

Republicans to Block WTO

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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WASHINGTON — Republican leaders vowed to block a vote clearing the way for Russia's entry into the World Trade Organization until Congress passes free-trade agreements with Panama and Colombia.

"The time is up for Colombia and Panama," Rep. Kevin Brady, a Texas Republican and chairman of the House's Ways & Means Committee's trade subcommittee, said Wednesday at a hearing. Brady said there's "virtually no chance" of a vote on Russia before the Colombia and Panama agreements.

For U.S. companies to qualify for measures Russia adopts as a condition for joining the WTO, Congress must repeal a Cold War-era law limiting trade and grant the nation permanent normal trade relations. Republicans are pushing the administration on Colombia and Panama free-trade agreements reached under President George W. Bush but never approved by Congress.

(Bloomberg)

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