



**THE DKT LIBERTY PROJECT**      The Foundation For Democracy In  
AFRICA



May 16, 2006

To: **Members of the U.S. House of Representatives**

We, as representatives of consumer, taxpayer, and humanitarian groups, urge you to vote for the amendment to the Agriculture Appropriations bill to be offered by Congressmen Earl Blumenauer and Jeff Flake on the House floor this week. Their amendment addresses the wasteful sugar program in the United States, which cannot be justified on economic, social, or humanitarian grounds.

The program is a complex system that restricts the supply of sugar, guarantees a minimum price to sugar producers, and mandates an import quota regime. The cost of this price support and tariff regime includes higher food prices for U.S. consumers, lost jobs in sugar-related industries, a waste of taxpayer dollars, environmental damage, particularly in Florida, and the loss of economic opportunities for many small farmers in developing countries.

The Blumenauer-Flake amendment would be a small step to begin to rein in this egregious program. It would effectively reduce the sugar loan rates by about 6 percent, to not more than 17¢/lb. for raw cane sugar and 21.6¢/lb. for beet sugar.

For too long, the sugar program has benefited mainly large sugar producers while harming the average person in the U.S. and the poor in developing countries. Voting for this amendment would send a signal that we should begin to reform the program. Thus, we urge you to support this amendment on the House floor.

Sincerely,

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