

Wisconsin FAIR TRADE Coalition

WFTC: Trade Questions for 2008 Presidential Candidates

2008 Presidential Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Name: Hillary Rodham Clinton

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WFTC is asking candidates questions to determine who is the most focused on addressing the trade crisis effectively -- by rejecting further agreements based on the failed NAFTA model, renegotiating existing agreements and promoting a new responsible trade and globalization model.

The following questionnaire will be shared with Wisconsin Fair Trade Coalition partners in the labor, environmental, family farm and faith communities. **We strongly encourage you to supplement answers with additional explanations, information and rationale.**

Please respond by emailing info@wisconsinfairtrade.org or faxing to 414-344-1645.

NAFTA Style Trade Agreements

We believe the NAFTA model has failed the U.S. and our trading partners. During the NAFTA era, we have seen one out of every four U.S. manufacturing jobs destroyed and real wages decline. NAFTA incentivizes offshoring by providing foreign investors special protections that eliminate the risks of moving to low-wage countries. It has resulted in scores of attacks on our domestic environmental, health and safety laws upon which communities rely. NAFTA bans buy-America initiatives, and limits our ability to inspect for the safety of children's toys or the food supply. The NAFTA-model pacts such as CAFTA and various other free trade agreements simply replicate these problems.

1. Will you commit to renegotiate NAFTA and CAFTA, during your first term of office, to meet the standards you lay out for future agreements?

Please Circle One: **Yes** No

Additional Comments:

I believe that all trade agreements must have strong labor and environmental provisions. That is why, as President, I will thoroughly review NAFTA and make necessary changes. This agreement is now 14 years old and its shortcomings are evident. The labor protections, for example, are not what we would demand today. I commissioned a study that found that farmers

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in upstate New York did not have the level of access to the Canadian market that they should have had. As President, I will work with our trade partners to fix NAFTA's shortcomings and make changes that promote the interests of our workers and our economy.

As President, I will take a time out from new trade agreements. Before committing the United States to more trade liberalization, I will review all of our existing agreements to determine whether they are benefiting our economy and our workers. And I will formulate a trade policy for the 21st century – one that is genuinely pro-worker, pro-American, and vigorously enforced.

2. As a Senator, if the vote came up today, would you support the Panama Free Trade Agreement?

Please Circle One: **Yes** **No**

Additional Comments:

I am opposed to the Bush administration's free trade agreement with Panama. As long as the head of the country's National Assembly is a fugitive from justice in America, I will not consider a trade expansion agreement with Panama.

3. As a Senator, if the vote came up today, would you support the South Korea Free Trade Agreement?

Please Circle One: **Yes** **No**

Additional Comments:

I am opposed to the trade agreement with South Korea because it does not create a level playing field for American carmakers. South Korea has a long history of restricting access to its car market, and this agreement does little to change that. The Bush administration concluded the agreement hurriedly and produced a deal that will cost us jobs.

4. Will you commit to considering emergency policies to bring our trade deficit into balance, including addressing currency manipulation, eliminating tax breaks for off shoring production, and exploring other options, such as an import surcharge?

Please Circle One: **Yes** **No**

Additional Comments:

The trade deficit has nearly doubled since President Bush took office. He has failed to enforce our trade agreements, and he has stood by while China has manipulated its currency in order to make their goods inexpensive on the world markets and our goods expensive. As President, I will vigorously enforce our trade agreements and I will pressure China to play by the rules. I have co-sponsored the Currency Exchange Rate Oversight Reform Act, which will force the administration to take aggressive steps to stop harmful currency manipulation. I have also co-

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sponsored legislation that will require the administration to draw up an action plan to addressing the trade deficit and the national debt. In addressing the deficit, we urgently need to boost the national savings rate. Companies need incentives to invest more in plant and equipment; families need policies that help to save; and the government has to return to fiscal discipline. As President, I will move us back toward balanced budgets. I will close loopholes that reward American companies when they move jobs abroad. And I have proposed a generous program to help families save for retirement. As President, I will tackle our economic problems before they become crises.

WTO “Doha Round”

5. Will you commit to oppose the current direction of the WTO “Doha Round” and to call for a new direction in global trade talks to prioritize protections for workers, the poor, public health and the environment, and to ensure that global trade rules do not undermine the ability of governments to regulate in the public interest?

Please Circle One: **Yes** **No**

Additional Comments:

We need a 21st trade policy that allows us to better manage globalization. Trade policy cannot just protect the interests of elites. It must make our workers better off, and it must elevate standards of living around the world. That is why I have insisted on ever stronger labor and environmental provisions which will ensure that American workers are not caught in a race to the bottom. I have said that as President, I will take a timeout from new trade agreements. My priority will be to review all of our existing agreements to ensure that they are producing benefits for our workers and our economies. And I will then formulate a comprehensive trade policy that is genuinely pro-worker and vigorously enforced. I have opposed fast track authority for President Bush, and I will fight any attempt he makes to ram through new trade agreements before he leaves office.

Fast Track

Fast Track, also known as “Trade Promotion Authority” allowed past administrations to negotiate trade deals and sign them before Congress ever got to vote. It concentrates power in a small agency where corporate lobbyists have set the agenda away from democratic oversight. Since Fast Track was enacted, we have run up a steadily growing trade deficit and wages for American workers have been stagnant. Thankfully, TPA authority expired in July 2007.

