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Ambassador Robert Lighthizer Issues Statement Concerning the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act

10/13/2020

Washington, D.C. – Ambassador Robert Lighthizer issued the following statement today concerning the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act:

“President Trump’s October 10 action to reauthorize certain provisions of the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act (CBERA) will help to preserve well-paying jobs in the U.S. textile industry while also strengthening our trade ties with Caribbean beneficiary countries, especially Haiti. Importantly, CBERA’s eligibility criteria also provide a means to promote more open markets, protection of intellectual property rights, and stronger worker rights in beneficiary countries.”

Background

The Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act was launched in 1983 to facilitate economic development and promote economic diversification in the Caribbean region by providing duty-free access to the U.S. market for certain goods from Caribbean beneficiary countries. In 2000, the Caribbean Basin Trade Partnership Act (CBTPA) expanded this access to additional goods not covered under CBERA including apparel, petroleum products, and some agricultural products. The legislation signed by President Trump extends the CBTPA provisions of CBERA through September 30, 2030. CBTPA is unique among U.S. trade preference programs in that it requires the use of U.S.-manufactured yarns or fabrics in finished apparel goods eligible for trade benefits, supporting many jobs in the U.S. textile sector. The eligibility criteria under CBERA and CBTPA require that beneficiary countries meet certain requirements including 1) providing equitable and reasonable access to the markets and basic commodity resources of the country, 2) protection of intellectual property rights, and 3) taking steps to afford internationally recognized worker rights to their workers. CBTPA beneficiary countries are Barbados, Belize, Curacao, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, St. Lucia, and Trinidad and Tobago.