

**RELEASE IN
FULL**

From: Abedin, Huma <AbedinH@state.gov>
Sent: Saturday, October 8, 2011 9:16 AM
To: H
Subject: Fta calls

Some background before you make the calls:

NOTE FOR THE SECRETARY

FROM: Jose Fernandez

SUBJECT: Update on Korea, Colombia, and Panama Free Trade Agreements

The House and Senate have tentatively scheduled October 12 votes on the Korea, Colombia, and Panama free trade agreements (FTAs), the day before Korean President Lee Myung-bak's state visit. The House plans to vote to renew Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) and Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) programs on October 12 as well. The Senate already passed the TAA/GSP bill.

The House Rules Committee announced the House will have one hour of debate on the TAA/GSP bill and 90 minutes of debate for each FTA bill on October 12. The House floor debate will be followed by separate votes on each of the three FTAs as well as the TAA/GSP bill. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid and Minority Leader Mitch McConnell agreed to limit debate on the three FTAs to a total of 10 hours. Barring any objections from Senators, this would allow Senate votes on each of the FTAs October 12. To accommodate the Senate vote, the Senate Finance Committee will hold a markup of the three FTAs on October 11. The normal layover requirement between committee and Senate floor action will likely be waived by unanimous consent to allow the October 12 Senate vote.

FTA supporters expect, and opponents concede, there are sufficient votes in both the House and the Senate to pass all three of the FTAs. Hill staffers expect the Colombia FTA to pass by a relatively narrow margin due to labor opposition. The Korea FTA is expected to pass by a comfortable margin, despite concerns about trans-shipment of goods from China and North Korea. The Panama FTA is expected to pass with little opposition.