



American
Public Health
Association

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Protect, Prevent, Live Well

July 16, 2009

The Honorable Chris Van Hollen
1707 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Lloyd Doggett
201 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Van Hollen and Doggett:

On behalf of the American Public Health Association (APHA), the oldest and most diverse organization of public health professionals and advocates in the world dedicated to promoting and protecting the health of the public and our communities, I write in strong support of H.R. 2293, the Public Health Trade Advisory Committee Act. This legislation is critical to ensuring that public health has a voice in the Federal Trade Advisory Committee System.

Because trade agreements can have serious implications on public health laws both domestically and internationally, it is essential that public health experts have representation on the Federal Trade Advisory Committee System. Unfortunately, while other health-related industries such as pharmaceutical companies, hospitals and insurance companies are represented on trade advisory committees, the U.S. does not receive formal advice from the public health community. Your legislation would establish a Public Health Advisory Committee on Trade (PHACT) as a Tier 2 committee – allowing the public health community to provide advice in establishing trade policy and in negotiating trade agreements. The new PHACT will enable public health representatives to consult with each other and to express their unique perspectives.

Thank you again for your leadership on this important public health legislation. We look forward to working with you to move this legislation forward this year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Georges C. Benjamin'.

Georges C. Benjamin, MD, FACP, FACEP (E)
Executive Director