

working together for social and environmental justice in trade policy

## Over 400 Groups Urge Replacement of Outdated "Fast Track" and a New Direction for the Trans-Pacific Partnership and Other 21<sup>st</sup> Century Trade Agreements

March 4, 2013

## Dear Member of Congress:

As U.S. trade negotiators seek to conclude a standard-setting new trade and investment pact for the Asia-Pacific region by this October and consider launching another with the European Union, we write on behalf of our more than 15 million combined members and supporters to share our expectations regarding commercial agreements in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and the congressional oversight role needed to transform past U.S. trade policy into a tool that helps build a more just and sustainable global economy.

We find it troubling that, even as the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Free Trade Agreement enters its 16<sup>th</sup> major round of negotiations this March in Singapore, U.S. negotiators still refuse to inform the American public what they have been proposing in our names. Shielding not only proposals, but agreed-upon texts from public view until after negotiations have concluded and the pact is finalized is not consistent with democratic principles. In this regard, the TPP appears to be even less transparent than some past trade negotiations. For example, in 2001, the United States joined with 33 other countries in releasing draft text of the Free Trade Area of the Americans, and draft texts within the World Trade Organization are frequently made available.

Issues that must be addressed so that a TPP, a European Union-U.S. Agreement or any other U.S. trade pact actually improves the quality of life for Americans and people throughout the world include:

- *Prioritization of human and labor rights.* Too many existing trade policies go to great lengths to protect the rights of investors, while ignoring or glossing over issues of forced labor, child labor, sweatshop working conditions, political violence, environmental degradation, violations of indigenous peoples' sovereignty and government suppression of such basic freedoms as speech, assembly, movement and the rights to form independent trade unions and bargain collectively. Human and labor rights must be front-and-center in any trade agreement if it is to help reverse the global race to the bottom in working conditions and environmental practices.
- Respect for local development goals and the procurement policies that deliver on them. Trade agreements should not impede governments from spending taxpayer funds in ways that prioritize local development, environmental or social goals. The procurement provisions of trade pacts must maintain existing "Buy American" preferences, as well as prevailing wage requirements, green preferences, sweat-free preferences, human rights preferences and policies designed to address long-standing inequalities.
- No elevation of corporations to equal terms with governments. Trade agreements should not grant individual corporations and investors special powers to privately enforce agreement terms by challenging laws, regulations and court decisions through tribunals that circumvent domestic judicial systems. The "investor-state" tribunal system that allows panels of three private sector lawyers to order unlimited taxpayer compensation for foreign firms who claim that a country's laws undermine their expected future profits must be eliminated. International investment rules must also be revised to more narrowly define terms including "investment," "expropriation" and "minimum standard of treatment" in order to safeguard the ability of governments to regulate in the public interest.

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- **Protect food sovereignty.** Trade agreements should respect governments' ability to implement programs that ensure farmers and other food workers receive fair compensation and that consumers have access to safe and affordable foods. Likewise, nations must be able to protect themselves from dumping and other unfair trade practices that force farmers off their land.
- Access to affordable medicine. Maintaining access to affordable, generic medications is critical to reducing health care costs in the United States and to saving lives throughout the world. Trade agreements are an inappropriate vehicle for extending the length of drug patents, and U.S. policies should explicitly uphold the standards set forth in the Doha Declaration on access to medicine.
- Safeguards against currency manipulation. Trade agreements should include measures that allow the United States and other governments to take measures to counteract trade-distorting currency manipulation. Agreements should also include strong rule of origin provisions to ensure that the benefits of the agreement go to those countries that agree to meet its rules.
- Space for robust financial regulations and public services. Trade pacts should set floors, not ceilings, when it comes to the regulation of banks, insurance companies, hedge funds and other financial service providers. Trade agreements' services provisions should contain clear and specific language stating that nothing in the agreement should be interpreted as requiring deregulation or privatization of any private or public service.
- *Improved consumer and environmental standards*. Likewise, trade agreements should set floors, rather than ceilings, when it comes to environmental, food and product safety and consumer right-to-know measures.

We believe a much greater degree of public and congressional oversight is needed if the TPP and other pacts are to achieve these high standards. Before granting the Obama administration any special trade policymaking authority, please request that it make the draft TPP texts public.

