

Client Alert

February 17, 2009

Office of US Trade Representative Seeks Comments Concerning Proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership Free Trade Agreement**Areas of Interest**

Government Relations
Global Trade
United States

The United States intends to initiate negotiations on a Trans-Pacific Partnership free trade agreement with Singapore, Chile, New Zealand, Brunei Darussalam, Australia, Peru and Vietnam. In preparation for these negotiations, the Office of the US Trade Representative [is seeking comments](#) from interested parties to assist in clarifying negotiating objectives for the proposed agreement and to provide advice on how specific goods and services and other matters should be treated.

The input provided during this public comment process is extremely useful to negotiators, and interested companies are encouraged to submit written comments. The Office of the US Trade Representative appreciates comments on all aspects of the negotiation, in particular on the issues listed below. It is not necessary to address all of the issues proposed.

- a. General and commodity-specific negotiating objectives for the proposed agreement.
- b. Economic costs and benefits to US producers and consumers of removal of tariffs and non-tariff barriers on articles traded with the seven Trans-Pacific countries.
- c. Treatment of specific goods (described by HTSUS numbers) under the proposed agreement, including comments on:
 1. Product-specific import or export interests or barriers,
 2. Experience with particular measures that should be addressed in the negotiations, and
 3. In the case of articles for which immediate elimination of tariffs is not appropriate, a recommended staging schedule for such elimination.
- d. Adequacy of existing customs measures to ensure that imported goods originate from the seven Trans-Pacific countries, and appropriate rules of origin for goods entering the United States under the proposed agreement.
- e. Existing sanitary and phytosanitary measures and technical barriers to trade imposed by the seven Trans-Pacific countries that should be addressed in the negotiations.
- f. Existing barriers to trade in services between the United States and the Trans-Pacific countries that should be addressed in the negotiations.
- g. Relevant electronic commerce issues that should be addressed in the negotiations.
- h. Relevant trade-related intellectual property rights issues that should be addressed in the negotiations.
- i. Relevant investment issues that should be addressed in the negotiations.

- j. Relevant competition-related matters that should be addressed in the negotiations.
- k. Relevant government procurement issues that should be addressed in the negotiations.
- l. Relevant environmental issues that should be addressed in the negotiations.
- m. Relevant labor issues that should be addressed in the negotiations.

Written comments should be submitted in Word or PDF format by noon (EST), March 11, 2009. Comments should be submitted electronically via the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov>.

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