That the Senate passed S. 1619.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

UNITED STATES-COLOMBIA TRADE PROMOTION AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 1(c) of rule XIX, further consideration of the bill (H.R. 3078) to implement the United States-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement will now resume.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CAMP) has 30 minutes remaining.

Mr. CAMP. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

At this time I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from North Dakota (Mr. BERG), a distinguished member of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. BERG. Mr. Speaker, we've been waiting for these trade agreements for a long time. Every day that goes by without them has been a missed opportunity. At a time when our economy is struggling, these trade agreements mean more opportunities for Americans. They mean more American exports. And, most importantly, they mean more American jobs.

We've already seen the benefits of trade in North Dakota. Our exports have more than doubled over the last 5 years because of our renewed commitment to free trade. These trade agreements before us today could increase exports by $23 million in North Dakota alone and $13 billion nationwide.

If we're serious about creating jobs, if we're serious about getting our economy back on track and allowing the U.S. to stay competitive in a fast-moving global market, passing these trade agreements is a critical first step. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting them.

□ 1240

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN).

Mr. LEVIN. I yield 1 minute to the very distinguished gentlelady from California (Mrs. CAPPS).

Mrs. CAPPS. I thank my colleague for yielding.

I rise today in opposition to the Colombia Free Trade Agreement. I oppose this bill for many reasons. First, Colombia does not yet meet the high standards we should be demanding of our trading partners. While Colombia has made admirable progress, trade unionists continue to be brutally murdered and attacked. This is unacceptable. We can't just look the other way and hope things get better.

Second, this agreement makes permanent the trade preferences that have absolutely devastated California's cut flower industry, which produces 80 percent of domestically grown flowers. This agreement continues millions of dollars in subsidies for Colombia flower growers but provides no such support for our domestic growers. California's growers have developed a plan to cut costs and compete globally, but they can't do it alone. It's only fair that our domestic flower growers get a little help from their government, too. This FTA is a huge missed opportunity to help this valued domestic industry.

For these, and so many other reasons, I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on the Colombia Free Trade Agreement.

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to a distinguished member of the Ways and Means Committee, the gentlewoman from Kansas (Ms. JENKINS).

Ms. JENKINS. Thank you, Mr. Chair, for yielding, and thank you for your leadership in this area.

It has been nearly 5 years since we signed our trade agreement with Colombia, and although I'm disappointed that it took this long, I am so pleased we will be ratifying this agreement today. Once this trade deal has passed, we will finally have what our Trade Subcommittee chairman Representative BRADY has correctly labeled a ''Sell American'' agreement with the third-largest economy in South and Central America.

Exports of American goods will increase by more than $1 billion, and the ITC expects our stagnant GDP will get a boost of at least $2.5 billion, not to mention Kansas wheat farmers can look forward to an even larger share of the Colombian grain market.

It's been 5 years in the making, but we are finally here. I urge my colleagues to come together and support the pro-jobs, pro-growth Colombian Free Trade Agreement.

Mr. LEVIN. It is now my privilege to yield 3 minutes to the distinguished member of our committee, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia.

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. I want to thank my friend and colleague Mr. LEVIN for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the United States-Colombia free trade agreement. Some of my colleagues do not believe that the issue of human rights and the issue of the rule of law should be addressed through our trade policy. Some believe it is not about stolen lands, ransacked homes. It is not about human rights activists whose families and friends were harassed and disappeared. It is not about murdered labor leaders. It is not about a crisis that is only comparable to Sudan.

Trade for the sake of trade. Money for the sake of money. Let someone else care. Let someone else do it. Let someone else work on the human rights. Let someone else fight for justice. Let someone else worry about peace, order, and tranquility. All we need to do is find the cheapest, fastest, and easiest way to make a buck.

My friends, we're mistaken to believe that this is not about us. But the crisis in Colombia affects every part of our region. It affects millions forced from their homes. It helped to create the drug cartels and international gangs. It impacts the cost of crack and cocaine on every single street on America.

We cannot ask someone else to address the violence. We cannot leave the question of corruption and impunity to another leader, another generation. We must demand these answers now. If we don't, who will? It is up to us. We can do better. It is on our watch.

Mr. Speaker, today is a very sad day. We could have taken our time and done it right.

Today, we are abandoning our duty to the people who elected us and to millions of Colombians who now know that their cries fell on deaf ears and cold hearts. We can do better. We must do better. This Congress and this administration must have the courage to stand up and do what is right and be on the right side of history. It is a missed opportunity for change, for good, if we fail to do what is right.

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to a distinguished member of the Ways and Means Committee, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SCHOCK).

Mr. SCHOCK. First, I thank the chairman for his leadership in support of these agreements.

Let me say I agree with the President. The passage of the Colombia, Panama, and South Korea trade agreements will mean 250,000 new jobs at a time when our economy needs them most. But these trade agreements, Mr. Speaker, aren't just about new jobs. They're about the millions of Americans who rely on new markets and new customers. In my district in central Illinois alone, Illinois' farmers depend on customers in South Korea, in Panama, and in Colombia. And when the United States of America does nothing, we lose market share.

Five years ago, when this agreement was negotiated, Colombians purchased 60 percent of their wheat from the United States' farmers. Today, that number is 30 percent. It's costing jobs and it's costing opportunity here in our country. In manufacturing in my home area, Caterpillar, one of the major manufacturers of our country, employs a lot of high-wage union jobs, manufacturing jobs. Eight out of 10 of the tractors that are built in my district are sent to other customers around the world. With only 5 percent of the world's population in this country, it takes a pretty defeatist mentality to believe that our country would be better off not selling to the other 95 percent of the world.

Mr. Speaker, today, the House of Representatives will pass a jobs bill, a jobs bill that can pass the House, a jobs bill that can pass the Senate, and a jobs bill, Mr. Speaker, that the President of the United States has already said he will sign into law. And this jobs bill, Mr. Speaker, does not require a tax increase. This jobs bill does not require us to go into debt. And this jobs bill has bipartisan support and is good

not only for current Americans, but more importantly, it's good for future Americans and the future generation of America.

I urge passage of these three bills.

Mr. LEVIN. I yield 3 minutes to the ranking member on the Trade Subcommittee of Ways and Means, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT).

(Mr. MCDERMOTT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, we are all proud Members of the United States Congress. We consider this the preeminent legislative body in the world that sets the standard for how the world should create laws and how we should govern our country. We believe in the rule of law. We talk about it all the time. We're for the rule of law. Well, that is the nub of this argument about why so many of us will vote against the Colombian Free Trade Agreement.