Instead of delegating Congress' exclusive constitutional authority to "regulate commerce with foreign nations" to the executive branch through the reinstatement of outdated and extreme procedures like Fast Track "Trade Promotion Authority," we urge you to support a new American trade agreement negotiation and approval process that:

- Requires that Office of the U.S. Trade Representative consult with all interested stakeholders, participate in
  hearings with all committees of jurisdiction over matters affected by trade agreements and provide a thorough
  and public assessment of what specific job creation and export expansion opportunities each prospective trade
  partner would provide and how a proposed agreement would impact human and labor rights, the environment,
  food sovereignty, access to medicine, currency manipulation and balance of trade among the countries involved
   beginning this expanded engagement process with the TPP as soon as possible;
- Sets up an objective process to verify that negotiating objectives set by Congress are actually achieved in the final agreement; and
- Includes a process by which a majority of the Congress must vote to certify that a proposed agreement is in the public interest and that Congress' negotiating objectives have been met *before* the executive branch can sign the agreement and bind the United States to its terms.

Only through this type of robust oversight and public participation can we forge a new national and global consensus on trade policy that works for all.

Sincerely,

Citizens Trade Campaign 8th Day Center for Justice ActionAid USA Alliance for Democracy Alliance for Global Justice Alliance for Retired Americans American Federation of Government Employees

American Friends Service Committee

American Medical Student Association

American Postal Workers Union

Americans for Democratic Action

Association of Western Pulp and Paper Workers (AWPPW) International Union

**BAYAN-USA** 

Campaign for America's Future

Campaign for Labor Rights and Nicaragua Network

Center for Biological Diversity

Center for Digital Democracy

Center for Policy Analysis on Trade and Health (CPATH)

Coalition for Justice in the Maquiladoras

Coalitions of Mutual Endeavor

Colombia Support Network

Communications Workers of America

Conference of Major Superiors of Men

Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes, General Council

Corporate Accountability International

Cultural Survival

Democracy for America

Democratic Socialists of America (DSA)

Earthjustice

**Educating for Justice** 

**Energy Action Coalition** 

Engineers and Scientists for Animal Rights

Equal Exchange

Fair World Project

Family Farm Defenders

Food & Water Watch

Foundation for Integrative AIDS Research (FIAR)

Friends of the Earth US

Global Coalition of Women Against AIDS in Uganda

Global Exchange

Global Justice for Animals and the Environment

Grassroots International

Green Party of the United States

Guatemala Human Rights Commission

Health GAP

Holy Cross International Justice Office

Initiative for Medicines, Access & Knowledge (I-MAK)

Inlandboatmens Union of the Pacific

Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy

Institute for Global Labour and Human Rights

Institute for Local Self Reliance

Institute for Policy Studies, Global Economy Project

International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers

International Brotherhood of Boilermakers

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

International Brotherhood of Teamsters

International Labor Rights Forum

International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers (BAC)

International Union of Painters and Allied Trades

Intersect Worldwide

It's Our Economy

Jobs with Justice/American Rights at Work

Just Foreign Policy

Labor Network for Sustainability

League of Rural Voters

**MADRE** 

Maquiladora Health & Safety Support Network

Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns

MDM Inc.

Medical Mission Sisters' Alliance for Justice

Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Justice, Peace/Integrity of Creation Office

Moana Nui Action Alliance

Move To Amend

National Alliance of Latin American and Caribbean Communities (NALACC)

National Consumers League

National Family Farm Coalition

National Farmers Union

National Latino Farmers & Ranchers Trade Association

National Legislative Association on Prescription Drug Prices

National Nurses United

NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby

New Rules for Global Finance Coalition

North American Intertribal Missions

Pax Christi

Peace Action

Peaceroots Alliance

Presbyterian Church USA

Progressive Agriculture Organization

Progressive Democrats of America (PDA)

Public Citizen

Public Knowledge

Rainforest Action Network

Real Food Generation

Rural Coalition/Coalición Rural

School of the Americas Watch

**SELF** 

Sheet Metal Air Rail Transportation

Sierra Club

Sisters of the Holy Cross Congregation Justice Committee

Society of Professional Engineering Employees in Aerospace (SPEEA)

Student Global AIDS Campaign

SweatFree Communities

Take Back America for the People

TenThousandMeans

Unitarian Universalist Association

United Brotherhood of Carpenters

United Church of Christ Justice and Witness Ministries

United for Peace and Justice

United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society

United Mine Workers of America

United Steelworkers

United Students Against Sweatshops

Universities Allied for Essential Medicines

US Human Rights Network

US Labor Education in the Americas Project

**USAction** 

Veterans For Peace

Witness for Peace

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, US Section

## **Regional, State and Local Organizations**

A. Philip Randolph Institute (WA)

AfroColombia NY

AFT-Wisconsin

All Souls Bethlehem Church (NY)

