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Flush the TPP - a message from AWPPW Vice President Greg Pallesen

Brothers and Sisters,

President Obama's administration continues pursuit of the new multi-national trade agreement called the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade act. The AWPPW leadership and a number of AWPPW members also continue to actively oppose the TAA. History certainly shows there will be another mass exodus of U.S. jobs, especially manufacturing jobs, if the TPP negotiations are completed then passed by the U.S. Congress.

Although U.S. Trade Ambassador Ron Kirk has announced he is leaving the position Kirk believes TPP negotiations are at a point where in order for the TPP to become reality President Obama will need to have Presidential "Fast Track" authority. As trade negotiators rush to complete the massive new Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Free Trade Agreement, we need your help encouraging our elected officials to stand up and declare an end to business-as-usual trade policy.

The following is a synopsis of our recent National TPP Organizing Call that was coordinated by Arthur Stamoulis, Executive Director Citizens' Trade Campaign.

National TPP Organizing Call

Thank you to our presenter Lori Wallach. Here are some bullet points recapping Fast Track and its connection to the TPP struggle:

- *An Anti-Democratic Policy.* Fast Track is a Nixon-era trade policymaking procedure that delegates Congress' constitutional authority to "regulate Commerce with foreign nations" to the executive branch. Fast Track allows the White House to select countries with which to negotiate special trade and investment pacts; to negotiate the substance of those pacts; to sign the pacts; and then present them to Congress for a mandatory "up or down" vote that circumvents ordinary committee review, amendment and debate procedures.
- *Needed to Pass the Worst Trade Pacts.* For the vast majority of U.S. history, trade has flourished without Fast Track. Even in recent decades, the United States has passed numerous trade policies without it — but they have typically been much smaller in their scale and scope than the damaging pacts we are most concerned with. The biggest, most radical and far-reaching policies, such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the Central America Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA), the World Trade Organization (WTO) and trade preferences for China, were all passed under Fast Track and could not have been passed without it.
- *Needed to Complete the TPP Negotiations.* The U.S. Trade Representative has already says he needs Fast Track — not only to get a final Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) through Congress, but to complete the negotiations with other countries. Foreign governments are loathe to make politically-difficult concessions to the United States during the TPP negotiations when they're not even sure that the Obama administration has the power to get the TPP through Congress. They don't want to be put in a situation in which they accept political consequences at home, sign a deal, and are then told they'll need to make more concessions to get the deal through the U.S. Congress.

- *Our Contribution to the Global TPP Campaign.* The good news is that Fast Track expired in 2007, and will require an act of Congress in order to be reinstated. ***Preventing the reinstatement of Fast Track is the single most important contribution U.S. activists can make to the global campaign to defeat the TPP.***
- *We Can Win.* Trade activists prevented Fast Track from being reauthorized during the Clinton administration. When it finally was renewed in 2002, it happened during a midnight session and won by only two votes. The political terrain on which we're operating in 2013 is actually better today than it was 2002 or even in the late 1990s. The most likely path to victory is convincing most House Democrats to oppose Fast Track (joining with the votes of a handful of Republicans who have long opposed Fast Track on constitutional grounds). That said, after the recent elections, there are also more "fair trade" U.S. Senators than any time in recent history, and filibuster reform notwithstanding, we would only need 40 there to win.
- *The Timing.* The Obama administration has announced it wants to conclude the TPP negotiations by October 2013, which presumably means that, unless we make it too politically untenable for them, they will request Fast Track some time this year. It's possible the President could request Fast Track — which he is likely to call Trade Promotion Authority or TPA — during his State of the Union Address on February 12. If he doesn't, it's also possible that Republicans will decide to move forward with Fast Track legislation independent of a formal request as early as this February. The better we do our jobs, the longer it will be put off.
- *How We Win.* We need to put sustained, in-district pressure upon Members of Congress from both the House and Senate in 2013 letting them know that we are angry with the direction of the TPP negotiations and will not accept a granting of Fast Track authority for the TPP.

For those interested in more background on the TPP itself, recordings of the [December 2012 call](#) and [November 2012 call](#) are available. You can also download talking points, template resolutions and more in our [TPP Organizer's Toolkit](#).