Now, we all know the horrors. And we'll hear them repeated again and again. But the fact is that we forced the government of Colombia—President Obama did—to sit down and write a Labor Action Plan in which they said what they would do. We had listened for a couple of years to the previous administration, the Uribe administration; promise, promise, promise—nothing happened. So this President said, I want it in writing. Write down a labor agreement. It set out the precise steps that Colombia had to take to address the particular problems faced in that country; for example, steps Colombia could take to detect sham subcontractors and punish employers for using them to suppress worker rights.

□ 1250

We went down to very specific things. Why was that? Well, many of us who have been here awhile were here when we passed NAFTA. And we thought we had read it and understood what it meant, but we didn't understand a lot of what happened because we agreed that we wouldn't put the labor into the agreement; we would write a side letter. And we wouldn't put the environment into the agreement; we would put it in a side letter. Maquiladoras would be taken care of; the Rio Grande would be cleaned up.

Nothing happened because it wasn't in the agreement. It did not have the force of law of the United States Congress behind it.

So when we came to this, we didn't seal the deal. We said to the President, we want that in there. The President talked to the Republicans, and back and forth it went. And the Republicans were absolutely implacably opposed to putting in any mention of the Colombian Action Plan. Now, if somebody says they're going to do something, you take them at face value—sure they're going to do it. Then write it down here; just let's put it right in there so there's never any confusion about what it was you said you were going to do. But the Republicans insisted that this be as wide open as the NAFTA agreement, that it not have built into it the one thing that makes this so difficult for us to deal with.

If we believe in workers' rights and if we believe in human rights in this place—and we talk about it all the time. We talk about it for every country in the world. But when we write a trade agreement for Colombia, we're unwilling to write in the demands for the Colombian workers. That's what's wrong with this, and that's why most of us will vote against it.

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Arizona (Mr. QUAYLE).

Mr. QUAYLE. I want to thank the chair for his excellent leadership in this because it's taken 5 years too long, but finally the House will have the opportunity to vote on the three pending free trade agreements.

We have to understand that America competes in the global economy; and if we ignore this, we ignore it at our own peril. And while these free trade agreements have been languishing on the President's desk for 5 years, we have actually lost market share to the EU, to Canada. And those are the things that are going to keep our country from growing again.

Now, if you look at just the Colombia free trade agreement, since we have actually drafted that agreement, $3.85 billion in unnecessary tariffs have been put on American products. When we actually have these free trade agreements in place, we're going to actually add to our economy and add to the jobs here in the United States.

In my home district, we have a very robust high-tech sector, and it's very heavily on trade. Last year, we had $10 billion of trade going out in exports, and a lot of them have been going to countries that we actually have free trade agreements for. And 35,000 jobs are directly related to that.

So I think that this is a jobs bill. I urge my colleagues to support all three free trade agreements, and I urge their passage.

Mr. LEVIN. How much time remains on each side, please?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) has 23 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CAMP) has 25 minutes remaining.

Mr. CAMP. At this time, Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to a distinguished member of the Ways and Means Committee, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN).

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. I thank the gentleman for yielding and for his leadership.

Mr. Speaker, this is just long overdue. This creates jobs. There is an issue that comes to the floor that has bipartisan support rarely these days. The Obama administration estimates this will create 250,000 new jobs. We agree. With respect to Colombia in particular, they have free access to our markets, but we don't have free access to theirs. This gives us a level and equal playing field.

Colombia is our strongest ally in the region. Colombia has done so much to help stop the proliferation of drugs coming into this country. They've helped us at the U.N. More importantly, they want to buy our products. Where I come from, Mr. Speaker, we make things and we grow things. Twenty percent of all the manufacturing jobs in Wisconsin require exports; $16.7 billion of our agricultural products in Wisconsin in 2009 were in exports, creating 200,000 jobs in Wisconsin alone. Ninety-five percent of the world's consumers, they're not in this country; they're in other countries. If you're standing still in trade, you're falling behind.

All our trading competitors are going around the world getting better agreements and better deals for their exporters, freezing us out. It's high time we pass these agreements to break down these barriers so that we can make and grow things in America and sell them overseas so we can create jobs. And that's exactly what these three agreements, especially Colombia, do; and I urge its passage.

Mr. LEVIN. It is now my pleasure to yield 3 minutes to a very active member of our committee from the great State of Texas (Mr. DOGGETT).

Mr. DOGGETT. I thank the gentleman.

We need a new, 21st-century trade policy that encourages more trade without encouraging a race to the bottom in conditions for our workers and in the quality of the air we breathe and the water we drink.

Trade agreements should not be measured solely with regard to how many tons of goods move across a border, but they must consider the impact on how our workers are treated, how our environment is treated. And that's the very kind of trade policy that President Obama has said repeatedly he is committed to. Trade Adjustment Assistance is just not a substitute for a new trade policy that recognizes that too often American jobs have been a leading American export.

All three of these Bush-Cheney trade agreements are deficient. But this one in particular shows just how far those who think that the only thing that matters in trade policy is the volume of goods from one country to another, to the exclusion of everything else, how that narrow view insists today that we must have totally free trade with the trade union murder capital of the world. Yes, supporters of this free trade agreement have forgotten it's not free, it's not free to those who attempt to represent workers in Colombia.

Last year, 49 trade union members were murdered in Colombia. And this year, it's already up to 20. Human Rights Watch has just reported that there is virtually no progress in securing murder convictions. They got six

out of 195 union member murders that were actually convicted. In nine of 10 cases, the Colombians haven't even identified a suspect in these murders. You can talk of an action plan, and that's fine; but it's just like talk of a new trade policy. It's just talk and nothing else.

This amendment denies any enforcement provision on the Action Plan that would make it actionable. LULAC, the League of United Latin American Citizens, opposes this agreement, quite rightly calling for a new American trade policy that promotes living wages and sustainable jobs, encourages human rights, labor standards, and a healthy environment—not only here, but among each of our trading partners.

Instead, today's agreement emplaces the principle that violence against the very people who make the goods being traded will be disregarded, will be overlooked if only we can increase the trade volume of what they make.

Reject this misguided agreement.

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to say that obviously the murder of any citizen in any country is something to be avoided. But let's just set the record straight that the homicide rate since 2002 against union members has declined 85 percent in Colombia. I think this is an example that the efforts of the Colombian Government are succeeding. And the homicide rate for the general population has declined by 44 percent, and kidnappings as well have declined.

The ILO has also removed Colombia from their Labor Watch List. They did that in 2010, recognizing their collective bargaining rules, recognizing the measures they've adopted to combat violence against trade union members. And so we have a very different picture being painted by the reality there.

I would also point out that three main labor confederations have called the Labor Action Plan the most significant social achievement in Colombia in 50 years.

With that, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Florida (Mr. DIAZ-BALART).

□ 1300

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. I want to thank Chairman CAMP not only for that great explanation that he just gave, but for bringing this bill to the floor.

