



LATIN AMERICA TRADE COALITION

Why Support the Trade Agreements with Colombia and Panama? **Here are 13,257 Great Reasons!**

More than 15,000 U.S. companies export their products to Colombia and Panama, which are among Latin America's most dynamic growth markets. Of this total, 13,257, or 83%, are small and medium-sized enterprises. These so-called SMEs exported \$2,456 million worth of merchandise to Colombia and Panama in 2005. This represented 38% of all U.S. exports to these countries, well above the 29% share of U.S. exports that our smaller companies contribute globally.

Market	No. of U.S. Exporters	No. of U.S. SME Exporters	SME Exporters as % of Total	SME Exports in US\$ millions	SME Exports as % of Total
Colombia	10,018	8,509	85	1,681	35
Panama	5,898	4,748	81	775	40
TOTAL	15,916	13,257	83	2,456	38

Note: Some double counting may exist for companies that export to both markets.

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, 2005 data except the number of exporters and SME exporters to Colombia, which is 2006 data.

What if there were a way to eliminate the barriers that prevent America's small businesses from seizing the full benefit of these markets' export opportunities? The trade agreements with Colombia and Panama will open the door to new opportunities for smaller U.S. firms in ways that go far beyond just cutting tariffs:

- **Non-Tariff Barriers:** NTBs are especially harmful to smaller companies because they add to the fixed costs of doing business. A \$10,000 permit is a nuisance for a big firm; it can be a show-stopper for a smaller one.
- **Intellectual Property:** Trade agreements protect the innovation and creative content captured in so many U.S. exports; in fact, Colombia and Panama will give protections for intellectual property similar to those in U.S. law.
- **Services:** These agreements will also open up service sector sales by American companies, expanding the opportunities for a part of our economy that's humming with efficient and innovative smaller companies.
- **Government Procurement:** These agreements will give American small business expanded access to government procurement contracts. Those contracts for roads, schools, clinics, and the like are often too small for major American companies to perform profitably. But they are just the kinds of contracts that our smaller construction companies, distance learning companies, and medical equipment companies (to mention just a few) can fulfill beautifully.

For more information, visit www.latradecoalition.org