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Unifying Trade & Environmental Policy...

Dear Friend:

I appreciate you taking the time to read this week's brief update—it is an honor to represent you in the U.S. House of Representatives!

This week, I introduced [H.R. 7064, the 'Fair Environmental Trade Agreements Act.'](#) This act seeks to integrate environmental and labor policies in with U.S. trade policy.

While the United States has consistently raised its environmental regulations and labor standards, other countries have been exporting products, once made in America, to us while we have been exporting our manufacturing jobs to them because of their competitive advantage in not bearing the mitigation cost of industrial pollution and employing forced and child labor at little cost.

Under current law, the office of Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) can negotiate 'fast-track' trade agreements through 2021. Although TPA calls for the inclusion of environmental or labor standard in such agreements, they are not required provisions. My bill, if enacted, will require the U.S. Trade Representative to certify to the U.S. House Ways & Means Committee and to the Senate Finance committee, that any trade agreement with the United States enters into will require that other nations meet minimum environmental and labor stands.

Our trade with China, for example, is subject to both these issues. Its outdated and inefficient factory technology only focuses on increased output. The result is that Beijing is reported to have some of the worst air quality and factories have been known to use child labor to keep production costs low. China also is said to use forced prison labor. When a country only focuses on reducing manufacturing costs at the expense of its workers and the environment, it can easily drive down the production costs below having the same goods made in the U.S.

Following up on another concern of mine, I want to let you know that after my September op-ed titled, ["The U.S. Air Force Needs a Light Attack Aircraft"](#), received a response from Dr. Heather Wilson, Secretary of the Air Force. In her response, the Secretary stated that she "fully agrees with your [Coffman] view that it [light attack platform] should be an affordable and lethal alternative for the U.S. and its allies and partners to use in permissive environments." The Secretary went on to say that "our focus is on delivering a high quality, exportable, and affordable combat aircraft...and to provide this capability quickly and a reasonable cost." As a Member of the House Armed Services Committee, a Marine Corps combat veteran who has personally relied on close air support in combat, and I consider the prompt procurement of the light attack aircraft essential to our national security. I will continue to update you as the procurement process progresses.

As always, I invite you to stay in contact with me via my [website](#), [facebook](#) or [twitter](#) account. See you around the district!

Sincerely,



Mike Coffman
U.S. Representative



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