. We can strengthen our current programs while also helping other desperately poor countries who right now get no benefits. We can help different countries like Lesotho, the Philippines, and Cambodia at the same time.

I think this is a good start, and the House ought to pass this bill, and next year we will deal with a larger bill.

Mr. CAMP. At this time, Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished member of the Ways and Means Committee, the gentleman from Washington State (Mr. REICHERT).

Mr. REICHERT. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I rise today also in support of this legislation to extend our trade preference programs.

Trade is vital to creating jobs, growing our economy, and strengthening ties with key partners around the world. Preferences are a bridge for developing countries to enter the global market, to grow, and to achieve permanent trade relationships with America.

Look no further than South Korea and Colombia for great examples of preferences done right. Through successful preference programs, both allies now stand ready to enter into permanent trade agreements with the United States.

The failure to pass pending free trade agreements like those with Korea and Colombia is costing America thousands of jobs and billions of dollars. President Obama did recently speak about how growing exports creates jobs, and I hope the Congress will soon prepare these agreements for consideration, because not only do these agreements create jobs, but also business relationships and partnerships and friendships.

It creates opportunities for cultural exchanges and the opportunities to help our friends across the globe educate each other and educate us. It also even affects our national security and our environment.

While I am disappointed that we could not extend these preference programs beyond just 1 year, they are too important to our partner countries to let them expire. I urge all of my colleagues to support this extension of our preference programs.

Mr. LEVIN. It's now my privilege to yield 3 minutes to my very distinguished colleague and member of the Ways and Means Committee from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER).

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I appreciate the gentleman's courtesy in permitting me to speak on this, as I appreciate his thoughtful leadership in this area of trade and balancing the commitments that we have.

The extension of the system of preferences was not merely related to trade but is reflective of a Nation's social values. It was in that context that we inaugurated our program of preferences in 1974.

It's more than a trade agreement; it's a statement about what policies we find valuable in our trading partners and which policies we feel drive the development of nations. For this reason, it's often referred to as a tool of foreign policy as well as trade.

We appropriately judge our trading partners on eligibility for this program on protection of American commercial interests, protection of intellectual property, preventing the seizure of property belonging to United States citizens or businesses, as well as protection of individual rights such as the protection of commonly accepted labor rights and the elimination of child labor.

Madam Speaker, the United States has, I think, at times fallen short in our dealing with tariff barriers for poor nations and agriculture. My friend from Washington referenced the difference between Cambodia and Great Britain.

I am hopeful that we will be able to work in the year ahead dealing with some outmoded tariff dealing with footwear and outerwear that's no longer even manufactured in the United States, and I am confident that we can work through in this approach.

But I would hope, as we move forward, that we would add to the list of the criteria by which we are going to judge the extension of these preferences environmental criteria. They are noticeably absent as we go through the list currently.

Making sure that agreements are required of our trading partners to enforce environmental laws already on the books and comply with various international environmental agreements, I think, is absolutely essential.

Concern for the environment is a core element of development. It reflects an appreciation of civil law for protection of individual and often indigenous people's rights and concern for the long-term sustainability of a state and society. Protection of the environment is not merely what rich nations do after they become wealthy, but it is what nations must do as they become wealthy.

Madam Speaker, at this moment the world is meeting in Copenhagen, and I am pleased the United States has not turned its back on these global climate negotiations. We are dealing with problems of energy demands and carbon pollution that may well be the most important for this century.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. LEVIN. I yield the gentleman an additional minute.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. These may be the most important discussions that we are going to have on the survival of human habitation as we know it, for the economies of countries rich and poor.

Being able to deal meaningfully with environmental protections through trade negotiations is perhaps the single most effective way that we are going to be able to establish a basis, a criteria, moving forward.

I hope that we will be able to have a more robust conversation in this next year. I hope that we will be successful in moving the world and this country forward in Copenhagen. I hope that as we move forward we can work together to strengthen the role of environmental protections that will be found as we extend these preferences in the future and our overall approach to trade.

Mr. CAMP. At this time, Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE).

Mr. ROYCE. Madam Speaker, here we go again. Another year, another Andean trade preference extension, another year of the Colombian trade agreement held up. Another missed opportunity.