Look, I keep hearing a lot about the horrors of Colombia. A couple of facts:

Because of the Andean trade pact preferential act, Colombian goods that come to the United States already basically come almost tariff-free. This would even it out so our products, created by American labor here, can go to Colombia with the same preferential treatment, fact number one.

And fact number two, the chairman just talked about this. I keep hearing about this Colombia, which is really, frankly, a caricature, an offensive caricature of what Colombia really is, as if we can just throw those things out there pretending that it doesn't mean anything. Colombia is a democratic ally, Mr. Speaker. They have taken incredible steps to move forward to lower violence, to lower crime, to lower narcotrafficking. They're even now training police forces across the world, including Mexico, in their fight against narcoterrorism.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DREIER). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. CAMP. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, it's an offensive caricature of Colombia, a democratic ally, a place that is fighting for democracy and for freedom and for due process and the rule of law. We should recognize it, commend them, thank them for being such an ally, for being a democracy.

Mr. Speaker, isn't it ironic that a lot of the people that want to do business with Castro's Cuba, where labor unions aren't even permitted, complain about Colombia because they are a democracy, because they're an ally, because they're doing the right thing. Let's pass this commonsense thing.

Let's also thank the President for finally doing what he said he was going to do a long time ago when he said that it was time to pass this.

It's better late than never, Mr. President, but thank you for finally sending it.

Mr. LEVIN. It is now my privilege to yield 1 minute to our distinguished leader, the gentlelady from California (Ms. PELOSI).

Ms. PELOSI. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank him for his great leadership on protecting American workers while promoting the global economy which we are proudly a part of.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today, as we consider the Colombia free trade agreement, to make the following statement:

Much has been said about this agreement creating 6,000 jobs in the United States—6,000 jobs. Now, we want to fight for every single job for the American people. But it is ironic or strange to hear a big fuss about we have to do this because it's going to create 6,000 jobs, when the leadership of this body is totally ignoring the fact that we are losing 1 million jobs—1 million jobs—because of the China currency bill.

When it was discussed that these bills would be brought to the floor, many of us said we shouldn't even be considering these bills: 6,000 for Colombia, perhaps 70,000 for Korea, maybe 1,000 for Panama, 77,000 jobs. That's significant if, in fact, those numbers really bear out. But let's assume they do for a moment.

We're making a big deal out of 77,000 jobs, which are a big deal. But how much bigger a deal is it to say we're ignoring the fact that we are losing over 1 million jobs per year because of the China manipulation of their currency?

The distinguished Speaker has said, if we push this bill, we will start a trade war with China. My, have I heard that song before. Many of us have been fighting for a better relationship with China in terms of our trade relationship, and for at least two decades we've been fighting for opening of our markets to China to stop the piracy of our intellectual property. The list goes on.

But this manipulation of currency, okay, the Speaker says we're going to start a trade war. Twenty years ago, when we started this debate, following Tiananmen Square, our trade deficit with China was $5 billion a year. We tried to use our leverage with most favored nation status to get the Chinese to open their markets, stop pirating our intellectual property, et cetera, and everybody said, if you do that, you will start a trade war. Just let the natural course of events take place.

Well, we didn't start a trade war. But do you know what China's surplus with the United States is today, what our deficit is with China? $5 billion a year two decades, 20 years ago when we fought this fight and lost. It's now $5 billion per week, over—more than $5 billion a week. Over a quarter of $1 trillion in surplus does the Chinese Government enjoy in their relationship with the United States.

So you're telling me that if we say, ''We want you to act fairly in terms of your currency,'' that they're going to give up a quarter of $1 trillion in surplus, much bigger exports to the United States, but in surplus.

This manipulation of currency is the subsidy of the Chinese Government for their products. By subsidizing their exports, they make it uncompetitive for us, not only in the U.S.-China bilateral trade relationship, but also in the global marketplace where we have to compete. Our exports have to compete with China's exports, and they have subsidized their exports on the manipulation of about 25 percent of their currency, 25 percent manipulation.

This is just not fair; a million U.S. jobs. So when our colleagues make a fuss about 6,000, every one of them is precious to us, yes, but why are we missing in action when it comes to a million jobs if 6,000 jobs are so important? And I agree, they are.

Last night in the Senate, they passed this legislation. They passed legislation to take action if China continues to manipulate their currency. We shouldn't even be talking about any trade bills until we do the same. They're not voting on Colombia, Korea, and Panama before they voted on China. They did that. They staked their claim for the American workers.

The Speaker says we're going to start a trade war. The Chinese Government started a war with America's manufacturing sector a long time ago. They've undervalued their currency, as I've said. They've violated intellectual property rights. They've subsidized target industry. They've dumped their products into our country. This is a

one-way street to the disadvantage of American workers.

Look, many of us, when we grew up, we dug a hole in the sand at the beach and we said we were going to reach China if we were digging far enough, if we dug far enough. It's a country that we want to have a brilliant relationship with culturally, economically, politically, in every possible way, economically, too.

But when are we going to call a halt to something that is so obvious? We're talking about not an 800-pound gorilla, an 8-ton gorilla that is lying on the floor of this House that we want to ignore so we can talk about 6,000 jobs and 70,000 jobs, which are important. I don't want to minimize that. But why are you minimizing a million jobs at least that would be affected?

It's funny to me because when we were having the fight on most favored nation status for China, we were winning every vote; we just couldn't override the Presidential vetoes. And so they had to change the name. You've heard the expression, PNTR. Do you know what that means? It went from most favored nation, which they said that sounds—we can't win that argument, to permanent normal trade relations.

You know what that means? Surrender all your leverage in the trade relationship. Surrender because this is a permanent normal trade relationship. So when specific things come up like the manipulation of currency—and, by the way, other Asian economies peg their currency to China's currency; so we're getting an onslaught of this. It's really, really important for us to say: Whom are we here for? Whom are we representing?

□ 1310

We have a Make It In America agenda to grow and to strengthen our industrial and manufacturing base in our country. Exports are essential to our success economically. Small businesses are essential to the success of our economy. Small businesses want to export as well. But why are we saying to small business people, to our industrial workers and to our manufacturing base, you are now going to go into an arena which we have subscribed to that makes you engage in an unfair relationship because we will not speak out against this manipulation of currency?

Sixty-one Republicans are cosponsors of the bill. It has bipartisan support. The Senate has passed the bill overwhelmingly with bipartisan support. They took it up first as a premise planting a flag, staking a claim for the American worker before they went on to consider other trade agreements. Why can't we do that in the House? I think we should call a halt to voting on any of these things until we say to the American worker, we're on your side. We're on your side when it comes to these trade agreements.

We recognize that trade is very important to us. President Kennedy is part of the legacy of all of us here talking about America as important in the world economy and free trade. Fair trade, I like to think, is part of that. But after 20 years of violations of our intellectual property, subsidizing their projects—the list goes on and on—we just sit by and say we're going to start a trade war if we do something about the war on America's manufacturers that the Chinese already have done.

