

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 17, 2015

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Harry Reid
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell and Minority Leader Reid:

We write to urge you to expeditiously pass H.R. 1295, the Trade Preferences Extension Act of 2015, without attaching unrelated amendments. If passed, the bill would go to the President and reauthorize the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) until the end of FY 2025.

AGOA is too important to be used as a bargaining chip to pass unrelated trade legislation. As you know, AGOA is not controversial and passed out of the House of Representatives with almost 400 votes. AGOA is a trade preference program that is usually noncontroversial, and thus voice voted. It is the centerpiece of relations between the United States and sub-Saharan Africa. Though a small percentage of overall trade by the United States, AGOA has helped enhance trade, investment, job creation, and democratic institutions throughout Africa.

In its current form, AGOA expires September 30, 2015. It is imperative that the Senate move H.R. 1295 along to reauthorize the program soon. Delays will not only negatively affect global supply chains, but also adversely affect the livelihoods of individuals whose jobs come from AGOA.

The House has already passed H.R. 1295 to reauthorize AGOA. We urge the Senate to follow suit without delay and send the bill to President Obama's desk.

Sincerely,

CK Butterfield
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

Barbara Lee
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

Karen Bass
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

Keith Ellison
MEMBER OF CONGRESS