



Maine Fair Trade Campaign

*Working together for fair trade
and a just, sustainable and democratic
global economy*

February 13, 2013
Cynthia Phinney, President
126 Campground Road, Livermore Falls, ME 04254

Re: TPP and TPA

Dear Senator Angus King:

In his State of the Union address, President Obama declared a desire to complete negotiations of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Free Trade Agreement. We write to express our deep displeasure with the direction of these negotiations, and to ask that you refuse to hand your constitutional authority to set the terms of U.S. trade policy over to the executive branch through the reinstatement of Fast Track.

After three years and fifteen major negotiating rounds, the Obama administration still refuses to tell the American public what it has proposed for the TPP in our names. Meanwhile, it has granted literally hundreds of corporate lobbyists special "cleared advisor" status that allows them access to TPP texts. This is anti-democratic, to say the least, and is rollback in trade policy-making transparency from the previous administration.

Despite the extreme secrecy, certain U.S. proposals for the TPP have been leaked. These include intellectual property proposals that would increase up health care costs in the United States and deny people in poorer nations access to life-saving generic medications, and so-called "investor rights" proposals that would encourage off-shoring of U.S. jobs, while putting our domestic public interest policies at increased risk of attack within international tribunals that circumvent domestic judicial systems. Press reports and other sources suggest that the TPP might further restrict U.S. "Buy American" and "Buy Local" procurement policies; restrict commonsense steps our government and others can take to regulate banks, insurance companies, hedge funds and other financial institutions; and restrict consumer safety and inspection policies for imported foods, toys and other products.

The TPP must not be Fast Tracked. Instead, Congress should reassert its authority to set the terms of trade by replacing the already-expired and outdated Fast Track "Trade Promotion Authority" process with new procedures that require real transparency, real public participation and real Congressional oversight. At a minimum, this new process should set mandatory negotiating objectives and require a vote by Congress certifying that those objectives have been met before the TPP or any other trade agreement can be signed.

President

Cynthia Phinney

Vice President

Matthew Beck

Treasurer

Ben Chin

*www.maineairtrade.org
info@mainefairtrade.org*

We ask that you please write to us confirming your opposition to Fast Track and reaffirming your commitment to trade policy that works for ordinary Mainers. We look forward to sharing your response with our members.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cynthia Phinney". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent than the last.

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