

domestic firms and workers, representatives of consumer interests, United States product exporters, and any industrial user of any goods or services that may be affected by action taken under section 6(b).

(4) PROHIBITED SUBSIDY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term “prohibited subsidy” means a subsidy described in article 3.1 of the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures.

(B) SUBSIDY.—The term “subsidy” means a subsidy within the meaning of article 1.1 of the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures.

(C) AGREEMENT ON SUBSIDIES AND COUNTERVAILING MEASURES.—The term “Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures” means the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures referred to in section 101(d)(12) of the Uruguay Round Agreements Act (19 U.S.C. 3511(d)(12)).

(5) TEXTILE OR APPAREL PRODUCT.—The term “textile or apparel product” means a good listed in the Annex to the Agreement on Textiles and Clothing referred to in section 101(d)(4) of the Uruguay Round Agreements Act (19 U.S.C. 3511(d)(4)).

(6) TRADE REPRESENTATIVE.—The term “Trade Representative” means the United States Trade Representative.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS) and the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 5602 was a bill that was introduced in June of this year by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. RAMSTAD) and principally the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON). This is the culmination of a long and sometimes very difficult process.

The relationships between the United States and Vietnam have been difficult. When I was a member of the committee as a member of the minority and the chairman of the Trade Subcommittee was the gentleman from Nevada, Mr. GIBBONS, we traveled to Vietnam as the first official United States Delegation on Trade. That was a number of years ago. So we arrive today after an 11-year effort in working with Vietnam to enjoy the announcement that Vietnam is on the verge of joining the World Trade Organization.

Vietnam joining the WTO will bring substantial economic benefits obviously to the Vietnamese and to the United States, because Vietnam has agreed to open its markets to U.S. goods and services. However, to fully benefit from this move on the part of Vietnam to the World Trade Organization, the United States must first extend the so-called permanent normal trade relationship to Vietnam, and that is what this bill does.

I asked to take it up with the “as amended” phrase attached because we have been able to come to an agreement. One of the real concerns with an increase in trade between the United States and Vietnam is the textile industry. We have concerns about those areas in the United States that still

have an ability to provide and afford the production of textiles and the relationship we are going to continue to grow with Central America with the free trade agreement there and with the pending free trade agreements with Andean countries that will provide us with an excellent opportunity to move our raw and partially finished textile products to an area that will both advance those countries and the United States.

Vietnam will be a major player in the textile industry. The concern we have is in balancing the concerns of those who are on the retail side and those who are on the production side, and we believe that the amendment that we have offered will go a long way toward resolving those concerns.

There is still concern as far as the chairman is concerned and, I know, of other Members on Vietnam's record on human rights and religious freedom. Just because it decides to join the World Trade Organization doesn't mean that it has decided in all aspects to join the world's civilized nations in its behavior not only to its people and to others. However, I do firmly believe that if Vietnam lives up to its commitment in its membership in the World Trade Organization, it will encourage and accelerate the opportunity for needed reforms in a tangible way that impacts the Vietnamese people's lives daily. So although I have a number of reservations in that regard, I do support going forward.

This is a regime that is not a democracy. I do hope as we examine trade relationships that may be presented to this Congress before we adjourn sine die, that we take cognizance of the fact that we have an opportunity to enter into free trade agreements with growing and vibrant democracies in this hemisphere, and if we are anxious to move a trade agreement with a country that is not democratic, that we extend that same courtesy to those in the Western Hemisphere, specifically Peru, that have made significant sacrifices to come to a free trade agreement. They are, after all, a deserving people.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that I turn the balance of my time over to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW), the chairman of the Trade Subcommittee of the Ways and Means Committee, and that he be allowed to yield said time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN).

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

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I support this legislation because I believe, on balance, Vietnam's accession to the WTO is a positive step. It is a growing economy

with 90 million people. It remains a command economy basically and a one-party state, and that always leads to some concerns and some qualifications. That is true here in terms of some problems, serious ones in the past with human rights, and also some economic issues. However, I think, on balance, it is wise to proceed. Their becoming part of the WTO will mean that the disciplines of international regulations will apply to them.

Let me say, however, I have several concerns. One is that this bill is on the suspension calendar. This bill did not go through committee. There was no hearing. I think this is not a wise procedure. In fact, I am sure it is not a wise procedure, and it is not going to be followed in the future. Bills of this nature, I believe, will have hearings before a committee and will not come up on suspension.

Secondly, a second concern, there is an important omission here and there is no safeguard mechanism in this accession agreement. When nonmarket economies operate, they usually do not do so through the usual mechanisms of supply and demand or international market dynamics, and so it is easier for there to be surges of imports into this country and more difficulty in dealing with them. The Bush administration did not negotiate a general surge provision here nor a textile surge provision. They were both in the China accession agreement. This is a serious omission, or at least an omission that should not be replicated.

For example, there is now negotiation with Russia of an accession agreement. The bilateral has been completed and the multilateral will start. I don't think we should be approving PNTR bills, for example, with Russia, until there is a safeguard mechanism negotiated in the agreement itself.

I believe all of us on this side who are speaking today will be dedicated to making sure that there is such a safeguard mechanism, so that if there is that surge of exports to us, we have a mechanism to deal with it.

On balance, I think it is important to proceed with this bill, and therefore I urge support.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 5602 would grant permanent normal trade relations with Vietnam and permit U.S. businesses to take full advantage of the commitments that Vietnam has made as part of its accession into the World Trade Organization.

On November 7, 2006, World Trade Organization members voted to approve Vietnam's entry into the organization and Vietnam is expected to officially become a member by the end of the year. To get to this point, Vietnam has clearly made significant economic reforms and will benefit not only the international community, but also the people of Vietnam.

As part of Vietnam's accession into the World Trade Organization, more