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E-Newsletter, October 2005

President Bush Signs into Law DR-CAFTA

President Bush recently signed into law the Dominican Republic-Central American Free Trade Agreement (DR-CAFTA). DR-CAFTA will create new economic opportunities for West Michigan companies and enhance national security.

An estimated 80 percent of the CAFTA region's exports have been allowed to enter the United States duty-free for the past 20 years, primarily as a result of the Caribbean Basin Initiative, but U.S. exports to the region faced tariffs as high as 11 percent on automobiles, 25 percent on fruits and vegetables and 165 percent on poultry products.

In addition to commercial opportunities, the trade agreement will help to cement recent democratic, legal and economic reforms in Central American countries that will help to counter threats posed by hostile governments in Venezuela and Cuba and create a competitive advantage against emerging economies such as India and China.

DR-CAFTA will help to stabilize Central America economically and politically. In doing so, it will enhance national security and translate into new opportunities for American companies and their employees.

Deadline for Service Academy Nomination Applications Oct. 28

The deadline to apply for a nomination from Congressman Hoekstra to attend one of the U.S. service academies – Army, Navy, Air Force and Merchant Marine – is October 28, 2005.

Every year, Congressman Hoekstra has the privilege of nominating students from Michigan's Second Congressional District for admission to the nation's service academies. The academies are very demanding, but provide individuals with the opportunity to become future leaders in the armed forces.

Admission to the academies is very competitive and open only to students who demonstrate high standards in academics, extracurricular activities and personal conduct. For a nomination by Congressman Hoekstra, applicants must be from Michigan's Second Congressional District and between 17 and 23 years old. The Academy Board will convene to conduct interviews on Dec. 2.

For further information on the requirements for a nomination and the application process, please visit Hoekstra's Web site at <http://hoekstra.house.gov> or call Paula Van Dyke in Hoekstra's Holland office at (616) 395-0030.

Hoekstra Writes Op-Ed on Education

The Grand Rapids Press recently published an op-ed written by Congressman Hoekstra and Kevin Clark, treasurer of the Holland Public Schools Board of Education, about how to strengthen Proposal A.

To read the op-ed visit: <http://hoekstra.house.gov/News/DocumentSingle.aspx?DocumentID=30455>

For more information on Pete's activities in Washington, D.C., please visit <http://hoekstra.house.gov>

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