Alliance for Democracy - Oregon

Allyship (WA)

Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1005 (MN)

American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) 3937 (WA)

American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) Council 220 (MD)

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Local 3336 (OR)

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Council 5 (MN)

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Local 3214 (OR)

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Local 34 (MN)

American Federation of Teachers, Seattle Community College Local 1789 (WA)

American Friends Service Committee - Pacific NW

American Postal Workers Union, Minneapolis Area Local

American University Student Worker Alliance

Americans for Democratic Action of Northeast Ohio

Animal Protection League of NJ

Ashtabula, Geauga, Lake Counties Farmers Union (OH)

Austin Central Labor Council (TX)

Austin Tan Cerca de la Frontera (TX)

Azatlan Media Kollective (CA)

Backbone Campaign (WA)

Bakery, Confectionary, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union (BCTGM) Local 167Gl (MN)

Bakery, Confectionary, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union (BCTGM) Local 369G (MN)

Bear Education and Resource Group (NJ)

Black Alliance for Just Immigration (MN)

Blue Green Alliance - Minnesota

Bronx Greens (NY)

Brooklyn For Peace (NY)

Bryn Mawr Peace Coalition (PA)

California Dairy Campaign

Capitol City and Minneapolis Metal Workers Lodge 459 (MN)

Caring Activists Against Fur (NJ)

Carpenters Local 322 (MN)

Carpenters Local 361 (MN)

Catskill Citizens for Safe Energy (NY)

Cement Masons and Plasters Local 633

Center for Community, Democracy and Ecology (CCDE) (MN)

Center for Natural Health (NH)

Central Co-Op/Madison Market (WA)

Central Florida Labor Council

Centro de Trabajadores Unidos en la Lucha (CTUL) (MN)

Chicago Fair Trade (IL)

Chicago Political Economy Group (IL)

Christ in Action-Prosperity Services

Church Council of Greater Seattle (WA)

Citizens' Environmental Coalition

Cleveland Jobs with Jusice (OH)

Columbia University Partnership for International Development-CUPID (NY)

Coalition Against the Rockaway Pipeline (NY)

Columbia-Pacific Alliance for Social Justice (OR)

Comite Pro Reforma Migratoria y Justicia Social (WA)

Communication Workers of America District 7 (MN)

Communication Workers of America Local 6215 (TX)

Communications Workers of America District 4 (WI)

Communications Workers of America Local 7901 (OR)

Communications Workers of America Minnesota State Council

Community Alliance for Global Justice (WA)

Community Alliance of Lane County (OR)

Community for Earth First Unitarian Church - Portland OR

Community Organizing Center

Community to Community Development Projects (WA)

Compassion for All Animals (KS)

Dakota Resource Council

Dakota Rural Action

Dallas AFL-CIO Central Labor Council (TX)

Dallas Building Trades Council (TX)

Damascus Citizens for Sustainability (PA and NY)

Dawson Resource Council (MT)

DC Time Bank

Delmont Progressive Democrats of America (PA)

Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), San Diego Local Chapter (CA)

Denver Justice & Peace Committee (CO)

Desert MoveOn Council (CA)

Desert Progressive Democrats of America (PDA) Chapter (CA)

Doctors Council (TX)

Eastern Maine Labor Council

Eco-Logic, WBAI-FM (NY)

EcoEmm Fair Trade (NY)

Economic Justice Action Group, First Unitarian Church (OR)

Elevator Constructors Local 9 (MN)

Eugene-Springfield Solidarity Network-ESSN, A Jobs with Justice Chapter (OR)

Expand the Love (FL)

FACE Faith Action for Community Equity (HI)

Fair Trade at UMass Boston (MA)

Fair Trade Penn State (PA)

Fair Trade University at CSU (CO)

Faith Action Network (WA)

Farms Not Arms (CA)

Florida Immigrant Coalition

Fort Worth Building Trades Council (TX)

Green Party of Florida

Green Sanctuary Committee, Community Church of New York, Unitarian Universalist

GrowJobsCT

Harlem Tenants Council (NY)

Harris County AFL-CIO Council (TX)

Heartwood (IN)

Hofstra Progressive Student Union (NY)

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Minneapolis (MN)

Houston Peace and Justice Center (TX)

Inland Boatman's Union (WA)

Intercommunity Justice and Peace Center - Cincinnati (OH)

Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice (MI)