Remember, 20 years ago, they made the same claims, $5 billion a year. How did that work out for us? Today, $5 billion a week at least. So the Chinese are going to walk away from a quarter of a trillion dollars in profits? I don't think so. Let's stop riding that tiger. Let's do the right thing for our workers. Let's not even consider any of these trade agreements.

Since we're talking about Colombia, I want to say the following. I really wanted very much to be able to vote for this legislation. I was very hopeful when the two governments, Colombia and the U.S., negotiated the U.S.-Colombian action plan related to labor rights. They addressed labor concerns to start the process of ending the abuses. But that didn't happen. The administration was advocating for this, but the leadership in the Congress said, no, and leadership in this House said no, we're not going to put language in the bill, the language that the two governments negotiated to address the labor concerns. If it's not in the bill, it doesn't exist. If we're going to implement this action plan, it has to be part of the legislation, or else we're just saying it's an incidental, it's something on the side. That's not fair to the workers in Colombia or to the workers in the United States.

So when the commitment made by our government and Colombia to each other was not included in the bill, I lost my faith in the legislation. I hope that today we can get a vote on China's manipulation of currency, get a Colombia free-trade agreement that can work for Colombian workers and U.S. workers, and get a trade policy that recognizes that it's a competitive world. We intend to be number one, we intend to be innovative, and we intend to educate our workforce so that our entrepreneurial spirit can prevail. It could be a very exciting time—something new and something fresh, instead of reverting to the same old same old ways.

So I urge my colleagues to urge the leadership of this House to take up the China currency bill before we consider any other trade bills.

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the lead chief Democrat cosponsor of the bill we're considering today, the Colombia trade promotion agreement, Mr. FARR of California.

(Mr. FARR asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FARR. I thank the chairman for yielding.

I rise in support of this agreement. Look, Colombia is a very important country to us. It has a lot of problems, but it has incredible potential. Colombia is a big country. It's the 20th-largest trade partner with the United States. It's our best ally in Latin America. It was the oldest democracy in Latin America, the first country to accept Peace Corps. It allowed an Air Force base to be built in Colombia. Other countries haven't allowed that. They fought alongside of us and are now fighting alongside of us in Afghanistan. They help us with Mexico drug cartels by teaching the Mexican national police and military how to handle those cartels.

It's the first country to adopt a labor action plan. And let me speak to that. That labor action plan was adopted this year on April 11. You're going to hear a lot of complaints—well, it hasn't moved fast. It's only been in effect 6 months. It's already been able to organize the grocers into unions and other big industries into unions. It's the strongest labor plan ever adopted in the history of the United States trade agreements. And that's not my opinion; that's the opinion of the Secretary of Labor of this country. It's the opinion of the Congressional Research Office.

And, frankly, a lot of people say, oh, this is another NAFTA. No. No. No. It's not NAFTA. NAFTA didn't have the ILO declaration on fundamental principles and rights at work and the follow-up provisions. This is the Peru free trade agreement which we passed. It has that right here under article 17, and this is the Colombian free trade agreement. They are exactly the same. The principles are the same. Number 2 reads, effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining—effective recognition. That means that anything that stops that can be brought under this agreement, an action against the country.

So, look, you'll hear arguments today that it will create a loss of jobs. There's going to be a loss of jobs if we don't do this. Do you know that we have made a free trade agreement with every single country in Latin America except Colombia, Panama, and Ecuador? Every one of them, none of them with these labor protections. These will be the strongest. But if we don't lift those trade barriers, all the products that we send to Colombia have a tariff on them. All those other countries, they don't. All of the European countries that are entering into a free trade agreement with Colombia don't have it. Canada doesn't have it. So guess what? We're going to lose the jobs of people who make things here and send them there because it's going to be too expensive to buy them in Colombia. So we don't want to lose those jobs. We want to grow those jobs. And there's a great market in Colombia to do that.

They say union workers are not protected, and they're not allowed to organize. That's not true. In fact, the only country that counts the crimes against

labor unions is Colombia. It's the only country that has set up a ministry just to handle those crimes. And some say, oh, they haven't prosecuted enough. Some of those crimes were committed in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, it's old, old hard evidence. It's hard to figure out who did it. But they have people assigned to it, they have investigators, they have judges, and they have prosecutors. They've worked those out with the Colombian labor unions as to what crimes do you want us to go after first? They're working with the unions. A lot of unions are in support of this free trade agreement because of the labor standards that we've required them to adopt.

So I would submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that the provisions in this Colombian free trade agreement are the strongest labor provisions in any U.S. free trade agreement.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. CAMP. I yield the gentleman an additional 15 seconds.

Mr. FARR. If we're going to encourage progress—we're investing a lot of money in Colombia, we have Peace Corps volunteers in Colombia—if we're going to encourage growth of U.S. industries and markets in South America, and if we're going to really deal with the culture of poverty, then we have to encourage a strong future for both countries. And the only way to do that is to assure the adoption of this agreement.

Most agricultural groups across the state of California are strongly supportive of all three FTAs.

They understand that the FTAs will generate new export opportunities in their sector.

However, the California cut flower industry grows over 80% of the domestically grown flowers, supporting over 10,000 jobs and contributing $10 billion to the California economy.

They have real concerns about the pending Colombia FTA.

Our cut flower farmers are the group most adversely impacted by free trade with Colombia.

And I have been working hard to mitigate the impact of the FTA on their industry.

To their great credit, our California flower farmers do not oppose the FTA.

Together, they have developed a transportation and logistics center.

This will cut shipping costs by 22–34 percent, according to a new study by USC.

This would help level the playing field and restore competitiveness with Colombian farmers, who have received hundreds of millions of dollars in assistance from their government and ours over the past 20 years.

As reference I will point out that from 2002–2010, Colombian exports to the U.S. increased 89%.

In the same time span, the number of acres dedicated to cut flower production in the U.S. declined by 22%.

The Obama administration knows that I am a strong supporter of the Colombia FTA, and I am proud to be leading the charge in the House to pass it.

However, I have also made it very clear that I will continue to fight for funding for the new transportation center that is vital to California cut flower farmers.

I am optimistic that this vital U.S. industry that provides 20% of flowers sold to U.S. consumers will soon get the federal assistance that it needs to thrive over the long term.

Mr. LEVIN. I yield 2 minutes to another member of our committee, the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON).

Mr. THOMPSON of California. I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the Colombia trade bill.

Trade agreements must be balanced, facilitating reciprocal two-way trade between nations. It's absolutely necessary that we also take into consideration small, family-owned, domestic industries that are sensitive to cheap foreign imports. Unfortunately, the Colombia trade bill falls flat in accomplishing these goals.

