
AGOA Extension and Enhancement Act of 2015

The African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), first authorized in 2000, provides for duty-free treatment for nearly all goods from eligible sub-Saharan African countries. AGOA is currently set to expire on September 30, 2015.

Provides a long-term extension of AGOA for 10 years, including a 10 year extension of third-country fabric provisions, which are important to continue to nurture the development of the textile and apparel industry in sub-Saharan Africa.

Reaffirms Congress's commitment to Africa through clear statements of policy on the importance of AGOA and expanding trade and investment ties between the United States and sub-Saharan Africa.

Promotes greater regional integration by expanding the rule of origin to allow AGOA countries greater flexibility to combine inputs to meet the rule of origin for AGOA-eligible products and statements of policy encouraging the adoption and implementation of WTO Agreements, including the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, which can reduce red tape at the border.

Promotes compliance with eligibility criteria by providing greater flexibility to the Administration to withdraw, suspend, or limit benefits under AGOA if it determines that such action would be more effective than termination.

Ensures greater certainty in operation of AGOA by requiring the Administration to notify Congress and any affected country at least 60 days before removing a country from the program or withdrawing, suspending, or limiting any benefits.

Simplifies claims for preference, improving transparency and making it easier to complete paperwork on imports from AGOA beneficiaries.

Encourages development by AGOA beneficiaries of utilization strategies to improve effectiveness and use of the program. Commits the United States to working with AGOA beneficiaries to develop and implement strategies.

Improves transparency and participation in AGOA review process by codifying the process and ensuring that the Administration establishes mechanisms for public input.

Creates new review mechanisms so that any party, at any time, can petition USTR about whether a country is meeting the AGOA eligibility criteria and USTR can initiate an out-of-cycle review of a country's eligibility.

Outlines a path for deepening and expanding trade and investment ties by requiring the Administration to develop a long-term strategy for negotiating trade agreements with sub-Saharan African countries and setting clear statements of U.S. policy.

Strengthens Congressional oversight through additional notification and reporting requirements.

Addresses unfair practices by the European Union that condition African access to the European market on signing imbalanced and substandard trade agreements.

Renewal of the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) Program

The Generalized System of Preferences (GSP), first authorized in 1974, is a unilateral preference program that allows eligible developing countries to import duty-free import over 3,500 items.

Extends the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) until December 31, 2017 and provides retroactive relief to eligible products that were imported during GSP's lapse.

Promotes export growth and economic development for developing countries by continuing to provide duty-free entry for approximately 5,000 agricultural and non-agricultural products from 126 designated beneficiary countries and territories.

Implements U.S. WTO commitments by making duty-free certain cotton articles eligible from Least-Developed Beneficiary Developing Countries (LDBDCs).

Benefits U.S. companies by eliminating an estimated \$2 million a day in tariffs on imported goods.

Supports an estimated 80,000 jobs in the United States through the movement of GSP products from ports to manufacturers, farmers, and stores.

Fosters innovation and U.S. competitiveness in the global marketplace by lowering costs for intermediate goods, including components, parts, and material imported from designated beneficiary developing countries.

Ensuring Continued Benefits for Haiti

Congress provides duty-free benefits on apparel exports from Haiti to the United States through the Haitian Hemispheric Opportunity through Partnership Encouragement Act, which was enacted in 2006 and renewed and expanded in 2008 and 2010. The program currently expires in 2020.

Extends the HOPE and HELP programs for products from Haiti until September 30, 2025.

Promotes export growth and economic development for Haiti by continuing to provide duty-free entry for a variety of products, including certain apparel products.

Supports an estimated 30,000 jobs in Haiti that are created by the apparel industry, the core export industry and primary source of employment growth.

Encourages foreign investment and job creation by extending trade preferences to reinvigorate the apparel industry and attract new and expanded foreign direct investment.

Reaffirms U.S. foreign policy and national security interests by promoting trade and long-term investments in Haiti.