

Coalition of New England Companies For Trade

Contacts: Peter Friedmann and Ray Bucheger
Tel: (202) 783-3333; Fax: (202) 783-4422

Extension of Trade Promotion Authority

Presidential Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) expires on June 30th, 2007. A renewal of TPA (formerly called fast track trade negotiating authority), which allows the President to negotiate trade agreements under expedited Congressional approval would have to be passed by Congress this year.

Will TPA be extended with Democratic majorities in the House and the Senate? The answer to that question is anyone's guess. While Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee Charlie Rangel and Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee Max Baucus have already signaled their support for TPA extension as long as it includes protections for the environment and takes care of workers in the US and abroad, many people in the trade community are concerned there will not be enough support among the rank and file in Congress to pass legislation that would extend TPA.

How TPA Works: TPA provides for close collaboration between the President and Congress in opening foreign markets for U.S. goods and services. It gives the Executive branch specific Congressional guidance on objectives to seek in trade negotiations. TPA also sets detailed notice and consultation requirements for the Administration to follow to ensure it has the benefit of advice from the Congress, the private sector, and the public before and during negotiations. TPA establishes a special Congressional Oversight Group through which Members of Congress provide timely advice to the Administration on trade negotiations and receive regular briefings from the United States Trade Representative on proposed U.S. negotiating positions. In addition, the Administration's trade negotiators brief and seek advice from Congressional committees before each negotiating round. This process ensures close coordination and regular exchange of information between the two branches.

CONNECT Position: CONNECT supports extension of Trade Promotion Authority.