

WASHINGTON, DC— Today Representative Xavier Becerra (CA-31), Vice Chair of the House Democratic Caucus and Ranking Member of the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Social Security, released the following statement on the scheduled informal or “mock” mark-up of three Free Trade Agreements (FTA) and the exclusion of Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) legislation from committee consideration.

**“The number one focus of this Congress should be jobs, jobs, jobs. Any trade agreement we sign should have that principle as its priority. Trade agreements done right expand markets for US exports and provide opportunities for American workers.”**

**Unfortunately, along with helping create new exports and job opportunities, trade agreements can lead to job displacement. That's why America must have in place a robust program to address jobs lost to trade. Our Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program is America's response to job displacement and a robust TAA is a must before moving to enact future trade deals.**

**House Republicans have their priorities misplaced. Rather than updating a proven, effective TAA program that helps American workers retrain, retool and transition into a new job when they are displaced by international trade, the Ways and Means Committee will consider only the implementing legislation for the pending free trade agreements with Colombia, Korea and Panama.**

**The TAA reforms which lapsed in February of this year should have been renewed a long time ago. Our committee and our Congress have no business moving forward with consideration of the three pending free trade agreements until we get this right.**

**The process for considering these pending trade agreements should be pretty simple: no TAA—no FTA's." □**