

Washington, D.C. - US Rep. David Price (NC-04) announced today that he intends to vote "no" on the Central American Free Trade Agreement, which was passed by the House Ways & Means Committee and by the full Senate late last month.

"There are serious arguments on both sides of this issue, and I've listened closely to the constituents who have brought them to me," said Price. "The Triangle region is highly dependent on exports for growth, and we need a trade policy that opens overseas markets while maintaining rules of fair competition.

"However, good trade agreements must also push our trading partners to raise their labor and environmental standards so that we are not penalized for the high standards we as Americans already maintain. The President has not taken sufficient steps to move Central American countries forward in these areas.

"In addition, I continue to be concerned about North Carolina communities that are disadvantaged by trade competition. We must strengthen programs that provide short-term financial help and job training for workers (especially those in high-tech and service sectors who currently get no assistance) before moving forward on another trade agreement.

"With the President's submission of the agreement to Congress late last month, it is clear that no improvements to the agreement can be made. I have determined that I will vote against CAFTA when it comes before the full House."

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