



Via Fax

February 10, 2006

To: All Members of Congress

Dear Member of Congress:

The recently released trade deficit numbers are deeply troubling to the 700,000 members of the Communications Workers of America (CWA, AFL-CIO). We desperately need concrete solutions to the trade imbalances that these failed policies have generated.

"The economy is growing at such a fast rate that it is generating lots of disposable income... some of which is used to buy goods from our trading partners." This direct quote from Treasury Secretary John Snow when the November trade numbers revealed a record \$60 billion deficit and a 2.3 percent decrease in exports is indicative of the problem. The numbers released today paint an even bleaker picture. **Our trade deficit rose 17.5 percent to \$ 725.8 billion in 2005**, a new record for the fourth year in a row. Add to this, massive credit card debt, stagnant wages, increased healthcare costs, increased bankruptcy filings and now, for the first time since 1933, a negative savings rate by Americans. We deserve real solutions, not spin when it comes to dealing with our economy.

None of the "free" trade agreements the United States has negotiated have increased exports. Yet, U.S.T.R. insists upon using this same failed model that exports good jobs and not American products. We call upon Congress to step in and cease consideration of all trade agreements until we develop a model in which people and industry of all sizes prosper.

We must hold trading partners accountable. Congress can take action this session by passing the WTO compliant Hunter-Ryan China Currency Act of 2005. Those in the global community have an obligation to live up to their promises. Congress has a duty to step in and address this persistent and injurious problem.

I write to you as a worker, the Executive Vice President of CWA, and most important, an American who wants the spirit and innovative history of our country to prevail in the global economy. These failed economic policies and the fundamental disconnect between those responsible and those whom these policies directly affect, is leading our nation down a path of economic disaster and ruin. They threaten our national security, economic security and our very future as the leading democracy in the world.

American workers need Congress to exert its authority and rectify this economic debacle. I look forward to your response and to working with you to preserve our way of life.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey A. Rechenbach
CWA Executive Vice President