I.N.T.A.C.T. Community Development Corporation (NY)

International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW) Airline Local 1833 (MN)

International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW) District 751 (WA)

International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW) Local Lodge 112 (MN)

International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW) Local Lodge 623 (MN)

International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW) Minnesota State Council (MN)

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) 3rd District (PA)

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 112 (WA)

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 1253 (ME)

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 191 (WA)

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 46 (WA)

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local Union 278 (WA)

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 567 (ME)

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local Union 681 (TX)

International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) – Puget Sound District Council (WA)

International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 23 (WA)

International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 23 (WA)

International Transport Worker's Federation of North America-West Coast

International Union of Elevator Constructors Local 21 (TX)

International Union of Elevator Constructors Local 81 (TX)

InterReligious Task Force on Central America (OH)

Ironworkers Local 263 (TX)

Ironworkers Local 7 (ME)

Ironworkers Local 84 (TX)

IUE-CWA Local 1140 (MN)

Jeannette Rankin Peace Center (MT)

JOBS NOW Coalition (MN)

Jubilee Northwest

Koreatown Immigrant Workers Alliance (KIWA) (CA)

Labor Outreach Committee of Occupy Wall Street (NY)

Laborers District Council of Minnesota & North Dakota

Land Stewardship Project (MN)

League of Humane Voters of NJ

League of Rural Voters - Minnesota

Lehigh Valley Gas Truth (PA)

Linn-Benton-Lincoln Central Labor Council (OR)

Lipari Renewables, Inc. (MN)

Live Real

Lone Star Earth First (TX)

Lubbock Central Labor Council (TX)

M. L. King County Labor Council (WA)

Maine Fair Trade Campaign

Maine's People's Alliance

Malama Kauai (HI)

MAPE (MN)

Maryland United for Peace and Justice, Inc.

Mingas-NY

Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation (MN)

Minnesota AFL-CIO

Minnesota Building and Construction Trades

Minnesota Fair Trade Coalition

Minnesota Farmers Union

Minnesota Industrial Union Council

Minnesota Nurses Association

Minnesota Public Interest Research Group

Minnesota State Council of Machinists

Missourians Organizing for Reform and Empowerment

Montana Human Rights Network

Mothers on the Move / Madres en Movimiento (NY)

Move to Amend - Portland (OR)

Move to Amend - Rochester (NY)

Movement In Motion (NY)

New York Climate Action Group

Newground Social Investment (WA)

NH Veterans for Peace

Nicaragua Center for Community Action (CA)

NJ Youth United Against War and Imperialism

Nodutdol for Korean Community Development (NY)

North Central States Regional Council of Carpenters

North Coast Veterans for Peace Chapter (OR)

North East Area Labor Council (MN)

North Texas Jobs with Justice

Northern Plains Resource Council (MT)

Northwest Bronx Community & Clergy Coalition (NY)

Northwest Oregon Labor Council

NY4WHALES

NYC Friends of Clearwater (NY)

NYC Labor Coalition for Latin America Advancement (NY)

Occupy Coachella Valley (CA)

Occupy Harlem (NY)

Occupy Maine – Bath Brunswick Region

Occupy Wall Street Environmental Solidarity (NY)

Occupy Wall Street Outreach Working Group (NY)

Occupy Wall Street Special Projects Affinity Group (NY)

Occupy Wall Street Trade Justice Working Group (NY)

Office and Professional Employees International Union (OPEIU) Local 12 (MN)

Office and Professional Employees International Union (OPEIU) Local 8 (WA)

Operative Plasters & Cement Masons Local 783 (TX)

Oregon AFL-CIO

Oregon AFSCME Council 75

Oregon Alliance for Progress

Oregon Fair Trade Campaign

Oregon Machinist Council

PA 12CD Chapter of Progressive Democrats of American (PDA)

PA Fair Trade Coaltion

PA Progressive Democrats of America

PA State Electrical Workers Assoc.

