

Aric Newhouse

Senior Vice President
Policy and Government Relations

October 11, 2011

U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

The National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), the largest manufacturing association in the United States representing manufacturers in every industrial sector and in all 50 states, urges you to support H.R. 3079, the United States-Panama Trade Promotion Agreement Implementation Act.

Panama offers U.S. manufacturers a growing opportunity for exports within a stable and expanding market. It has had one of the fastest growth rates of any economy in Latin America over the last four years, and its GDP has nearly doubled since 2000, according to the International Monetary Fund.

U.S. manufactured goods now face an effective average tariff of 8 percent in Panama. This free trade agreement (FTA) will lower Panama's tariffs to zero, making U.S. exports even more competitive. Many U.S. small and medium-sized manufacturers (SMMs) – including the more than 7,250 SMMs that already export to Panama – stand to benefit.

The Panama FTA also would ensure that U.S. firms have an opportunity to participate on a competitive basis in the \$5.25 billion Panama Canal expansion project. Panama's strategic location as a major shipping route and the massive project underway to expand the capacity of the Canal enhances the importance of the FTA.

The NAM's Key Vote Advisory Committee has indicated that votes on H.R. 3079, including procedural motions, may be considered for designation as Key Manufacturing Votes in the 112th Congress.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Aric Newhouse

Key Manufacturing Vote