TPP Bird-Dogging Action Team

- We need volunteers in every Congressional district throughout the country who are willing to keep an eye out for Town Halls and other public events held by U.S. Representatives and U.S. Senators. Please take a moment now to visit [your Member of Congress' websites](#) and sign up for their email lists, so that you're receiving invitations to their constituent events. Once you've done so, please let us know at by filling out [the TPP Bird-Dogging Action Team sign-up form](#).
- When you hear about an upcoming Town Hall or public event with your Members of Congress, please let us know at info@citizenstrade.org.

- Whenever possible, please attend the event yourself and ask a pointed question like, "I am angry that U.S. trade negotiators have refused to tell the American public what they've been proposing in our names for the Trans-Pacific Partnership, while simultaneously giving hundreds of corporate lobbyists, including those from Wal-Mart, Chevron and Cargill, access to the negotiating texts. We can't afford for the TPP to become another back-room deal that enriches big corporations at the expense of working people. Will you commit to opposing Fast Track authority for the TPP?"
- Please report back what the Representative or Senator says at info@citizenstrade.org— and please don't hesitate to contact us if you want background on the Member's past trade positions or if you need help crafting a Member-specific question or comment. Contact information: Citizen Trade Campaign 202/494-8826 or AWPWW 503-228-7486.

Other Action Steps

- Please help circulate the [Cross-Border Unity Statement](#) on the TPP for organizational sign-on.
- If you're on Twitter, please use the hashtag #StopTPP when tweeting about the TPP and Fast Track. You can also follow us at @citizenstrade.
- In particular please **call or email** your Senators asking them to **oppose** the TPP trade act and **endorse** [The 21st Century Trade and Market Access Act](#) that was first introduced by Senator Sherrod Brown of Ohio. The 21st Century Trade and Market Access Act reasserts Congressional and public oversight over the TPP and future trade policies. It sets a range of binding negotiating requirements regarding labor rights, the environment, food safety and other provisions that are needed to ensure that the TPP and other pacts actually improve life for ordinary working people in Oregon and throughout the world.

The bill also establishes commonsense compliance reporting mechanisms and export promotion activities in order to maximize the job creation potential of U.S. trade agreements — transforming “job creation” and “human rights” in U.S. trade policy from cynical hype into reality.

Example call/email language:

Dear Senator:

Please co-sponsor previously submitted [Senate bill S-3347](#), called "The 21st Century Trade and Market Access Act", to reassert Congressional and public oversight over the Trans-Pacific Partnership and future trade policies. The legislation sets a number of binding negotiating requirements regarding labor rights, the environment, food safety and other provisions that are needed to ensure that the TPP and other pacts improve living conditions for ordinary working people in the U.S. and throughout the world. It also establishes commonsense compliance reporting mechanisms and the streamlining of trade and export promotion activities in order to maximize the job creation potential of U.S. trade agreements.

I look forward to hearing your decision on this matter.

Sincerely,

Further Background

Lori Wallach is currently updating her book "The Rise and Fall of Fast Track Authority." In the meantime, the May 2009 version of the book is available at www.FastTrackHistory.org

Lori Wallach was a founder of the Citizens Trade Campaign and is now the Director of Public Citizen's Global Trade Watch division. Launched by Wallach in 1995, Global Trade Watch is a leader in the global citizen movement for fair trade and investment policy. A Harvard-trained lawyer, Wallach has promoted the public interest regarding globalization and international commercial agreements in every forum: Wallach has testified on NAFTA, GATT-WTO, and other trade issues before over 30 U.S. congressional committees, numerous other countries' legislatures, the U.S. International Trade Commission and the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative. Wallach's work in "translating" arcane trade legalese – entire proposed international commercial agreements – into relevant, accessible prose has had significant national and international impact.

Wallach has served as a trade commentator on CNN, ABC, CNBC, C-SPAN, and regularly appears on such programs as *All Things Considered* and *The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer*. Wallach's most recent book is *Whose Trade Organization? A Comprehensive Guide to the WTO*.

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