

# Bad Trade Stalled, Good Trade Advancing

## Your Rep is a Strategic Target: Please Call Today

Dear Arthur,

**Congratulations.** Thanks to your pressure, we've just gained momentary success in stalling the Panama free trade agreement. A flurry of calls and letters from constituents like you emboldened Senators and Representatives to [voice strong opposition](#) late last month to the NAFTA-style agreement. This unexpected wave of pressure dashed FTA supporters' hopes of quickly ushering the NAFTA-style agreement through Congress. The successful chorus of dissent included the 3,065 people who sent letters to their representatives through [our online action](#).

To keep up the heat, please send your own letter (if you haven't already) and pass the link on to your friends: [witnessforpeace.org/panama\\_action](http://witnessforpeace.org/panama_action).

**But the struggle isn't over.** Our pressure has successfully but temporarily pushed the Obama Administration to back off the Panama agreement. Everett Eissenstat, Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for the Americas, testified in a May 21 Senate hearing, "The President believes that the United States needs a new framework for trade...the Administration wants to make sure that any new trade agreements that are advanced - including with Panama - be part of this broader framework." What will that new framework look like? We're not waiting to find out. Instead, we're seizing the debate by naming a concrete, forward-thinking trade framework that we can actually support.

**Enter the TRADE Act.** The Trade Reform, Accountability, Development and Employment Act answers the question, "If you're against NAFTA-style free trade, what are you for?" The [TRADE Act](#), a bill first introduced last year, names unequivocal economic justice, human rights, labor, and environmental standards by which NAFTA and CAFTA must be renegotiated, and to which any future trade agreements must conform. ([See details below](#).) If passed, the Act would launch a new, more just era of U.S. trade. In the next week or so, the '09 version of the bill will be introduced in Congress to steer the debate further away from the Panama FTA's tired model and toward the fresh model articulated in the Act. To accomplish this, we're striving to get 100 representatives to co-sponsor the bill at the moment of its introduction. (Last year, the bill gained over 80 sponsors.)

**That's where you come in.** Your representative has been identified as one of a handful in the House who are riding the fence on the TRADE Act. That puts you in a key position to make a difference. Please place a simple call to your representative's office today to urge them to add their name to the list of TRADE Act sponsors. Then get five friends in your city/town to do the same. Feel free to use [the call script below](#). To reach your rep's office, call the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at 202-224-3121, give your zip code, and ask to be connected to your House representative.

Your efforts thus far have already impeded the Panama free trade agreement's progress. Calling your representative today will help to definitively derail that FTA while paving the way to a new day on trade. Thanks in advance for your advocacy.

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## TRADE Act Background

The TRADE Act, if passed, would take four major steps toward a more just U.S. trade model:

1. **Evaluate existing FTAs.** The Act would require a public report assessing NAFTA and CAFTA's impacts on signatory countries' employment and wage levels, access to health care and water, cost of essential medicines, and compliance with labor and environmental standards, among other criteria.
2. **Renegotiate existing FTAs.** The text of NAFTA and CAFTA would have to be transformed so as to meet explicitly outlined requirements. Among other changes, the renegotiated FTAs would have to:
  - Allow all signatory governments to take measures against agricultural dumping so as to ensure income stability for small-scale farmers
  - Require signatory governments to actually enforce core labor, environmental, and human rights standards
  - Revamp any intellectual property provisions that tend to increase the cost of essential medicines in signatory countries
  - Delete all requirements to privatize or deregulate key services such as health care, education, or water
  - Eliminate the investor-state dispute resolution process in which corporations can sue governments for laws construed as barriers to trade (i.e. NAFTA's Chapter 11)
3. **Impose a moratorium on future FTAs.** The Act would require that the President submit to Congress a plan to renegotiate existing FTAs at least three months before the negotiation or implementation of any new FTA. This prerequisite of renegotiation spells an effective moratorium on further FTAs.
4. **Abolish Fast Track.** The Act would discard the anti-democratic Fast Track provisions that currently restrict Congressional debate and amendments on trade agreements. In its place, the Act prescribes a more democratic process that would bolster Congressional oversight of any future trade agreements.

For more background, see this [factsheet from Global Trade Watch](#). For the full text of last year's bill, [click here](#).

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## Sample Call Script

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm calling from \_\_\_\_\_ (city/town).  
I'm calling today to encourage Mr./Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_ (Representative name) to sponsor the Trade Reform, Accountability, Development and Employment Act. The TRADE Act, originally introduced last year by Representative Mike Michaud and Senator Sherrod Brown, outlines a badly-needed, forward-thinking alternative to the discredited NAFTA trade model.

NAFTA-style agreements have erased jobs here in the U.S., displaced farmers abroad, and undermined labor, consumer, and environmental protections in all signatory countries. The TRADE Act would mend these flawed agreements and ensure that future ones promote good jobs, accessible medicines, food security, and environmental sustainability.

The TRADE Act gained over 80 co-sponsors in the House and Senate last year, in addition to the institutional backing of diverse faith, farm, labor, consumer, and environmental organizations across the country. The 2009 TRADE Act is likely to be reintroduced soon this month. I urge the representative to add her/his name to the list of sponsors prior to the Act's introduction to clearly demonstrate his/her commitment to a trade agenda that actually works for the majority. To join in support as a cosponsor, the representative can contact Kim Glas in the office of Representative Michaud. Can I count on Representative \_\_\_\_\_ to sponsor the TRADE Act? *(Pause for any response and feel free to offer follow-up comments.)* I'd appreciate a written response that clearly outlines the representative's position on the TRADE Act-could you send that to me?

*(If you receive a verbal commitment or a written response, please email Ben Beachy at [wfpma@witnessforpeace.org](mailto:wfpma@witnessforpeace.org).)*