□ 1320

For more than 20 years, Colombia has benefited from the duty-free access to the U.S. market under the Andean Trade Preference Act. At the same time, some Colombian industries have received big government subsidies from the Colombian Government, and oftentimes our own U.S. foreign aid dollars benefit them. These policies have slowly eroded one of California's most unique and innovative industries.

California is home to the vast majority of domestic cut-flower growers in the United States of America. They account for more than 10,000 jobs across our State and represent hundreds of millions of dollars in economic activity every year. Because of these failed trade policies, Colombia now has a stranglehold on 75 percent of the U.S. cut-flower market, creating a marketplace dominated by cheap foreign flowers, produced with cheap, unregulated labor. This puts our small family-owned businesses at an extreme disadvantage.

You can't tell me that it's cheaper to import flowers from Colombia than it is to grow them in our own backyard. I drive through northern California on a very regular basis and see collapsed, dilapidated, and unused greenhouses littering the small towns and rural communities of California. It's clear this industry has taken a major hit over the last few decades due to this flawed trade policy.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. LEVIN. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. THOMPSON of California. As we see more and more flower farms and greenhouses closing all over California, this reminds us of the last time we did business with Colombia. This agreement is anti-family business and it's anti-American jobs. I urge a ''no'' vote on the Colombia trade bill.

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to a distinguished member of the Ways and Means Committee, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. DAVIS).

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. I want to thank Chairman CAMP and Chairman BRADY for their leadership in moving the three pending free trade agreements that are long overdue for our consideration.

I strongly urge all of my colleagues to support the passage of all three pending trade agreements. Passing the Colombian agreement would not only create jobs in the U.S. but would signal our dedication to a faithful and strategic ally.

During my service in the U.S. Army, I ran Army flight operations with the Multinational Force and Observers-Sinai while serving jointly with the Colombian military. That was over 25 years ago. In watching the changes that have taken place, Colombian troops are still serving in peacekeeping roles, and they're serving internationally now in counterinsurgency and counternarcotic roles around the globe.

In 20 years Colombia has gone through an incredible economic, social, and democratic transformation. They are a robust democracy with strong ties to the United States in a region that includes increasingly anti-American governments, especially Venezuela. Let's strengthen these ties and eliminate any concern about America's reliability as a partner by ratifying the Colombian trade agreement.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of the Colombia free trade agreement for the job creation potential it brings to our struggling economy and especially to improve our national security in the Western Hemisphere.

Mr. LEVIN. I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished Member from Nevada, a member of our committee, Ms. BERKLEY.

Ms. BERKLEY. I thank the gentleman from Michigan for yielding me the time.

I rise today to talk about what should be Congress' top priority—jobs, jobs, jobs. The economic downturn has hit my State of Nevada particularly hard, and families are still struggling with record unemployment.

Instead, today, we are debating the job-killing Colombia free trade agreement that will result in more good-paying American jobs being shipped overseas. In fact, this trade agreement, taken together with the Panama and the Korean trade agreements, will cost our Nation over 200,000 more jobs.

How much more job loss can Nevadans be expected to absorb before we stand up and say enough is enough?

Congress needs to get our priorities straight. Job creation needs to be our top priority. We must create a level playing field for the American worker. Last night, the Senate took a step in that direction by voting to stand up to the Chinese Government, whose unfair currency manipulation has cost our Nation over 3 million jobs in the last decade, including over 14,000 jobs in the State of Nevada alone. The House should be following suit. Instead of focusing on a trade agreement that will

send more Nevada jobs to foreign countries at a time when we can least afford it, we should reject these job-killing trade agreements and pass the China currency manipulation bill.

Let's get on with the job of Congress, which is to create jobs for the American people, for the American worker.

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN).

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I do understand the concern that my very good friends have expressed on the Democratic side about the threat of violence in Colombia and the loss of jobs in America. What I don't understand is how voting against this trade agreement helps on either front. A ''no'' vote does nothing to create more jobs in America or, in fact, to reduce the level of violence in Colombia.

The fact is that the rate of violence in Colombia has been cut in half. The murder of trade union members is down by 80 percent. College enrollment is up by 50 percent. 90 percent of children are in school now. Poverty is down by 25 percent. Why? In large part because of the $8 billion in Plan Colombia we provided.

Now the Colombian Government wants to show its appreciation for our investment in Colombia's future by letting us share in their new prosperity. It's difficult to do that, though, when Colombia has average tariff barriers of 9 percent, with agriculture at 17 percent. The U.S. has virtually no tariff barriers, so this is a one-way street going in our direction, this trade agreement.

The share of U.S. imports, though, to Colombia, as a total amount of their imports, has dropped from 21 percent to 9 percent; and that's because of the trade agreements Colombia has been able to sign with Argentina, Brazil, Canada, and others; and they're about to further eat into American jobs by signing a trade agreement with the European Union. We in America made the investment to help Colombia become less violent, more democratic and more prosperous; and now we want to disengage rather than reap the benefits of producing jobs, products and services in America for export to Colombia.

It seems to me my very good friends on the Democratic side should support our President, who is doing everything he can to create jobs here. He understands when other countries, don't have tariff barriers that we have to overcome we can produce and sell more products and services to those countries and generate more jobs in this country. That's what we ought to be about. It seems to me a ''yes'' vote on all three trade agreements is the right thing to do.

Mr. LEVIN. How much time remains, please, on both sides?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CAMP) has 14¼ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) has 15 minutes remaining.

Mr. LEVIN. I now yield 2 minutes to another distinguished member of our committee, Mr. KIND from the great State of Wisconsin.

(Mr. KIND asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for the gentleman from Michigan's allotment of time.

I rise in strong support of the three trade agreements before us today: the Colombia agreement, Panama, as well as South Korea. Let me explain why.

For too long, I feel the United States has been standing on the sidelines while other countries have been moving on without us in opening up market share and establishing bilateral/multilateral agreements with them.

In the specific case of Colombia, because of our inability to be able to come together and pass a trade agreement, in the last year alone we've lost close to 50 percent market share with agricultural products that we would normally be exporting in the Colombian market. Being from the State of Wisconsin, obviously the agriculture sector is immensely important; and the longer we delay in passing these measures, the more we're going to be precluded from the market.

Also Mr. Speaker, I rise and share the concern of so many of my colleagues today in regard to labor rights in Colombia, but I think the Colombia of today is not the Colombia of 10 years ago or even of 5 years ago.

□ 1330

And much to the credit of the ranking member on Ways and Means, Mr. LEVIN, who worked tirelessly to make sure that we had a Labor Action Plan to work with Colombia to improve labor rights and protections, he thinks it should be a part of the body of the agreement. I think it's being implemented as we speak now, and it's not necessary, but the Santos administration realizes it's in their best interest to do more to enhance labor rights and protections in Colombia. I think a large part of the credit deserves to be given to the gentleman seated next to me here today, Mr. LEVIN.

