



For Immediate Release

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AAFA Welcomes Congressional Action on Extension of Andean Nation Trade Benefits; Urges Swift Passage of Peru and Colombia Trade Promotion Agreements

Arlington, VA (Friday, June 29, 2007) – Today, Kevin M. Burke, President and CEO of the American Apparel & Footwear Association (AAFA), commended the Congress for taking action to extend the Andean Trade Preference Act (ATPA). The bill passed the House of Representatives with a vote of 365-95, and in the Senate by Unanimous Consent.

Burke stated, “We are pleased that key Congressional leaders were able to forge a bipartisan and bicameral agreement to allow this eight month extension to go forward without any further delay.” Without this legislation, the ATPA legislation would have expired on Saturday, June 30, creating considerable disruption for U.S. textile and apparel firms that do business with the Andean countries. President Bush is expected sign the extension before tomorrow’s expiration of the original ATPA.

Burke thanked House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Charles B. Rangel (D-NY), Ranking Member Jim McCrery (R-LA), Senate Finance Committee Chair Max Baucus (D-MT), and Ranking Member Charles Grassley (R-IA) for their efforts over the past week to secure final approval of this legislation.

Burke added, “Before time runs out on this new eight month extension, we urge Congress to turn its attention to passage of the Peru and Colombia Free Trade Agreements – agreements that have been endorsed by the entire textile and apparel supply chain – to remove the economic uncertainty that currently plagues our trade relationships with these important partners.”

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The American Apparel & Footwear Association (AAFA) is the national trade association representing apparel, footwear and other sewn products companies, and their suppliers, which compete in the global market. AAFA's mission is to promote and enhance its members' competitiveness, productivity and profitability in the global market by minimizing regulatory, commercial, political, and trade restraints.