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United States Senate

Dear___,

Thank you for contacting me to share your opinion about the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). I am deeply concerned about how the TPP might affect Maine businesses, families, and communities, and am working hard to ensure that our state is not adversely impacted. As you may be aware, I recently voted against H.R. 2146, the Bipartisan Congressional Trade Priorities and Accountability Act of 2015, also known as Fast Track, which was passed by Congress in June, 2015. I chose to oppose the Act because of my concern for how it limits Congressional amendments and debate not only on TPP but also any future trade agreements until July 1, 2018. I remain disappointed that Congress has given up its ability to amend the TPP.

Unfortunately for Maine, our country's free trade agreements have too often allowed new participants into our markets that are not held to the same standards and rules as Maine businesses. Over the last several decades, our trade policies have produced reverse incentives that have lead U.S. businesses to off-shore jobs, further contributing to the hollowing out of the American economy and sharp, harmful declines in U.S. manufacturing.

I worry that the TPP will be another in a recent series of trade agreements that leaves Maine factories shuttered, workers unemployed, and families struggling. During my Senate campaign, I visited one such employer, the New Balance facility in Skowhegan, to talk to workers about how the TPP's proposal to eliminate duties on imported footwear would have severe consequences for the company and for Maine. Since assuming office in January 2013, I have been in constant communication with the White House and the United States Trade Representative (USTR), Ambassador Michael Froman. Ambassador Froman and his agency are well aware of my deeply-held concerns with the potentially catastrophic results that the provisions surrounding rubber and plastic footwear tariffs could have for New Balance and its employees.

The TPP remains one of my top concerns but at this point, we have not seen the final text of the proposed agreement. As Congress and the public will have the opportunity over the course of the coming months to scrutinize the text of this agreement, I intend to carefully review it with an eye on the effect this agreement would have on the people of this country and, most importantly, on the people of Maine. My final decision on the TPP will be made based on my review of its final provisions and especially their effect on jobs in Maine.

Best Regards,



ANGUS S. KING, JR.
United States Senator