We're just 4 percent of the world's population. Of course we've got to have a proactive trade agenda. The question is whether we're going to be a member of a rules-based trading system or not, because we are going to be trading with these countries one way or the other. These trade agreements now have core international labor and environmental standards in the bulk of the agreement, fully enforceable with every other provision.

That is an attempt to elevate standards upwards rather than seeing this race to the bottom that so many of my colleagues are concerned about. That's the question I think that's before us today involving Colombia, Panama, and the larger market, South Korea, is whether we're going to move forward on trade agreements that have been much improved with the current administration, having inherited from the last, or whether we will continue to move forward without any rules with those countries. They already have virtual unlimited access to our market but we face restrictions to theirs. These trade agreements will fix that.

I would urge my colleagues to support all three trade agreements.

Mr. CAMP. I yield 1½ minutes to the distinguished chairman of the Agriculture Committee, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS).

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to voice my support for this free trade agreement on behalf of America's farmers and ranchers.

All three free trade agreements under consideration today are essential for our Nation's agricultural industry. Out of every $100 in agricultural sales, more than $25 comes from exports. So market access is critical to the success of our farmers and ranchers.

Colombia is particularly important to our producers because without a free trade agreement in place, we have begun to lose market access. Tariffs on American goods have made them more expensive and Colombians are choosing to buy other countries' products instead. Lost market access means lost income, lost jobs, and we cannot afford that.

Right now Colombia imposes duties on all American agricultural products. They range from 5 percent to 20 percent. Yet we still sell more than $830 million in agricultural products there. That's because America's farmers and ranchers produce high-quality crops and livestock, and those goods are in demand.

Under this agreement Colombia will eliminate tariffs on 70 percent of our exports. We can be sure that when American agricultural products are no longer subject to tariffs and become more cost competitive, we'll see substantial benefits. In fact, the Farm Bureau estimates we'll see 370 million more dollars in farm exports to Colombia annually.

While our farmers and ranchers will benefit from increased market access, they will not be alone. Farm exports create jobs throughout the economy in processing, packaging, transportation, just to name a few industries. A vote to pass the Colombia free trade agreement is a vote for job growth in all these sectors. It's a vote to create income and opportunity for our farmers and ranchers.

So I strongly urge my colleagues to support this free trade agreement and help keep America's agricultural industry competitive.

Mr. LEVIN. I yield 2 minutes to the gentlelady from California, MAXINE WATERS.

Ms. WATERS. I thank my friend from Michigan, Congressman SANDER LEVIN, for the time.

I rise to oppose this so-called free trade agreement. I find it deeply disturbing that the United States Congress is even considering a free trade

agreement with a country that holds the world's record for assassinations of trade unionists and would cause a loss of 55,000 jobs in the United States.

The Congressional Black Caucus has been working hard to create jobs. We've held job fares in five cities in the country. We have been working hard to create jobs because the unemployment rate in this country is unacceptable: 9.1 throughout the country, 11.3 for Latinos, 16 percent for African Americans. We need jobs, not an unfair trade agenda.

Additionally, according to Colombia's National Labor School, 51 trade labor unionists were assassinated in 2010. That's more than the rest of the world combined. In addition, 21 unionists survived attempts on their lives, 338 unionists received death threats, 35 were forcibly displaced, 34 were arbitrarily detained, and 7 just disappeared in 2010. Another 23 unionists have been assassinated so far this year, and a total of 2,908 union members have been murdered in Colombia since 1986. And the Colombian Attorney General's Office has not obtained any convictions for these murders for the past 4 years.

The people of Colombia don't need a free trade agreement; they need a government that respects the rights of all of its citizens.

Let's vote down this trade agenda and tell the Government of Colombia that there can be no free trade without human rights and human dignity.

Mr. CAMP. I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS).

Mr. MEEKS. I thank the chairman for his work and I thank the ranking member.

Let me start off by thanking Mr. LEVIN also, because indeed I know he's been back and forth to Colombia, and he's made this a better trade bill with the action plan. And it was your hard work and dedication, Mr. LEVIN, and I thank you for doing that.

Yesterday, I had a chance to talk briefly on the floor in regard to the economics of it, and I'm hearing a lot of people talk about the past of Colombia, but not some of the things that are taking place on the ground right now. I have heard a lot of individuals talk about how it may be devastating in reference specifically to the African Colombian community.

But let me bring some facts to the issue, because I think oftentimes when I looked and talked to President Santos and the civil rights struggle right here in America, I see some similarities that we've got to think about because there's some positive things, a lot of positive things that happen on the floor.

For example, for the first time we have the Victims and Land Restitution Law in Colombia that was passed by the Government of Colombia. We have at the Presidential program on Afro-Colombians. We have the development projects. We have the mining and prior consultation law. We have addressing discrimination law that has been passed. We have the Afro-Colombian and Indigenous Program that has been passed by the Colombian legislature. We have the Afro-Colombian leadership and scholarship program. We have the Martin Luther King scholarship program. We have the Equal Employment Opportunity initiative. All of this is done by the Santos government. We have the Pathways to Prosperity Women Entrepreneurs Mentoring Network. We have 400 scholarships for Afro-Colombian police. We have the emergency humanitarian assistance programs. These are just some of the programs that are happening on the ground right now that are benefiting African Colombians.

When you talk about the leadership there, because I'm getting letters back and forth, this is a diverse leadership in Colombia. This is a diverse leadership here in America.

And just as the goal is to make sure that we enact certain things into laws so that we can make changes to make it better for people for tomorrow, that is what President Santos has been doing. That's what has happened, and that's what is happening.

Some say Santos is not going to carry it out. When Lyndon Baines Johnson became President, some said he wouldn't do anything.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. CAMP. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. MEEKS. But he did. He came with some of the most landmark legislation with reference to civil rights and voting rights in the history of this country, the same thing that I see happening right now on the ground with President Santos. Landmark, for the first time ever, legislation addressing the rights of African Colombians; and because of the work of Mr. LEVIN, also landmark rights addressing the rights of all in labor.

I think that it's a positive thing and we should pass this Colombia free trade agreement because we are moving in the right direction. We're not there yet, but we're moving in the right direction.

□ 1340

Mr. LEVIN. I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH).

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I have listened carefully to this debate, and I know that my good friend Mr. LEVIN and my friend Mr. CAMP have worked to try to craft an agreement that they feel is in the best interest of this country. But this debate cannot pass without pointing out some facts that concern those of us who are opposed to this.

