

Matsui Supports Bahrain Free Trade Agreement

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Washington, DC – Congresswoman Doris O. Matsui (CA-5) gave the following statement in support of the Bahrain Free Trade Implementation Act. “Through cooperation – Democrats working alongside Republicans on the Ways and Means Committee, who then coordinated with the administration – we have before us a strong trade package that will open markets, advance free trade and cement America’s ties to a strategically important ally in the Middle East. “And with the changes that are coming to Bahrain’s labor laws, this agreement will ensure that the fundamental rights of workers are protected. It is my hope that in the future, these worker protections will be incorporated into the core of trade agreements, rather than through side agreements. This is a standard to which the United States should hold all its trading partners. “Though the magnitude of this particular trade pact is relatively small, the global trading system is at a critical juncture. The United States’ leadership on trade is being tested—here in Congress and in Geneva. “For that reason, I am pleased that today we have both parties working together to advance free and fair trade. “I hope that this agreement receives broad support and that July’s contentious and mean-spirited CAFTA debate is the low point, only to be seen in the rearview mirror. Because in the long term, the only way for America to continue to lead the world forward on trade is for us to work across the aisle here in the House. “I urge my colleagues to allow today’s debate to serve as a first step toward reviving the bipartisan consensus on trade policy that has served this Congress so well in the past.” The House of Representatives passed the legislation today (327-95). The Senate is also expected to pass the legislation, as it was unanimously supported by the Senate Finance Committee.

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