



NEWS

AMERICANS FOR TAX REFORM

1920 L Street, NW • Suite 200 • Washington, DC 20036
202.785.0266 • Fax 202.785.0261

WWW.ATR.ORG

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
21 MAY 2004

CONTACT: Christopher Butler
Constance Liu
202-785-0266

Taxpayer Group Celebrates Signing of Free Trade Agreement

U.S. – Australia Free Trade Agreement signed on May 18

WASHINGTON— Today Americans for Tax Reform, the nation's leading taxpayer advocacy group, commended the Bush administration and the Howard government of Australia for signing the US-Australia Free Trade Agreement, one of the most comprehensive free trade agreements that promotes opportunities and choices for American taxpayers. U.S. Trade Representative Robert Zoellick signed on behalf of the United States and Australian Trade Minister Mark Vaile signed on behalf of Australia.

“It’s a major step towards the goal of a tariff-free world where open trade, economic growth, and individual choice is promoted,” praised leading taxpayer advocate, Grover Norquist. **“This is another success to the Bush administration’s adamant effort to promote free trade.”**

Bilateral trade between the U.S. and Australia is about \$28 billion each year, and Australia is our 13th largest export market that the U.S. has a \$9 billion trade surplus with. The US- Australia FTA will eliminate tariffs from over 99 percent of American exports to Australia and 97 percent of goods Australia sells to the United States.

“Consumers, workers, farmers and businesses are beneficiaries of a competitive market free from protectionist interference,” Norquist said.

Representatives from the business community, legislators and officials from both countries were present at the signing ceremony. The US-Australia Free Trade Agreement (FTA) solidifies the bilateral trade and investment cooperation between two countries that share a continuing history of strong political and security collaboration, dating back to the 1951 ANZUS Treaty, and both governments urge lawmakers in their respective countries to approve the agreement so it can go into effect by January 1.

The Bush Administration will continue conducting free trade talks with Peru, Ecuador, Columbia, Morocco, Bahrain, and Thailand.

Americans for Tax Reform (ATR) is a non-partisan coalition of taxpayers and taxpayer groups who oppose all federal, state and local tax increases. For more information or to arrange an interview, please contact Jonathan Collegio at (202) 785-0266 or at jcollegio@atr.org.