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JANICE MAYS,
MINORITY CHIEF COUNSEL

November 22, 2005

Honorable Rob Portman
U.S. Trade Representative
600 17th Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20506

Dear Mr. Ambassador:

I am writing in regard to the antidumping text issued on November 11 (and revised on November 15) by the Chairman of the Negotiating Group on Antidumping in the World Trade Organization. The text opens the door to a broad re-negotiation of the WTO Antidumping Agreement and contains numerous other flaws. Accordingly, I urge that it be rejected as a basis for further discussion or negotiation in this critical area.

I, like many Members of Congress, strongly oppose weakening the WTO Antidumping Agreement, let alone subjecting it to a broad renegotiation. The antidumping remedy ensures that American farmers, workers and businesses have a remedy against a key unfair trade practice of many foreign businesses. Weakening these vital rules would, in my view, put at substantial risk approval by Congress of the results of the Doha Round.

The antidumping remedy has been a bulwark of the international trading system since its inception in 1947. Injurious dumping is the only practice that is actually "condemned" by the WTO. Further, the Antidumping Agreement is the only Uruguay Round agreement outside of the built-in agenda as to which the WTO appears to be proposing substantial negotiations.

The text reflects the absence of an effective negotiating strategy by the United States in a vital and increasingly prominent aspect of the Doha negotiations. I urge you to meet with interested Members of Congress at your earliest opportunity to set out a strategy for avoiding a weakening of these important rules and ensuring a successful outcome of this aspect of the Doha negotiations.

Honorable Rob Portman
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For these reasons, among others, it is unwise to accept this text.

Sincerely,



The Honorable Charles B. Rangel
Ranking Member
Committee on Ways and Means



The Honorable Benjamin J. Cardin
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Trade
Committee on Ways and Means