

TALKING POINTS:

- **Congress has the sole authority for writing the laws on trade policy and passing them after full, open democratic debate in committees and on the floor of the House and the Senate.**

Article I Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution states: The Congress shall have Power to regulate Commerce with Foreign Nations. Congress can also offer amendments.

- **“FAST TRACK” subverts the intention of the Constitution and often allows profits to determine policies, even when they threaten sovereign US rights to protect citizens, workers, and local economies. “**

Fast Track” or Presidential Trade Promotion Authority was instituted by President Nixon in 1971. It is called Presidential Trade Promotion Authority because the President submits a letter to Congress asking that they give him the authority to unilaterally negotiate the content of trade agreements and sign these complex agreements.

- **Fast Track gives the President too much power** and means that the role of Congress in debate and voting is strictly conditioned and allows the President to control the process:

*normal Congressional committee process is limited and hearings may be forbidden

*debate on the House and Senate floor is limited

*no amendments are allowed

*in total all discussion must take place within a very limited number of days and vote must take place within a limited number of hours.

- **Trade agreements are highly technical and complex documents that we can not expect Congress to be able to read, understand and discuss in the limited time under Fast Track.** The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) text was 1,700 pages long including appendices.
- Furthermore, **the TPP unlike all other trade agreement negotiations, the TPP has been negotiated in secret.** There are 29 chapters only a few of which deal with trade in manufactured goods. The remainder will impact all aspect of our lives: health, jobs, medicines, labor, food, and the environment.
- **We must stop Fast Track** because it is used to pass unpopular and highly controversial agreements like NAFTA, the World Trade Organization, and the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) that have had terrible impacts on US jobs, economy, labor, and the environment.
- **We don't NEED Fast Track.** Hundreds of trade agreements became law without Fast Track; only 16 trade agreements require Fast Track to become law.
- **Biggest Treaty, Biggest Implications.** The TPP is the largest broad regional agreement to be negotiated to date. It includes 12 Pacific Rim countries at different levels of development and will have huge long term impacts on all these countries. **This demands immediate action of your member of Congress to stop the Fast Track process and the TPP.**