

State Coalition Letterhead

(Edit anything in blue to fit your coalition)

For Immediate Release
November 24th, 2009

Contact: Name of Director, 608/555-8585
State Director, Name of State Coalition

[Town Hall Meeting] to Focus on Trade Turnaround

Group Sheds Light on Local Impact of World Trade Organization

Green Bay, WI – Activists are gathering on the ten year anniversary of Seattle protest rallies that shut down a World Trade Organization (WTO) ministerial in 1999, in an effort to show how the global finance system is impacting our local communities across (state).

“Thinking globally and acting locally has never been more important than here and now, in response to the WTO”, said Jane Doe, director of the state fair trade coalition. “Whether it’s our paycheck, our job security, the climate, or the cost of a car or can of tuna, global trade impacts our everyday life, and the current system isn’t working.”

The WTO scheduled their 7th ministerial on November 30th, the exact same day as the ten year anniversary of Seattle protests. Local activists are using this date as a rallying cry to show the impact of corporate globalization on jobs, wages, climate and the environment and banking regulation.

“Letting the banks run loose got us into the current mess,” added Joe Labor Leader. “And now we can’t plug up these basic financial loopholes under the current WTO rules.”

Current World Trade Organization rules lock in regulations of financial sectors under WTO jurisdiction. Countries, including the United States, risk WTO challenges if they attempt to reregulate certain elements of the financial industry.

“There is a tremendous contradiction between the recent G20 communiqué calling for more regulation, and the push for deregulation under Doha Round expansion,” added Bigwig Academic, a coalition member. “The question is whether we’ve learned our lesson about deregulation, and now switch course, or whether we continue to follow the failed policies of the Doha Round at the WTO.”

The Doha Round -- the WTO expansion negotiation started in 2001—would require further financial service deregulation and liberalization for the 154 WTO signatory countries. Right now, U.S. positions at the Doha Round are the same as those from before the crisis. Trade advocates argue under the conservative standard of ‘**first, do no further harm**’, these positions must be withdrawn.

“Our trading laws are not immutable,” added Environmental Activist. “They are crafted by large corporations to make huge profits, and can be rewritten by citizens to better serve us.”

The coalition is made up of groups from the environmental, labor, consumer, family farm, religious, and civil society. They advocate that international trade and investment are not ends unto themselves, but instead must be viewed as a means for achieving other societal goals such as economic justice, human rights, healthy communities, and a sound environment.

###