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[Latino Members of Congress Disappointed in President's Proposed Fast Track Bill - September 16, 1997] [loose]

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**Congress of the United States**

**House of Representatives**

**Washington, DC 20515**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**September 16, 1997**

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**LATINO MEMBERS OF CONGRESS DISAPPOINTED IN PRESIDENT'S  
PROPOSED FAST TRACK BILL**

After meeting with President Clinton and Vice-President Gore, four members of Congress today announced their disappointment with the President's proposed fast track legislation. In reviewing the President's proposal, the House members cited the glaring absence of enforceable labor, environmental and human rights provisions as the basis for their dissatisfaction with his trade legislation.

Congressman Esteban E. Torres (D-CA) said, "over the past three years, I have closely monitored the President's implementation of the NAFTA agreement. In a nutshell, I am deeply disappointed. Unfortunately, the President has not effectively implemented NAFTA provisions intended to clean-up the U.S.-Mexico border, as well as retrain and employ displaced U.S. workers. As a result, far too many Americans have suffered.

"We have advised President Clinton that enforceable labor, environmental and human rights standards must be included as core elements in his fast track legislation, and that outstanding issues of NAFTA implementation must be resolved. But it has become abundantly clear to me that the President has not heeded our recommendations," stated Torres.

"For some time now, I have advised President Clinton that fast track legislation without labor, environmental and human rights standards would be dead on arrival to Capitol Hill. Repeating the mistakes of NAFTA is unacceptable. I call on the president to rethink his proposal," said Congresswoman Nydia Velasquez (D-NY).

Congressman Ciro Rodriguez (D-TX) stated, "based on the President's proposed legislation, I would have great difficulty supporting his request for fast track authority. To the people of Texas, it is critically important that the President take into consideration their concerns. Thus far, in both the implementation of NAFTA and in his proposed fast track legislation, he has not done so."

Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez (D-CA) remarked, "NAFTA's greatest impact has been on working women. This language does nothing to lessen my concerns that future agreements will include substantive programs to effectively deal with the impact on women and working families."

On July 16, 1997, 14 Latino Members of Congress wrote to President Clinton, outlining their concerns about issues of NAFTA implementation and fast track negotiating authority.