



**New
Democrat
Coalition**

Rep. Ron Kind, Chair
Rep. Gerry Connolly, Vice Chair
Rep. Jim Himes, Vice Chair
Rep. Rick Larsen, Vice Chair
Rep. Allyson Schwartz, Vice Chair

Support Russia PNTR

Dear Colleague:

As members of the New Democrat Coalition and as supporters of increased US exports, we urge you to stand with us in support of H.R. 6156, The Russia and Moldova Jackson-Vanik Repeal Act of 2012.

Passing Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) with Russia is a commonsense move that would only benefit the United States. Since 1992 the U.S. has had Normal Trade Relations with Russia. Making that status permanent now does not change our policy stance; it simply makes it permanent. Russia became part of the World Trade Organization (WTO) last August and is now required to comply with WTO standards. To join the WTO, Russia had to make several adjustments to conform to WTO rules. The entirety of the 150-plus WTO members has granted PNTR to Russia- with the only exception being the U.S. That means Russia has no obligation to grant trade concessions to the U.S, while our major competitors do have full access and advantage. The WTO accession process and accompanying reforms have been two decades in the works with integral support from U.S. agencies. These positive adjustments are now set to decrease tariffs and improve market access for U.S. businesses, if we act now.

Russia is one of the largest economies in the world. Failure to pass this bill would have serious consequences. Without PNTR, no WTO standards and benefits would protect U.S. manufacturing, agriculture, and services sectors when trading with Russia. Important enforcement measures would not be in place to resolve disputes in the event that Russia imposes unfair trade barriers for U.S. companies and workers - leaving our manufacturers without any recourse if violations were to occur.

This bill also includes enforcement and protection measures, including requiring the Secretary of Commerce to establish and maintain a hotline and secure website that allows U.S. entities to report instances of bribery and corruption in Russia. The bill would require the United States Trade Representative (USTR) to report on Russia's implementation of its WTO commitments, and to identify and address barriers on digital trade issues.

Finally, the bill includes strong language to promote protections for persons seeking to promote human rights and freedom, and expose any illegal activity carried out by Russian officials.

With 95 percent of the world's customers outside the U.S., American exporters need fair access to outside markets. Russia is one of the world's fastest growing markets. The World Bank estimates that more than half of Russia's 140 million people are middle class consumers. After passage of this bill, U.S. companies will have equal access to Russia's tariff cuts and market opening measures. One example of the opportunity ahead is that over the next five years, the total cost of needed infrastructure spending in Russia will be around \$500 billion. With your support, American companies will be able to be a more active participant in this building boom.

We call upon all members of Congress to stand with us to protect the interests of U.S. exporters and workers and vote yes on H.R. 6156. It is a vote for American economic growth and competitiveness.

Sincerely,

Ron Kind
Member of Congress

Rick Larsen
Member of Congress

Gerry Connolly
Member of Congress

Greg Meeks
Member of Congress

Jim Moran
Member of Congress