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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Business Community Coalition Praises Senate Action on Russia PNTR**

*December 6, 2012 (Washington, DC)* – The Coalition for U.S.-Russia Trade praised the U.S. Senate for its vote approving legislation to remove Russia from the Jackson-Vanik amendment and enact Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) with Russia by a margin of 92-4.

“Today’s vote in the U.S. Senate marks an important victory for U.S. manufacturers, service providers, farmers and ranchers, said Randi Levinas, Executive Director of the Coalition. “Our businesses will finally have the same rights and opportunities in the Russian market as their foreign counterparts. We look forward to President Obama’s signing of this historic legislation to ensure the competitiveness of U.S. exports to Russia.”

Russia joined the World Trade Organization (WTO) back in August after 18 years of negotiations with the United States and other WTO members to make commitments to open its market and assume the obligations of the global rules-based trading system.

“This has been a long day in coming,” said Levinas, “and there are many who have contributed to ensuring our success. The strong bipartisan votes we’ve seen today in the Senate and on November 16 in the House are a testament to the hard work the business community has done in conjunction with leaders on Capitol Hill, in the Obama Administration and around the country. We are delighted that U.S. business will have full access to Russia’s WTO commitments.”

Specifically, Russia PNTR enables U.S. business to take advantage of Russia’s commitments in services, animal and plant health regulations and intellectual property protection, as well as measures that facilitate greater regulatory transparency and accountability in the Russian market.

The Coalition for U.S.-Russia Trade is a broad-based group of manufacturers, service providers and farmers that has organized the business community’s outreach to Capitol Hill on Russia PNTR. It is led by the U.S.-Russia Business Council and its co-chairs include Caterpillar, Chevron, General Electric, International Paper, PepsiCo and Procter & Gamble.

Russia has a GDP of \$1.9 trillion, and it imported approximately \$400 billion last year in goods and services. Russia’s 142 million consumers appreciate high quality, and the country is seeking to improve its infrastructure and modernize its industrial base.

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*The Coalition for U.S.-Russia Trade is a broad-based group of U.S. corporations, trade associations and small businesses actively seeking to increase U.S. exports and jobs with increased trade with Russia. The Coalition is committed to ensuring the enactment of Permanent Normal Trade Relations with Russia in order to preserve the competitiveness of U.S. firms, farmers and workers in the Russian market. The Coalition is housed at the U.S.-Russia Business Council ([www.usrbc.org](http://www.usrbc.org)) which serves as the Secretariat for the Coalition. For more information, please visit the Coalition’s website at [www.usrussiatrade.org](http://www.usrussiatrade.org).*