

Citizens Trade Campaign

working **together** for **social** and **environmental justice** in **trade** policy

C4 Action Item Series: *How to Use Creative Fair Trade Actions*

When Standard Grassroots Organizing Tactics Just Aren't Working

Make Unique Contact with the Member:

- **Canceled Checks.** Start a check writing campaign to an incumbent who is not supportive of our position. Be sure to write CANCEL or NO GOOD in HUGE letters across the check, and include a short note letting the Congressional member know you no longer support him or her. Write COLOMBIA FTA in the subject line. Make all the checks out for an odd amount, such as \$60.00, or one dollar for every corrupt politician indicted in Colombia.
- **Duck Shadow.** Get a large duck costume, and shadow your representative for failing to give a response on opposing the trade agreement. Let people know she is ducking the question. Have people show up at public campaign events with duck calls. Wear duck hats. Make duck puns. Give her office a basket of peeps. Be sure to share your fun with the press.
- **Play Chicken.** Follow up with a chicken costume after the vote, calling her afraid to stand strong for American jobs. During the campaign, follow up by trying to make her a lame duck.
- **Mobile Phone Bank.** When people are meeting at a COPE reception or other large event, get five cell phones and set up a table. Have a script and list of congressional contact numbers. Grab folks walking by, and have them take two minutes to make a call the representative on your dime. Offer a jumbo cookie for each completed call.

Generate Unique Publicity

- **Unwanted Recognition.** Present the elected with a "job exporter" award. Give him a small ocean freighter trophy for "shipping" jobs overseas. Tie this action to a recent vote, or a recent campaign contribution from a company that moves jobs overseas. When he doesn't accept, take a picture of the empty chair next to the podium, noting the Representative failed to show up once again for you.
- **Lemonade Stand.** Set up a lemonade stand in front of your representative's office. Have two pitchers, one of "safe" lemonade and one of icky, brown polluted lemonade. Hand out literature about unsafe food imports while gathering signatures, and encouraging people to make calls to the representative. Encourage folks to go right into the office to share their concern.
- **Trade Export Tour.** Offer to take your representative and the press on a tour of a "job export zone". Go to a fairly common and familiar place, such as Main Street in the largest city in the district. Point out all of the service sector jobs that could be offshored and outsourced. Offer numbers for the statewide total of such jobs. Have somebody who lost their job speak.
- **Scavenger Hunt.** Publicly challenge your Representative to a "Free Trade Agreement Jobs Scavenger Hunt". Using TAA lists and other resources make a list of key locations that have lost jobs, and send him to those factories and businesses. Specify the job sectors he should be searching for in each area. Follow up with a release noting that while he was smart enough not to take the challenge, it will be worse next year. Put out the same release every year, on the same month.
- **Factory Graveyard.** Make large cardboard tombstones and write the names and life spans of factories that have shut down, or the number of family farms lost. "RIP Murro Co. - 1979 - 2002. Will be mourned for by all those who lost their jobs." Place the tombstones in front of a representative's district office or campaign office. Have everybody wear black.

Create Unique Visibility

- **Love a Parade.** The 4th of July, labor day, and other holidays are great opportunities for fair trade campaigning. Build a float of a ship moving jobs overseas. March along side handing out pink slip flyers explaining the recent FTA and your representative's stance, and their phone number. If election time, include a banner, stating you should give a pink slip to your congressman. Be sure to hand in proper registration, without being too obvious.
- **Yard sign Campaign.** Print or hand-create 50 signs that say your representative's name and "Quit moving our jobs overseas - Vote NO on the FTA". Go to every door along the member's street, and ask if you can put one up in the yard. Also solicit houses along his commuting drive into the district office. Combine with visibility when he is back in district. (See below)
- **Candlelight Vigil.** On a more somber note, hold a candlelight vigil for all of the labor leaders killed in Colombia. Do not tarnish it with attempts at humor. Make it 41 minutes long, from 7:00 pm to 7:40 pm, or about one second for every union activist that was killed (2460). Have a powerful labor leader speak eloquently on the issue afterwards.
- **Visibility Teams.** Much like on an election day, have volunteers stand at busy intersections during rush hour with signs and banners. Use "Vote NO on the Colombia FTA" and "Honk if you want to keep jobs in America". Supplement with "Banner Drops" from a bridge or outside of a downtown office window, with a message such as "Tell Ron Kind to Vote No on Colombia FTA." Let the TV and local media know when and where you'll be doing this. Catch the member driving to his office during recess.