

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 1, 1991

Dear Bob:

Today I sent to the Congress my request for an extension of the fast track procedures for the implementation of trade agreements, along with my report supporting that request. I am also writing to each Member of Congress to underscore the importance I attach to that request and to urge your support.

Events in the Gulf show how much the world continues to look to the United States for leadership. Continuation of fast track procedures is crucial to U.S. leadership in the global economy.

Our trade policy is to open markets worldwide for U.S. goods and services. Indeed, our economic growth is hinged to the success of these market-opening initiatives. Over the last three years, export expansion accounted for 57 percent of our GNP growth. But without the certainty the fast track guarantees -- an up-or-down vote on implementing legislation within a limited time -- we cannot complete or even negotiate trade agreements to sustain such growth.

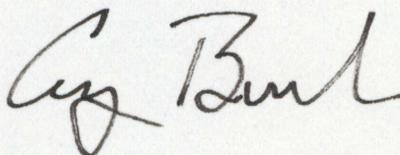
When Congress reenacted the fast track procedures in the Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act of 1988, it anticipated that an extension beyond the upcoming expiration might be needed and important. We do need an extension of these fast track procedures to pursue important initiatives such as the completion of the Uruguay Round negotiations, the negotiation of a North American Free Trade Agreement, and the pursuit of our trade objectives in the Enterprise for the Americas Initiative.

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I know that some may have concerns about these initiatives. But your support now for continuation of fast track procedures does not commit you in advance to endorse any particular agreement. Moreover, the fast track procedure is a partnership, and my Administration will do its part to make that partnership work. Fast track procedures call for, and I am committed to, close consultations to ensure that the negotiations are deliberate and that, ultimately, we achieve agreements in which we can all take pride. However, a vote against extending these procedures now deprives us of the prospect of negotiating any agreements.

I am asking for your support for our continued efforts to liberalize trade and open markets. No country stands to gain more from an open global economy than the United States. We are today engaged in trade initiatives that hold unprecedented promise for the advancement of our economic interests. With such important initiatives in the balance, we need more than ever to maintain U.S. leadership and the Legislative-Executive partnership that has endured for years.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "George Bush".

The Honorable Robert Dole
Republican Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510