Let's be clear: The Colombia agreement, which the majority is not moving, would be a job creator for Americans. If we passed it, Colombian tariffs, the tariffs that they place on U.S. exports, would be cut. If you reduced that export tariff, it would create more jobs here in the United States.

With the Colombia FTA, we could get two-way trade between the United States and Colombia. Right now, U.S. exporters sending to Colombia are mainly small- and medium-sized businesses. A lot of them are in my area in Southern California. They are our economic engine.

Let's help them. It's very ironic that many who routinely attack trade agreements are giving Colombia preferential treatment here today, asking for nothing in return, which is especially galling when there is a good agreement sitting on ice which would help our exporters in that market.

□ 1630

I think it's time to stand up for the American worker; certainly past time to get an agreement that's a two-way agreement here.

Of course, Colombia is our closest partner in an important region. It is locked in a very deadly struggle with well-financed forces, in this case terrorists and drug traffickers that are called the FARC. This bill today is better than nothing, but the majority is missing a good opportunity, an opportunity to help a friend in Colombia and to help American workers by passing the Colombia FTA.

This bill has another shortcoming that I wanted to speak on briefly, and that is Ecuador. A beneficiary, Ecuador is far, far from living up to this program's conditions. To be a beneficiary

of this agreement, there should be certain requirements. Yet it hasn't been cooperative in combating narco-terrorism, and Ecuador is very close to the FARC, which is warring against the Colombian Government. Its independent media has come under government attack. Its government has corrupted its legal system, harming U.S. companies.

Just to go into some of the specifics, the President of Ecuador, President Correa, has dissolved the Parliament there, the Congress. He has replaced all the judges in the country. He's censored the media and seized control of the television stations there. The State Department's 2009 human rights report cites concerns with what the State Department calls corruption and the denial of due process within Ecuador's judicial system. Transparency International ranked this country as one of the worst surveyed for 2008 in terms of its corruption perceptions index, one of the worst in corruption. And it has announced that it will withdraw from its bilateral investment treaty with the United States.

This bill frankly would be better without Ecuador. Instead, the majority rejected using these benefits as leverage. I think that's also a missed opportunity. Rejecting this bill would hurt Colombia and our strategic interests there, so let's pass it; but it should be noted that we should have done so much better for American jobs.

Mr. LEVIN. I now yield 3 minutes to my very distinguished colleague and friend, Mr. DOGGETT of Texas.

Mr. DOGGETT. I thank the gentleman and I thank him for his leadership.

I certainly support more trade—where it most stands to benefit American consumers and to spur economic development in some of the world's least developed countries. During the last 2 years, there has been considerable talk about crafting a 21st century American trade policy that ensures we are not encouraging trade that depends upon degrading our environment and lowering labor standards. Unfortunately, talk is often about all that we've had. Upholding labor and environmental standards has been much more rhetoric than reality. Today's renewal of this GSP legislation does nothing to encourage participating countries to even enforce their own minimal environmental laws or to honor the multilateral environmental agreements that they have joined.

This is in significant contrast with the European Union. There, in order to enjoy the benefits of its GSP Plus program, beneficiary countries must fully implement major multilateral environmental agreements. There's no reason why we should not be doing the same and more. We should have led the European Union on the environment, but we can now at least follow its lead.

There are GSP labor standards, but under the Bush administration, naturally, there was very little interest in

seeing them enforced. Why, for example, should the thuggish government of Uzbekistan enjoy any trade preferences? In addition to being one of the world's leading violators of human rights across the board, we have ample evidence of widespread labor abuses within Uzbekistan, including compulsory child labor. For over 2 years, the USTR has failed to act on a related petition about child labor, even after the Uzbeks failed to appear at a hearing to defend or explain their egregious child labor record.

This raises troubling questions about the integrity and effectiveness of the USTR review process. The Uzbek case is but one example of the significant problems with that enforcement mechanism of labor provisions in the GSP. Surely our trade policies here in the 21st century can aspire to do more than to bless practices that come right out of a 19th century Charles Dickens novel.

In the promised GSP review for this next year, as described by Chairman LEVIN, I think we have considerable work to do if we are to give full and complete meaning to the promises of President Barack Obama that our trade policy will reflect not only our desire for more commerce but our commitment to uphold our environment and our workers.

Mr. CAMP. Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the ranking member of the Trade Subcommittee, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY).

