



U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON

Finance

SENATOR CHUCK GRASSLEY, OF IOWA - CHAIRMAN

<http://finance.senate.gov>

MEMORANDUM

To: Reporters and Editors
Re: Senate passage of the United States-Morocco Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act
Da: Wednesday, July 21, 2004

Today the Senate passed the United States-Morocco Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act on an overwhelmingly bipartisan 85 to 13 vote. The House is expected to vote on the bill this week, clearing the way for the President's signature. Sen. Chuck Grassley, chairman of the Committee on Finance, made the following statement on final passage.

"Just over two months ago I expressed my interest in seeing both the U.S.-Australia and the U.S.-Morocco Free Trade Agreements pass the Congress by the August recess. A lot of people resisted this effort, arguing that it would be impossible for both the House and Senate to hold hearings, prepare the legislation, conduct mock mark-ups, report the bills, and pass implementing legislation for two free trade agreements in just two months. While the task was indeed difficult, I'm very pleased to say that we're achieving this goal.

"We have an historic opportunity to strengthen our relations with Morocco with the passage of the United States-Morocco Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act. Passage of this legislation follows on the heels of a strong Senate vote in favor of the United States-Australia Free Trade Agreement last week. The Australia bill itself was preceded by renewal and extension of the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act, which passed the Senate by unanimous consent on June 24 of this year. Prior to that, the Senate was able to work out its differences and pass the JOBS Act by a vote of 92 to 5. Each of these bills passed in an election year, a year in which many pundits argued that nothing would get done. I also want to point out the broad bipartisan support which each of these bills received. In my mind, it's that element – bipartisanship – that's the key to our success.

"Passage of the United States-Morocco Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act will help strengthen our relationship with a long-standing friend and ally of the United States. For more than 200 years, our two nations have enjoyed a strong and mutually beneficial relationship. Today, Morocco is a country in transition. It is a country that recognizes that its long-term economic prosperity lies not in shutting itself off to the world, but in opening up to the world. It is in large part Morocco's willingness to embrace free market and democratic principles that led President Bush to select Morocco as a potential free trade partner. This free trade agreement will help lock in and hasten reforms that the Moroccan government embraced on its own initiative. I'm confident that this agreement will spur growth and opportunity for Morocco and its people.

“This trade agreement is also very good for the United States, especially U.S. agriculture. Implementation of the agreement is expected to help advance U.S. agricultural exports to Morocco to unprecedented heights, enabling us to better compete with the European Union, Canada, and South America in the Moroccan market.”