

ANGUS S. KING, JR.
MAINE

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United States Senate

Dear Constituent, dated January 21, 2015

I will carefully examine any and all legislative proposals to renew fast-track authority. Please know this: I am fundamentally opposed to any fast track trade promotion authority that attempts to marginalize Congress from the process of providing enforceable negotiating objectives and meaningful oversight. I have serious concerns about the scope and depth of congressional consultation with past fast track authority renewals, which results in a shift in the balance of powers between the legislative and executive branches of government, and I have yet to be convinced that a new iteration of fast track authority would prove any better.

I am preparing to thoroughly review the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) to ensure that it is fair for Maine and levels the playing field for our state's manufacturers and businesses. Since taking office, I have been extremely critical of current trade policies, which I believe place American manufacturers at a disadvantage, and have repeatedly pushed the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative to strike a better deal for Maine during the TPP negotiations.

Our government has unnecessarily prioritized global trade liberalization at the expense of American workers, families, and communities. I worry that trade agreements likely to come before Congress soon—such as the TPP—will result in more of the same: Maine factories shuttered, workers unemployed, and families struggling. Without securing fundamental reforms to fast-track authority that would significantly increase congressional power relative to the executive branch, I would be extremely reluctant to vote for TPA.

As we move forward with trade policy reform, I believe we should be much more aggressive on the conditions of admission to our markets. Trade agreements have a great potential to bring U.S. goods to new markets and grow our domestic economy, but in order for that to happen new trade agreements must be rooted in a commitment to fairness and transparency among all member countries. Future agreements must include meaningful labor, environmental and intellectual property protections.

Finally, it is crucial that trade agreements include effective enforcement mechanisms which hold foreign firms to the same standards U.S. businesses already abide by. When our trading partners set lower health, environmental, and labor standards, U.S. businesses are placed at a real disadvantage to their foreign competitors, and everyone loses. Trade agreements are an important part of our economy and its future growth, however I believe we need to make sure we only enter fair and enforceable arrangements; in my view, fast-tracking these agreements puts U.S. workers and the

economy at unnecessary risk.

You may be interested in reading an article I wrote in 2011 about free trade for the Bowdoin Daily Sun, it can be found here: <http://www.bowdoindailysun.com/2011/10/angus-king-rethinking-free-trade/>.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Angus" followed by a horizontal flourish.

ANGUS S. KING, JR.
United States Senator

I am not able to read or respond to replies to this address. If you would like to be in contact with me further, please do not reply to this message, but instead go to <http://www.king.senate.gov/contact>. And, if you're ever in Washington D.C. when the Senate is in session, please stop by my Capitol Coffee hour from 9-10 AM on Wednesdays in Dirksen 361. Thanks, Angus.

