

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 1047

Reaffirming the economic partnership between the United States and the Caribbean nations and recognizing the need to strengthen trade and investment between the United States and the Caribbean nations, our “Third Border”.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 7, 2022

Ms. PLASKETT (for herself, Mr. WENSTRUP, Ms. SEWELL, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. EVANS, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, and Ms. SÁNCHEZ) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

RESOLUTION

Reaffirming the economic partnership between the United States and the Caribbean nations and recognizing the need to strengthen trade and investment between the United States and the Caribbean nations, our “Third Border”.

Whereas Congress commits to strengthening economic ties and cooperation with the Caribbean people to promote equitable economic growth and development across the region;

Whereas the Caribbean region has a population of approximately 44,000,000 people, millions of people have emigrated between the Caribbean and the United States, and approximately 13,000,000 people in the United States, or 4 percent of the United States population, share Caribbean ancestry;

Whereas it is in the national interest of the United States to support the economic development of sovereign Caribbean nations and territories;

Whereas greater opportunities for mutually beneficial trade and investments promote economic growth, development, poverty reduction, democracy, the rule of law, civil rights, and overall stability;

Whereas regional and global integration with our Caribbean neighbors should be strengthened to create decent jobs, boost economic growth in the Caribbean and the United States, and eliminate barriers to trade and investment in the Caribbean;

Whereas it remains the goal of the United States to support diversification of Caribbean exports to the United States;

Whereas, in 1983, Congress launched the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) through the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act (CBERA) and expanded it in 2000 with the United States–Caribbean Basin Trade Partnership Act (CBTPA);

Whereas the United States shares a history of struggle with Caribbean neighbor countries, including with our courageous sister nation of Haiti;

Whereas Haiti suffered destabilizing events in 2021, including severe insecurity, a deadly earthquake, widespread democratic protests, continuation of the COVID–19 pan-

demic, and the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse, all of which have contributed to a governance and humanitarian crisis that requires immediate further attention and support from the United States and the global community;

Whereas specialized United States trade preferences with Haiti, including the Haiti Economic Lift Program (HELP) and Hemispheric Opportunity through Partnership Encouragement Act (HOPE II) programs, aid Haiti's growing textile and apparel manufacturing industry and are a critical source of steady jobs for many Haitian people to support their families;

Whereas trade preference programs for the Caribbean and Caribbean Community (CARICOM) countries, such as the Generalized System of Preferences, CBI, and CBTPA have provided important economic benefits for Caribbean Basin country economies, including by facilitating niche production and more diversified exports, while also benefiting United States businesses and workers, including by helping to add value for customers and supporting United States jobs;

Whereas Caribbean people and their island nation economies have led globally by exploring innovative economic strategies to produce collective benefits for their communities, such as through the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility, to reduce the economic impact of major disasters;

Whereas the United States seeks to prioritize and promote a worker-centered trade agenda that facilitates trade and protects freedom of association, fosters a sustainable environment and climate path, advances racial equity and supports underserved communities, addresses unfair eco-

conomic trade practices, supports domestic producers, and promotes growth and development around the world;

Whereas the COVID–19 pandemic has negatively impacted the public health and economies of the Caribbean and the United States, which has also contributed to inequality within and between nations, and further excluded vulnerable groups from the benefits of trade and economic development;

Whereas the COVID–19 pandemic has highlighted the need to strengthen supply chain resilience and increase near-shoring in global trade;

Whereas the United States believes that free and fair trade practices, economic growth, and stable domestic employment foster democratic principles of good governance;

Whereas United States and Caribbean economic ties, including through Caribbean services and manufacturing sectors, produce critical goods and services for consumers and jobs for workers that strengthen their economies;

Whereas such economic ties serve strategic purposes by providing an alternative to potentially predatory economic practices of other foreign governments, including non-market economies, in the Caribbean that harm national and regional interests in the Western Hemisphere;

Whereas climate change and natural disasters pose acute risks for Caribbean people and island economies; and

Whereas the United States signed a Trade and Investment Framework Agreement in 2013 with CARICOM to drive strengthened trade and investment ties between CARICOM and the United States: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

1 (1) urges the President to prioritize trade en-
2 engagement with the Caribbean region that promotes
3 sustainable and resilient economic development;

4 (2) commits to engaging directly with diverse
5 stakeholders from the Caribbean, including
6 CARICOM Trade Ministers, policymakers, as well as
7 labor, business, and civil society representatives, to
8 dialogue and develop a shared trade agenda;

9 (3) affirms trade engagement that strengthens
10 the economic relationship between the Caribbean
11 and the United States and produces economic bene-
12 fits for people of all racial, ethnic, gender, ability,
13 economic, linguistic, and religious backgrounds;

14 (4) recognizes the importance of further en-
15 hancing trade and investment relations between the
16 Caribbean and the United States;

17 (5) commits to support economic efforts led by
18 and for the Haitian people to rebuild and develop
19 their own economy for the benefit of all Haitians;
20 and

21 (6) commits to support critical trade policies
22 and preference programs, such as HELP and
23 HOPE II, and further strengthen those policies to
24 ensure they advance sustainable economic develop-
25 ment, produce positive economic benefits in Haiti,

- 1 the Caribbean, and the United States, and protect
- 2 our most vulnerable communities.