According to Global Trade Watch, Colombia is the world capital for violence against workers, with more unionists killed every year than in the rest of the world combined. Unionist murders have been growing from 37 in 2007 after the deal was signed to 51 in 2010, even though Colombia has been under maximum security. Only 6 percent of the nearly 2,680 unionist murders that have occurred have been prosecuted to date.

The deal doesn't require Colombia to end the unionist murders or bring past perpetrators to justice to obtain special trade privileges. Colombian unions oppose the deal and agree with U.S. unions that a recent action plan will not fix this horrific situation.

Colombia has the highest number of displaced people in the world, outpacing even Sudan because of forced displacement and land grabs, often with Colombian military involvement.

Now, I know there has been an attempt to try to address these, but I think that we have to get the Government of Colombia to answer these things first before we pass a trade agreement, and I don't believe that they have sufficiently done that. In particular, they haven't brought to justice those who are responsible for the murder of all of these unionists.

I think, as a country which supports the right of people, freedom of association, the right of free speech, if we do not stand for them in these trade agreements, then we can expect the same kind of conduct to occur. This is a concern I have, notwithstanding what I know are the honest, good-faith efforts of my colleagues who support this, even though I don't. I urge the bill's defeat.

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Kansas (Mr. YODER).

Mr. YODER. I thank the chairman for yielding me this time.

As my colleagues have listened to this debate today, and as we listen to our constituents at home, our constituents are asking us to focus on one thing—jobs. We've talked about a lot of issues today. We've talked about unions. We talked about all sorts of issues; but at the end of the day, the American people are asking us to focus on jobs.

These trade agreements allow American companies to export more products to Colombia. They level the playing field, and they create jobs back here at home in America. Colombia is the third largest U.S. export market in Latin America; and for farmers and companies in places like Kansas, exports have grown over 667 percent in the last 13 years, even with the one-sided tariffs that Colombia is currently imposing. If we level the playing field, allow companies in Kansas and across the country equal access to Colombian markets, exports will go up, as will the jobs those exports create.

Mr. Speaker, every day we don't pass these agreements we are falling behind, and our companies and our workers are at a disadvantage. If our top priority is jobs, then it's time to open up these markets, put our businesses on a level playing field, and create jobs at home as opposed to exporting them overseas.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CAMP. Does the gentleman from Michigan have any additional speakers?

Mr. LEVIN. I think not. I'm going to sum up myself.

Mr. CAMP. At this time I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. CANSECO).

Mr. CANSECO. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to be able to cast my vote in support of the Colombia free trade agreement, even though it has taken almost 5 years to get a vote on it. I thank Chairman CAMP, Chairman DREIER, and Chairman BRADY for their leadership on this cause.

The Colombia free trade agreement is important for several reasons. First, it will create jobs here in the United States. The International Trade Commission has estimated this will increase U.S. exports to Colombia by over $1 billion. It will grow our Nation's economy by over $2 billion and create thousands of new jobs here at home.

In the case of the 23rd District of Texas, the Colombia free trade agreement is of particular importance as I have a great deal of agriculture in my district and more than half of current U.S. agricultural exports to Colombia will become duty free immediately and almost all remaining tariffs gone after 15 years. This agreement is also important as it demonstrates our commitment to a steadfast ally in Latin America against oppressive regimes like Hugo Chavez's Venezuela.

Fundamentally, this agreement is about the economic freedom of the American people to be able to have a wide array of choices and to pay less for those choices because of the power of trade and competition.

Mr. LEVIN. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CAMP. At this time I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE).

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of all three free trade agreements that will be on the floor today.

In an era where we have a near-constant supply of Federal bailouts and stimulus packages and Federal spending, it is refreshing that Congress is doing today what it should be doing, and that is creating an environment in a bipartisan way under which businesses can create jobs and the economy can flourish. It's the appropriate role of Congress to take these kinds of steps, to simply create an environment and then step out of the way and let businesses create these jobs.

Arizona alone had more than $15 billion worth of merchandise exports in 2010. More than half was exported to countries with which we have free trade agreements. These three free trade agreements today will only expand the opportunities for that to increase. These arrangements will allow the private sector to create thousands of new jobs and strengthen the economy in the long term.

Again, that is the appropriate role for government, to create an environment where the private sector can create jobs. That's what free trade agreements do. That's why I'm pleased to support these agreements today.

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I advise my colleague that I have no further requests for time.

Mr. LEVIN. I yield myself the balance of my time.

Let me be clear what's at stake here on the Colombia FTA. I feel so deeply about it. Free trade agreements set the terms of competition between nations. It's more than about the mathematical flow of goods. The conditions for workers in the country we trade with are fundamental to that competition. Workers in Colombia have long been without their basic worker rights. More than any other democracy in the globe, there have been extreme levels of violence against workers and their leaders. There's been a universal, really, a universal lack of justice for murders of union activists. And there have been extensive flaws in Colombia's labor law and its practices.

These conditions and the insistence of Democrats that they be effectively and fully enforced are what held up consideration of the Colombia free trade agreement. What has been long overdue was work on these conditions, and there wasn't by the Bush or the Uribe administrations. Yes, it has taken 5 years because most of those years were taken up by inaction by the Bush administration, and by the administration previous to Mr. Santos.

□ 1350

Earlier this year, an Action Plan on Labor Rights was negotiated between the new American and Colombian administrations, and it included some commitments and deadlines at long last for Colombia to address issues of worker rights, violence, and impunity. Very regretfully, some key obligations have not been met in a meaningful way. Let me give you one example about a condition that I saw firsthand in visits to Colombia. Their employers have a history of using sham cooperatives and other contract relationships to camouflage true employment relationships and thereby to rob workers of their rights. The ILO has long identified this type of practice as among the most serious problems facing Colombian workers. In Colombia, only workers who are directly employed can form a union and collectively bargain. Colombia committed to stop such abuses in the action plan. It passed far-reaching legislation and proposed effective regulations. But, unfortunately, it then backed away.

Through loopholes in the law it has allowed employers in Colombia, including a major beverage company and palm oil producers, to begin converting cooperatives to other contract forms to continue denying workers their basic rights. So we privately, we Democrats in the House, pushed the Colombians for months to try to stem this problematic shift. But even a clarification it issued on the eve of the markup last week—after public pressure had been brought to bear—fell short. So this problem highlights precisely why it was vital to link the action plan to the FTA we're voting on today. But very regrettably, the Republicans blocked any reference at all to the Labor Action Plan in the implementation bill, and unfortunately, the administration acquiesced in that position.

I just want to emphasize: Explicitly linking the action plan to entry into force of the Colombia FTA was necessary as a vital step to ensure effective, meaningful implementation of the action plan. Without such a linkage, we have no leverage to ensure that Colombia lives up to the commitments it has made. I also want to emphasize it provides no context and meaning for the enforcement of the FTA worker rights standard in the future.

