

The United States Senate Committee on Finance

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Hatch Hails Senate Passage of Bipartisan Trade Bill to Boost American Exports; Create Jobs

WASHINGTON – Today, U.S. Senator Orrin Hatch (R-Utah), Ranking Member of the Senate Finance Committee, hailed Senate passage of bipartisan legislation (H.R. 6156) to grant permanent normal trade relations (PNTR) to Russia and Moldova. The measure passed the Senate by a vote of 92 to 4 and awaits the President’s signature to become law.

“This legislation marks a pivotal step forward in our relations with Russia and Moldova,” said Hatch. “Strengthening our bilateral trade relations with these nations will provide access to new markets for American businesses, farmers and ranchers, expand our economy here at home, and create much-needed jobs. At the same time, this measure includes strong enforcement tools to ensure Russia lives up to its international trade obligations, and provisions to help advance human rights and the rule of law in Russia. Today’s Senate passage of the bill reflects the work of true bipartisanship. We must now build off the success of this trade initiative and continue to work together to enhance America’s competitiveness and increase access to new markets around the world.”

BACKGROUND:

During Finance Committee hearings on PNTR for Russia, Hatch expressed [a number of concerns](#) with both the Russian Government and the Obama Administration’s Russia “reset” policy, including concerns regarding Russia’s compliance with its international agreements, poor respect for the rule of law, rampant corruption in Russia, and the Administration’s reluctance to hold the Russian Government accountable for violations of its World Trade Organization (WTO) obligations.

After working with Chairman Baucus to produce a consensus measure, the Senate Finance Committee [approved](#) legislation to remove Russia from the Jackson-Vanik Amendment and grant Russia Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) on July 18, 2012. Under Jackson-Vanik specified countries, like Russia, are denied permanent normal trade relations with the United States unless the country fulfilled certain freedom-of-emigration requirements, or received a Presidential waiver. In order for U.S. job creators, workers, farmers and ranchers to fully benefit from Russia’s accession to the WTO, including use of WTO dispute settlement mechanisms, the U.S. Congress must remove Russia from the Jackson-Vanik amendment and grant Permanent Normal Trade Relations to Russia.