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Madam Speaker, I have long been a supporter of our preference programs because they allow valuable inputs to enter the United States duty free, helping our manufacturers and their employees. At the same time, trade preference programs are an important tool to help developing countries break into the international market. Over many years, Congress has worked on a bipartisan basis to develop trade preference programs that have provided a vital economic boost to many developing countries.

But effective trade preferences are just one step on a developing country's journey to becoming a full player in the international market, which a country achieves through a permanent, reciprocal trade agreement with the United States. Chile, Singapore and the CAFTA countries all graduated from trade preferences into these more mature relationships, giving them full, permanent duty-free access to the U.S. market. This is a significant benefit over the partial, temporary access provided by our preference programs, sending a strong signal that helps attract necessary investment and capital into the partner country.

For the United States, the benefits of reciprocal trade are obvious. American workers and businesses get a level playing field as a result of these countries opening their markets to U.S. exports. As a result, U.S. exports to these countries surge and those growing ex-

ports support American jobs. We can quickly realize similar benefits by implementing the pending trade agreements with Colombia and Panama, two more countries that are anxious to move from a one-way relationship to one that levels the playing field for American workers. I am frustrated to once again be faced with extending preferences for these countries instead of voting on a more permanent relationship that benefits all of us.

Now there are many countries that aren't yet ready to take the step from preferences to a free trade relationship, and for these countries effective trade preference programs are the right policy. To that end, we must design our preference programs with eligibility criteria that challenge countries to improve their laws while encouraging investment. The current eligibility criteria provide the right balance, allowing the U.S. on many occasions to use these criteria to prompt improvements in conditions in several countries and further economic development.

At the same time, when a country does not abide by the criteria in the preference programs, we must take notice and even eliminate benefits if necessary. Otherwise, the effectiveness of the criteria is undermined.

In this regard, I have been watching the situation in Ecuador for several years, and I'm deeply troubled by what I am seeing. When Congress last extended ATPA in 2008, we added an additional statutory review requirement for Bolivia and Ecuador because of our concerns about their compliance with the eligibility criteria. This past June the Obama administration completed this review. The administration found that Bolivia was not complying with the eligibility criteria in the ATPA program, which is why Bolivia is no longer eligible for benefits. The administration also noted several serious concerns about Ecuador. In particular, the administration cited Ecuador's withdrawal from the International Convention on the Settlement of Investment Disputes and Ecuador's unilateral decision to raise many of its tariffs to levels above its WTO bindings.

Since the administration's report, there have been further troubling developments in Ecuador. The country has announced that it will withdraw from its bilateral investment treaty with the United States, and the investment climate continues to cause concern. In addition, President Correa has made questionable statements with regard to Ecuador's respect for intellectual property rights. Moreover, negotiations to replace U.S. access to the Manta air base are still unresolved. Together with many other Members, I remain extremely concerned about the situation in Ecuador.

Therefore, I am disappointed that the bill before us today does not retain the requirement in current law that the President report to Congress on the situation in Ecuador. I believe that this

report provides us an opportunity to keep a careful eye on Ecuador and its compliance with the eligibility criteria. But just as important is the fact that the reporting requirement is enormously important as a signal to Ecuador—a message that this Congress is watching Ecuador closely.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. CAMP. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. I thank the gentleman from Michigan.

In addition, I am disappointed that today's bill doesn't do more to establish certainty for users of the program here and abroad through an extension that is longer than a mere year. I and Mr. CAMP have been seeking a 2-year extension.

Madam Speaker, I support this bill because I don't want the remaining preferences to lapse, but we can and should do better.

Mr. LEVIN. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CAMP. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I urge my colleagues to support the Andean Trade Preference Extension Act of 2009, which will extend the Andean trade preferences, as we know as ATPA, and also the Generalized System of Preferences, we also refer to as GSP, for an additional year. However, I do think it's important to note my disappointment that we did not put a message specifically putting Ecuador on notice that its behavior and its receipt of continued benefits is at serious risk. There is a deteriorating investment climate in Ecuador as well as their repudiation of the bilateral investment treaty. I think it's very important that while it is understood in this legislation that there is language maintaining a review, I am concerned that there is not specific language aimed at challenging Ecuador's actions. I do think this is a change from current law and it's a step backward. I think it's important to send a strong message that any central tenet of a preference program is that the participants uphold their commitments to the rule of law as well as their commitments to the U.S. on investment and other matters.

