

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 12, 2013

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

We are strong supporters of American trade expansion. We are also strong supporters of the U.S. Constitution. Article I-8 of the Constitution gives Congress exclusive authority to set the terms of trade. Meanwhile, the executive branch has constitutional authority to negotiate with foreign sovereigns on behalf of our nation. The Founders established this clear check and balance to prevent the president from unilaterally negotiating with foreign nations and imposing trade policies that Congress would deem to be against the national interest.

For two hundred years of our nation's history, Congress led our nation's trade policy. However, recent presidents have seized Congress' constitutional trade authority and also "diplomatically legislated" on numerous other matters under Congress' jurisdiction using a procedure commonly known as "Fast Track", or "Trade Promotion Authority."

Under Fast Track, the executive branch is empowered to sign trade agreements *before* Congress has an opportunity to vote on them, and then unilaterally write legislation making the pacts' terms U.S. federal law. Fast Track allows the president to send these executive branch-authored bills directly to the floor for a vote under rules forbidding all floor amendments and limiting debate. And by requiring the House to vote on the bill within a preset period of time, it takes the floor schedule out of the hands of the House majority and gives it to the president.

Given these factors, we do not agree to cede our constitutional authority to the executive through an approval of a request for "Fast Track Trade Promotion Authority."

Sincerely,



Walter B. Jones (NC-03)
Member of Congress



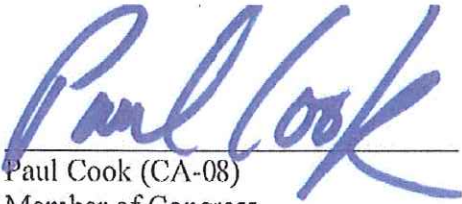
Michele Bachmann (MN-06)
Member of Congress



Dana Rohrabacher (CA-48)
Member of Congress



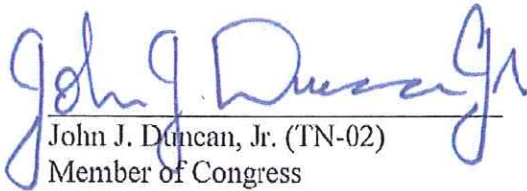
Louie Gohmert (TX-01)
Member of Congress



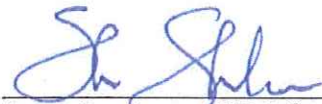
Paul Cook (CA-08)
Member of Congress



David B. McKinley (WV-01)
Member of Congress



John J. Duncan, Jr. (TN-02)
Member of Congress



Steve Stockman (TX-36)
Member of Congress



Frank A. LoBiondo (NJ-02)
Member of Congress



Rob Bishop (UT-01)
Member of Congress



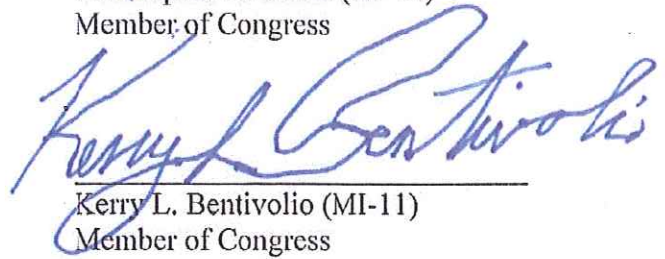
Chris Collins (NY-27)
Member of Congress



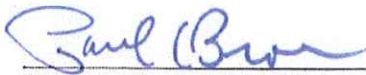
Christopher H. Smith (NJ-04)
Member of Congress



John L. Mica (FL-07)
Member of Congress



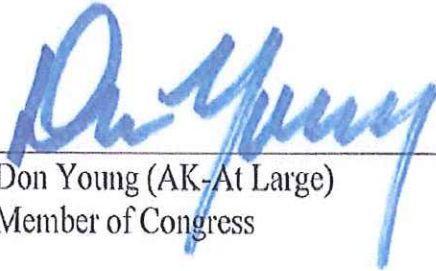
Kerry L. Bentivolio (MI-11)
Member of Congress



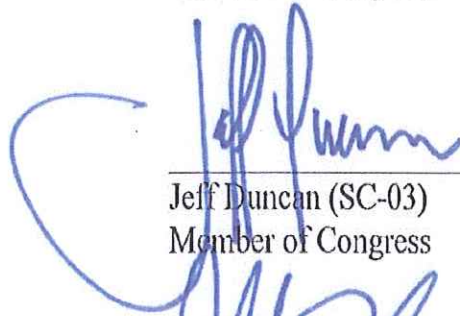
Paul C. Broun (GA-10)
Member of Congress



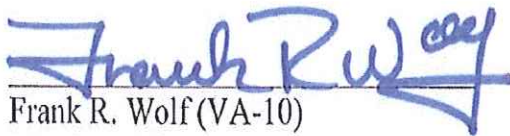
Mo Brooks (AL-05)
Member of Congress



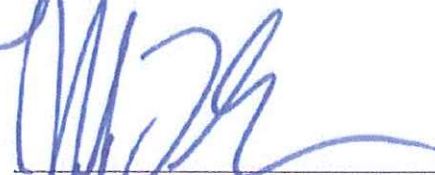
Don Young (AK-At Large)
Member of Congress



Jeff Duncan (SC-03)
Member of Congress



Frank R. Wolf (VA-10)
Member of Congress



Jeff Denham (CA-10)
Member of Congress



Michael G. Fitzpatrick (PA-08)
Member of Congress



Duncan Hunter (CA-50)
Member of Congress