The language in the FTA is the basic international worker rights language. It is general in its provision. It has to be given meaning. The Action Plan would help to give it meaning if in the future action is needed to be taken under the dispute settlement system. And so when there's no linkage between the implementation bill and the Action Plan, it takes away the context for future action.

Other obligations under the action plan have not been meaningfully met.

Despite minimal requirements set in the action plan, Colombian employers continue to use direct negotiations with workers, referred to as ''collective pacts,'' to thwart workers from organizing. And I saw firsthand the use of those collective pacts when I was in Colombia on one of my three visits.

Another pervasive problem was highlighted earlier this month by Human Rights Watch: Little progress in investigating and prosecuting murders of people trying to exercise their rights—even those cases designated as priorities. Colombia authorities obtained just 6 convictions of 195 union murders that occurred in the 4-plus years leading up to May, 2011. It's told that the ILO left Colombia off its priority list. That's because employers vetoed Colombia being on the list.

Notwithstanding clear commitments under the Action Plan to improve the situation through reforms and investigatory policies and methods, Colombia did not take the first step to do this—namely, the publication of an analysis of closed union murder cases—until the eve of the markup, even though the action plan called for its completion. Even with this, it is clear that additional leverage is necessary. Interviews by Human Rights Watch with Colombian prosecutors reveal that there's been no clear direction to implement the new policies and methods as committed to under the Action Plan.

I wish I could stand here today and say that Colombia had fully implemented the commitments under the

Action Plan to date, and very significantly, vitally, that the legislation incorporated the Action Plan and conditioned the FTA's entry into force on its effective implementation. I cannot in good conscience do so. Therefore, I urge my colleagues to oppose the Colombia Free Trade Agreement.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CAMP. I yield myself the balance of my time.

I would just say, Mr. Speaker, that well before the Labor Action Plan was signed by President Obama and President Santos, Colombia had raised their labor standards and aided union members in the exercise of their rights well before the action plan ever occurred. Colombia now has implemented all eight of the ILO core conventions—six more than the United States. The statute of limitations for murder was raised in 2009 from 20 to 30 years. The minimum prison sentence was raised from 13 to 25 years and the maximum was raised from 25 to 40. The authority to declare the legality of strikes is now in the purview of the judiciary, not the executive branch, which depoliticizes these decisions and shows the transition and progress that Colombia has made in this area. Employers no longer have a unilateral right to force a strike to arbitration. The constitution reforms in 2004 shortened by 75 percent the time it takes to prosecute a homicide case. As I mentioned earlier, the murder rate in Colombia against union members has declined by 85 percent since 2002.

As my Democrat colleagues in support of the Colombian Trade Agreement have said, the Labor Action Plan is the most stringent Labor Action Plan anywhere in the world that has ever occurred.

With regard to the cooperative issue, the U.S. Trade Representative testified in the Ways and Means Committee when we worked up this legislation that that loophole has been addressed and has been closed by the Colombian government. This is something the administration has agreed has occurred as well, not just myself.

Let me just address this issue of the Labor Action Plan being placed inside the trade agreement. I would just say that to condition entry into force of the trade agreement with compliance with the Labor Action Plan is completely inappropriate, and that's why there was bipartisan opposition to doing that. I certainly welcome the gentleman's statement that I was able to get the administration to acquiesce to not having the Labor Action Plan put into the agreement. Frankly, there was bipartisan agreement, with the administration agreeing as well on that point.

Let me just say there is a labor chapter in the agreement itself that addresses the labor issues that appropriately fall within the scope of the agreement. The Labor Action Plan goes well beyond that scope. Let me say why. The purpose of the implementing bill, the purpose of the bill before the House today, is to make changes to the United States laws that are necessary to implement the agreement. The Labor Action Plan doesn't require any changes to U.S. law. So therefore it should not and is not in the bill. Apart from being inappropriate, it's really unnecessary to condition entry into force on a labor action agreement that the Colombians have agreed to.

□ 1400

They have demonstrated their commitment to fulfilling the terms of the Labor Action Plan. They have satisfied, and on time, every single action item that has come due thus far. And our administration has certified that they have satisfied those conditions. There's only a few conditions that remain, which are due at the end of the year, and a few due in 2012, which we fully expect they will completely agree to.

And let me just say that it is high time we took up this agreement. Last year Colombian exporters paid virtually no tariffs when they shipped goods to the United States, but our exporters paid a tariff on an average of 11 percent trying to enter into their market. This agreement removes that imbalance by eliminating the Colombian duties. This need is urgent. Our exporters have paid nearly $4 billion in unnecessary duties since this agreement was signed and has been pending over the years.

We know from experience these agreements will yield the benefits that we say they will. Between 2000 and 2010, total U.S. exports increased by just over 60 percent, but our exports to countries in which we have trade agreements increased by over 90 percent. Our exports to Peru, for example, have more than doubled since the passage of the U.S.-Peru trade agreement, and those are very important statistics in these tough economic times.

So this is a major economic opportunity. Delay has been costly. There are major economies whose workers and exporters compete directly with ours. They have moved aggressively to sign and implement trade agreements with Colombia, Canada, Argentina, Brazil. Those undermine our competitive edge for our Nation and our workers and our families.

So we've been falling behind. We've been losing export market share that took years to build, frankly. For example, just the U.S. share of Colombia's corn, wheat, and soybean imports fell from 71 percent in 2008 to 27 percent in 2010 after Argentina's exporters gained preferential access.

Obviously, we have seen, also, a decline in our exports of wheat since Canada signed its trade agreement with Colombia, 2 years after. They entered and enforced their agreement with Colombia, which was signed 2 years after ours. So we owe it to U.S. workers. We owe it to our exporters to approve this agreement now and to press the President for prompt implementation.

I would urge strong support for this agreement, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 425, the previous question is ordered on the bill.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 1(c) of rule XIX, further consideration of H.R. 3078 will be postponed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 358, PROTECT LIFE ACT

Ms. FOXX (during consideration of H.R. 3078), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 112–243) on the resolution (H. Res. 430) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 358) to amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to modify special rules relating to coverage of abortion services under such Act, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2273, COAL RESIDUALS REUSE AND MANAGEMENT ACT

Ms. FOXX (during consideration of H.R. 3078), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 112–244) on the resolution (H. Res. 431) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2273) to amend subtitle D of the Solid Waste Disposal Act to facilitate recovery and beneficial use, and provide for the proper management and disposal, of materials generated by the combustion of coal and other fossil fuels, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

UNITED STATES-PANAMA TRADE PROMOTION AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 1(c) of rule XIX, further consideration of the bill (H.R. 3079) to implement the United States-Panama Trade Promotion Agreement will now resume.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. One hour of debate remains on the bill. The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CAMP), the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN), and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CAMP).

Mr. CAMP. I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS).

(Mr. HASTINGS of Washington asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)