



ACTION for Trade: Korea Must Honor KORUS, Respect Intellectual Property

WASHINGTON (Jan. 5) – In advance of negotiations this Friday between the United States and the Republic of Korea to amend and modify the Korea-U.S. Free Trade Agreement ("KORUS"), ACTION for Trade issued the following statement:

"When it was negotiated nearly six years ago, KORUS was lauded as having the 'gold standard' for intellectual property protections in a trade agreement at the time, including important transparency and due process provisions. But Korea has unfortunately not lived up to its commitments in certain key respects.

"In particular, the Korean government does not comply with its commitment to 'recognize the value of [a] patented pharmaceutical product' by pegging the price of innovative medicines to the price for older generics, artificially depressing the prices of innovative medicines. Nor does the Korean government comply with its commitment to allow pharmaceutical and medical-device manufacturers to request an independent review of how it prices and reimburses for their products.

"These practices devastate U.S. businesses and their workers. Price controls hamper investment in research and development, harm patients, and put good American jobs at risk.

"As U.S. negotiators seek to modify KORUS, they should ensure those protections are actually implemented and enforced. That would benefit both the United States and Korean consumers, who would gain increased access to new and innovative products.