Peace House (OR)

Pennsylvania Alliance for Clean Water and Air

Pennsylvania Council of Churches

People Over Pollution (CA)

Peopletech (FL)

Peruvians in Action (NY)

Philippine US Solidarity Organization (PUSO) (WA)

Pierce County Central Labor Council (WA)

Pittsburgh Anti Sweatshop Community Alliance c/o Thomas Merton Center (PA)

Plumbers Local 68 (TX)

Portland Central Amercian Solidarity Committee (OR)

Portland Jobs with Justice (OR)

Presbytery of the Twin Cities (MN)

Presentation Sisters, Aberdeen, SD

Professional and Technical Employees (PTE) Local 17 (WA)

Protest Barrick (PA)

Puget Sound Alliance for Retired Americans (WA)

Queerocracy (NY)

Racine Dominicans (MD)

Real Food Challenge (MA)

Regla do Oro (MN)

Rocky Mountain Peace and Justice Center (CO)

Rubaga Exchange on AIDS and Livelihood Support Group

Saint Paul Regional Labor Federation, AFL-CIO (MN)

San Antonio Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO (TX)

Sane Energy Project (NY)

Santa Barbara Progressive Coalition (CA)

Seattle CISPES (WA)

Seattle Education Association (WA)

Service Employees International Union (SEIU) 503, OPEU (OR)

Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 1199NW (WA)

Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 6 (WA)

Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 63 (MN)

Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 775NW (WA)

Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Minnesota State Council

Sheet Metal Workers Local 10 (MN)

Sierra Club Lone Star Chapter (TX)

Sierra Club Long Island Group (NY)

Sierra Club North Star Chapter (MN)

Sierra Club Santa Lucia Chapter (CA)

Sister of the Presentation, Fargo (ND)

SMART Sheet Metal Workers' Local Union 68 (TX)

Snohomish County Labor Council (WA)

Sol Fair Trade (WA)

South Sound Clean Clothes Campaign (WA)

Southeast Minnesota Alliance of Peace Makers

Southeast Minnesota Area Labor Council

Southern Oregon Jobs with Justice

Southwest Laborers' District Council (SWLDC) (OK)

Southwest Pipe Trades Association

SPEEA/IFPTE 2001 (WA)

Spirit Wolf Ranch, LLC (CO)

Spokane Regional Labor Council (WA)

St. Louis Inter-Faith Committee on Latin America (MO)

St. Paul Regional Labor Federation (MN)

St. Paul Area Local American Postal Workers Union (MN)

St. Pete for Peace (FL)

Stephanie Low Artists Inc. (NY)

Students for Labor and Economic Justice (CA)

Stulips Dance (OR)

Tarrant County Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO (TX)

Texas AFL CIO

Texas American Federation of Teachers

Texas Fair Trade Coalition

Texas Political & Legislative Committee

Texas State Association of Electrical Workers

Texas State Building and Construction Trades Council

Texas state council of machinists

The Chicago Religious Leadership Network on Latin America (IL)

The Forest Foundation

Trade Justice New York - Metro

Traditions Fair Trade (WA)

UNITE-HERE Local 5 (HI)

UNITE-HERE Local 8 (WA)

**UNITE-HERE Minnesota** 

United Auto Workers Local 879 (MN)

United Auto Workers State CAP Council - Minnesota

United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 1189 (MN)

United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 21 (WA)

United Food and Commerical Workers (UFCW) 1189 (MN)

United Steel Workers District 11 (MN)

United Steel Workers Local 11-75 (MN)

United Steel Workers Local 2002 (MN)

United Steel Workers Local 264 (MN)

United Steel Workers Local 6115 (MN)

United Steel Workers Local 7263 (MN)

United Steelworkers 1188 (ME)

United Steelworkers District 12 (WA)

United Steelworkers Local 1016 (PA)

United Steelworkers Local 1688 (PA)

United Steelworkers Local 2599-06 (PA)

United Steelworkers Local 4-014 (ME)

United Steelworkers Local 4-9 (ME)

United Steelworkers Local 404 (PA)

United Steelworkers Oregon L & E Committee

United Steelworkers SOAR Chapter 10-1 (PA)

United Students Against Sweatshops - University of Texas

United Transportation Union, Minnesota Legislative District

University of MN Labor Education Service

Veterans for Peace, Austin, Chapter 66 (TX)

Veterans For Peace 071 (CA)

Veterans for Peace 115 (MN)

Veterans for Peace 159 (OR)

Vibrant Public Lands Project (NY)

Vocal-NY

Washington Community Action Network

Washington Fair Trade Coalition

Washington State Chapter of the Sierra Club

Washington State Labor Council

**Washington Toxics Coalition** 

WashTech/CWA (WA)

Western Organization of Resource Councils (WORC)

Wetlands Activism Collective (NY)

Whatcom County Green Party (WA)

Wisconsin Fair Trade Coalition

Wisconsin State Council of Carpenters

Witness for Peace Northwest

Witness for Peace Southeast

Witness for Peace Upper Midwest

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom-Maine Branch

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom-Portland, OR Branch

Worldview (NH)