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**Computer & Communications Industry Association**

July 30, 2009

The Honorable Sander Levin  
Chairman, Subcommittee on Trade  
Committee on Ways and Means  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin Brady  
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Trade  
Committee on Ways and Means  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Levin and Ranking Member Brady:

On behalf of the Computer & Communications Industry Association (CCIA), I would like to thank you for holding the subcommittee hearing last week on the trade advisory committee system. CCIA wholeheartedly supports the Subcommittee's efforts to examine whether "administrative or statutory changes, building on revisions implemented in recent years, might broaden the range of views represented and permit the advisory committees to provide more timely and useful recommendations." Last week's hearing focusing on environmental, labor, public health, development, and civil society perspectives was an excellent start. However, these are not the only perspectives that deserve to be reflected in the trade advisory committee system.

In its testimony before the Subcommittee at last week's hearing, the Government Accountability Office stated "that representation of stakeholders is a key component of the trade advisory committee system that warrants consideration in any review of the system. In particular, as the U.S. economy and trade policy have shifted, the trade advisory committee system has needed adjustments to remain in alignment with them, including both a revision of committee coverage as well as committee composition." One of the most significant advances in the U.S. and global economy in the past decade has been the development of the Internet as a tool and stage for commerce in products and services. The Internet has enabled truly global access to products, services and information in a way previously unimagined. This has in turn led to conflicts and issues that are equally new, and for which the traditional trade advisory committee system is not well equipped.

For example, foreign legal regimes contribute to a hostile business environment for U.S. Internet companies. Foreign courts are increasingly imposing sweeping civil – and sometimes criminal – liability on U.S. companies simply for providing innovative online services entirely consistent with U.S. law. Indeed, in some countries, this anti-Internet bias may be viewed as a form of de facto protectionism due to the Internet being identified as a predominantly American phenomenon.

The advent of a new, networked world has given rise to innovative types of trade barriers. There must be a framework to address this changed landscape, and rules of the road for this new world need to be established. In order for our government to represent our industry's interests, and those of the consumers and users of the Internet, in this process, CCIA strongly urges the creation of an Industry Trade Advisory Committee (ITAC) on Internet issues. The issues that confront our industry are substantially unique from those facing other industry sectors, and cleared advisers with expertise in the Internet industry would be able to provide USTR with information and a perspective that it is not presently receiving.

We greatly appreciate your attention to the issue of trade advisory committee system reform, and your consideration of our views. We would be pleased to discuss these issues with you and your staff, and to assist in any way we can.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. J. Black". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "E" and "J".

Edward J. Black  
President & CEO  
Computer & Communications Industry Association (CCIA)

cc: Members of the Subcommittee on Trade