

## Michaud Joins U.S. and Colombian Labor Leaders to Speak Out Against Colombian FTA

Tuesday, May 13 2008

WASHINGTON, DC - Today, Congressman Mike Michaud, Chairman of the House Trade Working Group, participated in a press conference on Capitol Hill to highlight opposition to the U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement. Michaud was joined at the press conference by leaders of the largest Colombian unions, U.S. labor leaders, and Senator Sherrod Brown.

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"I am reminded that as a union member, if I were living in Colombia, I'd be subject to the same intimidation, the same threats, and the same scare tactics as they are," said Michaud. "I am proud to stand with them today in their fight to protect workers in Colombia."

Colombian trade unions detailed the current climate of fear for Colombian trade unionists and pledged their continued opposition to the U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement. Michaud and Brown, along with U.S. labor leaders pledged their continued opposition to the FTA, despite continued lobbying by the Bush Administration and the Colombian government. They called for a "time-out" on bad trade deals to consider their implications for US and foreign workers.

"When I confronted President Uribe about the violence, he issued an unconvincing flat denial, hoping that we would turn a blind eye toward the violence in order to pass a free trade agreement. The Bush Administration shows complete disregard for the views of American people by promoting a trade agenda that has been a boon for big business at the expense of working families and their jobs. Furthermore, the Colombia FTA rewards a country whose record of violence against union organizers is nothing short of disgraceful. The Administration is pushing an agenda under the guise of national security in order to promote its own special interests. I am pleased Speaker Pelosi has halted the consideration of the Colombia FTA until the violence is addressed in Colombia," said Congressman Michaud.

Michaud is a co-founder of the House Trade Working Group-a bipartisan group of Members of Congress committed to advocating for

fair trade policies.