

**Pingree says fast track trade authority could hurt workers, the environment
Bill introduced today would let bad trade deals speed through Congress**

January 9, 2014

For immediate release

Contact: Willy Ritch 207-841-8400

Congresswoman Chellie Pingree said a bill introduced today would make it too easy to push through trade agreements that hurt workers and threaten the environment. The bill—the Bipartisan Congressional Trade Priorities Act of 2014—creates "fast track authority" for trade agreements that would make it harder to debate or amend those agreements.

"There are two major trade deals that are essentially being negotiated in secret, and fast track authority means they could be rammed through Congress without the kind of debate and transparency that's needed if we want to really see what's in these agreements," Pingree said. "Congress should be figuring out how to create jobs here at home, not ship them overseas."

Pingree said unfair trade agreements hurt American workers by allowing unfair competition in other countries that don't enforce protections for workers and the environment.

"NAFTA went into effect 20 years ago this month and we can see the damage it's caused, particularly on manufacturing jobs in Maine and around the country. It wasn't a good deal for American workers and I'm concerned that some of the new deals being negotiated could be much worse," Pingree said.

Pingree joined over 150 of her Democratic colleagues in writing to President Obama to express their opposition to fast track procedures. (<http://goo.gl/XBIVok>)