So as a result of this, I believe preference programs should not be viewed as an entitlement; that they are based upon meeting certain criteria as I mentioned, particularly, as others have said, the observance of labor and environmental laws, certainly actions to prevent the distortion of investment as well as the support and enforcement of intellectual property laws as well as reasonable access to markets.

However, I do think despite these concerns, this legislation is extremely important. It is essential that we extend this for another year. I think that this is an important step to take, and I will support its passage. I look forward to working with the administration as well as my colleagues on the

Ways and Means Committee, Chairman RANGEL and Chairman LEVIN, as we continue to address trade issues in the coming year.

Ms. RICHARDSON. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4284, which would extend the Andean Trade Preferences Act, ATPA, and the Generalized System of Preferences, GSP, for an additional year. I would like to thank Chairman RANGEL for his leadership on this issue and for bringing this bill to the floor. It is critically important that we extend these trade preferences before they expire at the end of this calendar year. We have seen in the past the damage that a short lapse can do to cross border business relationships.

The trade preferences we seek to extend benefit both the United States and our South American trading partners. These preferences support economic growth both here in the United States and abroad in some of the poorest countries in the world. Almost 2 million jobs in the United States and the Andean region depend on ATPA preferences and the region has emerged an important market for U.S. exports. Because use of the programs is conditioned through eligibility criteria, such as labor, human rights, and intellectual property, the United States is able to advance both important economic and foreign policy goals.

I therefore urge all of my colleagues to join me in voting for H.R. 4284.

Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4284, the Andean Trade Preference Extension Act of 2009 (ATPA), which would extend both the General System of Preferences (GSP) and the Andean Trade Preferences for one year.

It is important to extend these preference programs, which assist developing countries in their efforts to build up domestic industries, increase exports, and alleviate poverty. In some cases, these programs have worked well. South Korea, Singapore, and other nations have graduated from the GSP program, and no longer qualify for these special trade benefits.

Failure to extend these preferences would put even more pressure on impoverished populations in developing nations.

Make no mistake, my support for this extension is not an unqualified endorsement of their current structure. To be sure, our preferences programs need improvement.

One key improvement that is desperately needed is to change the prevailing view that trade preferences are a development strategy. Instead, we must recognize that trade preferences are only part of a comprehensive development strategy, which must also include investments in education, training, and infrastructure, as well as a consideration of targeted debt relief.

In addition, our preferences programs currently have inadequately-enforced labor standards and no environmental standards whatsoever.

The rationale for linking trade and labor rights is vital to avoiding a "race to the bottom." For American working families, we need to ensure that developing countries attract investment based on a competitive wage advantage, not by artificially suppressing wages through labor repression. For working families in developing countries, the opportunity to bargain collectively for better wages and working conditions will ensure that some of the bene-

fits of trade go to them, not just to multi-national corporations.

This one-year extension will give us the time we need to reform existing programs without disrupting the fragile economies of the lesser-developed nations that our preferences programs are designed to help.

Finally, I want to address the issue of Ecuador in particular. Unfortunately, it has come to my attention that Chevron Corporation has been urging Members of Congress and the Administration to punish Ecuador because its government refuses to intervene in a private lawsuit against the oil giant. The plaintiffs in the lawsuit contend that the company is responsible for polluting a vast area of the Amazon Basin, causing serious health and environmental consequences.

While I take no position on the lawsuit, I do believe that the plaintiffs should have their day in court. I also believe that, of all the legitimate reasons to oppose the U.S. trade preferences programs, doing the bidding of a single corporation is not one of them.

As the editors of the Los Angeles Times wrote in a recent editorial, "There are other factors for Congress to consider in determining whether to extend Ecuador's trade preferences: workers' rights and trade and investment policy also are important. And there are issues that remain to be negotiated between the two countries. But in each of these areas, Ecuador has demonstrated a willingness to work with the U.S. That should be the test for an extension of trade benefits, not the private interests of one corporation."

To reiterate, while our trade preferences programs are not perfect, extending them for one year is vital, and I strongly support this legislation.

Mr. CAMP. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LEVIN. I urge passage, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4284.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FEDERAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2009

Mr. LYNCH. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 303) to reauthorize and improve the Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act of 1999, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment:

Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the "Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act of 2009".

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows: