

Dated Oct 19, 2015

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for sharing your thoughts regarding U.S. trade policy. I appreciate hearing from you and share your concerns about this issue.

As you know, the United States recently concluded negotiation of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), a massive trade agreement involving the U.S. and 11 other countries. Modern free trade agreements like the TPP aim to remove "non-tariff barriers" in member countries. Non-tariff barriers include a number of laws and regulations affecting labor, patents and copyrights, food safety, natural resources, and government procurement policies, as well as financial, health care, energy, e-commerce, telecommunications, and other service sector regulations. If enacted, this agreement would become the largest and most significant free trade agreement in history.

The Trans-Pacific Partnership has essentially been negotiated in secret, and Fast-Track authority could allow it to be rushed through Congress without the chance to debate and amend it. Congress shouldn't be a rubber stamp for a deal that could send American jobs overseas and put health, labor and food safety standards at risk. It is critical that the public and policymakers have sufficient time to review the proposals and provide meaningful input before these negotiations are sent before Congress for a vote. That is why I voted against H.R. 2146, the Bipartisan Congressional Trade Priorities and Accountabilities Act of 2015, more commonly known as "Fast-Track" or "Trade Promotion Authority," which unfortunately passed the House by a vote of 218-208 on June 18, 2015, despite my vote against it.

NAFTA went into effect 20 years ago and we can see the damage it's caused, particularly on manufacturing jobs in Maine and around the country. I strongly opposed the Colombia, South Korea, and Panama Free Trade Agreements when they moved through Congress under Fast-Track in October 2011. These are bad deals for American workers and I'm concerned that the new deal that's been negotiated could be much worse.

As the text of TPP remains shrouded in secrecy, I will continue to demand that it be made publicly accessible for people to see. From what I've heard about the agreement so far, I remain concerned that this is a bad deal for America's hardworking people, filled with giveaways to big foreign companies.

I appreciate hearing from you on this important issue, and I will keep your thoughts in mind as I work with my colleagues in the 114th Congress on trade policy. Thank you again for being in touch and I hope to see you in Maine soon.

Sincerely,  
Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress

*Please do not reply to this message, as this inbox is unattended. To contact me, please visit my website at <http://pingree.house.gov>. If you need immediate help with a federal agency, please call my Portland Office at 207-774-5019 or toll free at 888-862-6500.*