6. If elected President, would you seek an elimination of the Fast Track process?

Please Circle One: **Yes** **No**

Additional Comments:

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I oppose fast track for President Bush because he has failed to enforce our trade agreements and because he negotiates trade deals without particular concern for our workers. As President, I will take a timeout from new trade agreements. My priorities will be to review all of our existing agreements to ensure that they are benefiting our workers, and to craft a trade policy that is genuinely pro-worker, pro-American, and vigorously enforced. Our focus should not be on new trade deals, nor should it be on the fastest way of getting new deals done. It should be on enforcing the existing agreements and designing policies that benefit our workers.

Labor Provisions

7. Will you insist that any new trade agreement include in its core text the five basic internationally-recognized core labor rights as stated in International Labor Organization (ILO) conventions? These rights deal with freedom of association; the right to organize and bargain collectively; the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labor; the effective abolition of child labor; the elimination of the worst forms of child labor; and the elimination of discrimination with respect to employment and occupation.

Please Circle One: **Yes** **No**

Additional Comments:

I have long called for strong and enforceable labor provisions to be a part of trade agreements. I also believe that we must vigorously enforce our agreements. As President, I will double the enforcement staff at the Office of the United States Trade Representative and I will appoint a trade enforcement officer to ensure that our trade partners properly honor their agreements.

I have been proud to stand with organized labor, and I believe that the right to organize and bargain collectively is a fundamental right. I am an original co-sponsor of the Employee Free Choice Act, which would level the playing field between workers and employers and ensure that employees will not be unfairly punished by their employers for attempting to unionize. As President, I will work to sign the EFCA into law.

In addition, I will ensure that the economic benefits of trade are fairly distributed and that workers hurt by the global economy receive the help they need. When American workers are hurt by globalization, we have an obligation to give them the tools they need to get back on their feet. As President, I will expand the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program to help displaced workers. I will extend TAA benefits to service workers. I will broaden TAA to cover all workers whose plants have moved to any foreign country (including China and India), rather than simply those countries with which we have free trade agreements. I will also double funding for TAA's job training program, because education and training are important for equipping workers for the jobs of tomorrow. I will also overhaul the Health Coverage Tax Credit (HCTC), making the subsidy far more generous and enabling certain beneficiaries to use it to buy into the health plan that is available to Members of Congress.

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8. Will you insist that failing to meet and follow these worker rights standards must be subject to the same dispute resolution and enforcement mechanisms and penalties currently used to enforce intellectual property and other commercial provisions in trade agreements?

Please Circle One: Yes No

Additional Comments:

Every trade agreement must have strong and enforcement labor and environmental provisions, and those provisions should be subject to the same enforcement mechanisms as the commercial provisions.

Environmental Provisions

9. Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) allow nations to follow their own environmental, health and safety standards adopted in reliance on the precautionary principle, thereby recognizing the legitimate rights of governments to protect their public health, safety and environment. Will you insist that any new trade agreement must incorporate requirements to adopt and enforce major multilateral environmental agreements, which comprise the global consensus on basic environmental protection?

Please Circle One: Yes No

Additional Comments:

Every trade agreement must have strong and enforcement labor and environmental provisions, and those provisions should be subject to the same enforcement mechanisms as the commercial provisions.

10. Will you insist that failing to meet such standards must be subject to the same dispute resolution and enforcement mechanisms and penalties currently used to enforce intellectual property and other commercial provisions in trade agreements?

Please Circle One: Yes No

Additional Comments:

Every trade agreement must have strong and enforcement labor and environmental provisions, and those provisions should be subject to the same enforcement mechanisms as the commercial provisions.

Agricultural Provisions

11. Will you insist upon trade agreements that secure family farmers' livelihoods by offering fair prices for their products, that support measures to safeguard the health of rural communities, and that ensure the right of farm laborers to fair wages, contracts, and safe working conditions?

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Please Circle One: Yes No

Additional Comments:

Foreign Investor Rights

Existing trade deals like NAFTA and CAFTA give foreign investors greater rights than U.S. residents or businesses. These trade agreements allow foreign businesses to bypass the courts and directly sue the United States in foreign trade tribunals. These pacts empower foreign investors to challenge our U.S. environmental, zoning, health and safety laws before U.N. and World Bank tribunals to demand compensation in taxpayer dollars. Since CAFTA, agreements have extended such foreign investor rights to enforcement for timber, mining, construction and other concession contracts with the U.S. Federal government.

12. Will your administration ensure future trade agreements do not include private investor-state enforcement systems and also ensure that state-state investment rules do not grant foreign investors and overseas companies greater rights than U.S. residents or businesses?

Please Circle One: Yes No

Additional Comments:

I attest that these answers represent my beliefs, are now part of the public record, and may be used by the WFTC to keep member groups and the public informed about trade issues.

Hillary Rodham Clinton

February 18, 2008

Signature

Date

Thank you for your willingness to fill out our questionnaire. We would like to act as a resource of information to you and your campaign. We look forward to working with you over the period of your candidacy, and thereafter.