

**FTAA - COMMITTEE OF GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES ON THE
PARTICIPATION OF CIVIL SOCIETY**

COVER SHEET

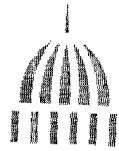
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Organization (s) (if applicable)	National Conference of State Legislatures
Country (ies) / Region (s)	United States of America

Number of Pages	Eight	Language	English
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ISSUES ADDRESSED (Check all that apply)

Agriculture		Subsidies, Antidumping and Countervailing Duties	
Competition Policy		Civil Society	
Dispute Settlement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Electronic Commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Government Procurement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Smaller Economies	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Intellectual Property Rights		The FTAA Process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Investment		Other:	
Market Access			
Services			

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY - 2 pages maximum - (see Open Invitation): See Attached



NATIONAL CONFERENCE
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**National Conference of State Legislatures Submission
to the
Free Trade Area of the Americas
Committee of Government Representatives on the Participation of Civil Society
by
The Honorable Bill Friend
Indiana House of Representatives
Chair, NCSL Agriculture and International Trade Committee
September 25, 2000**

The National Conference of State Legislatures is a bipartisan organization dedicated to serving the lawmakers and staffs of the 50 United States, its commonwealths and territories. The Conference is a source for research, publications, consulting services, meetings and seminars. It is the national conduit for lawmakers to communicate with one another and share ideas. The Conference is an effective and respected voice for the states in Washington, D.C., representing their interests before Congress, the Administration and federal agencies.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) supports the goal of liberalized trade and the potential benefits to U.S. state economies of the Free Trade Area of the Americas, provided that any agreement includes adequate federalism protections. NCSL is eager to build on the intergovernmental partnership reflected in recent agreements, including the implementing legislation for the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, to ensure that state authority is preserved and protected. In this connection, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) negotiations.

The following comments outline general principles that NCSL advocates for the FTAA negotiations. These comments are based on the limited information currently available. Given the mandates of the FTAA working groups, we have included comments related to dispute settlement, electronic commerce and procurement issues, and request the opportunity to comment further on these topics as discussions move forward. NCSL's interests in the FTAA are

comprehensive, however, so we look forward to continued communication and opportunities for expanded dialogue on the range of issues affecting U.S. states during the negotiations.

The National Conference of State Legislatures believes that international agreements such as the FTAA that liberalize the world trading and investment system can and must be harmonized with traditional values of constitutional federalism. In particular, NCSL recognizes that reservations can be made to trade and investment agreements that limit the unnecessary preemption of state law and preserve the authority of state legislatures.

U.S. states are committed to nondiscriminatory treatment of foreign firms that do business within their borders, based on the broad standard of protection afforded by the Commerce Clause and the Foreign Commerce Clause of the U.S. Constitution. Provided that the integrity of this standard is maintained and state legislators are appropriately consulted in the course of drafting the agreement and its implementing legislation, NCSL can be expected to provide political support for the FTAA.