

Occupy Wall Street

Trade Justice Working Group

For Immediate Release
3/28/12

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“Retire at 50, Wall Street Joe!”

As 1% Celebrate Rep. Crowley's 50th B-day at Grand Hyatt Fundraising Soiree, OWS Demonstrators Denounce Corruption, Free Trade Votes & Hold Mock Crowley Birthday Party and Campaign Rally

Who: Members of Occupy Wall Street Trade Justice Working Group, TradeJustice New York Metro, Global Justice for Animals and the Environment, and other groups.

What: One group of protesters will demonstrate outside Congressman Joseph Crowley's 50th Birthday Fundraiser at the Grand Hyatt while another group with corporate logo face masks will hold a pro-Crowley rally and birthday celebration, where a protester masked as Crowley will give a speech reaffirming his commitment to take corporate cash and vote for free trade agreements that help the rich get richer, but will hurt workers and the environment at home and abroad.

When: Thursday, March 29th, 6PM-8:30PM

Where: Grand Hyatt Hotel, 109 East 42nd Street at Grand Central Terminal, between Park Avenue and Lexington Avenue, Manhattan, NYC

Why: Queens Congressional Rep. Joseph Crowley, heads the New Democrats Coalition, an alliance of centrist, pro-corporate Democratic legislators. A ProPublica expose revealed the New Democrats's close ties to “large banks, pharmaceutical firms, insurance companies, and big-ticket trade groups” (<http://www.propublica.org/article/new-democrat-coalition>). The Office of Congressional Ethics recently recommended a full-blown probe of whether Crowley improperly solicited donations from corporate executives just before voting on legislation overhauling Wall Street. The scrutiny centers on a series of fund-raisers at which he collected thousands of dollars from financial power brokers before returning to the Capitol to vote against a series of amendments that would have imposed tougher restrictions on Wall Street. Crowley was reported to have received at least \$23,500 before the vote.

As New Democrats coalition leader, Crowley, a member of the House Ways and Means Committee, which oversees trade legislation, pushed Obama to pass free trade agreements with Colombia, South Korea, and Panama, pressured other Congressmembers to vote for them, and voted for all three agreements in October – despite knowing that these agreements will:

- ban regulations on Wall Street – prohibiting rules against toxic derivatives, “too big to fail”, and commonsense capital controls.
- give foreign corporation the right to sue the US for unlimited sums in international tribunals if they believe our environmental, health, food safety, and labor laws interfere with their future potential profits.
- protect the 1% and multinational corporations' use of Panamanian banks to hide their wealth to avoid paying taxes in the US while vital social services are cut. This will also help Colombia cocaine cartels linked to paramilitary terrorist groups launder drug profits.
- outsource an estimated 214,000 US jobs – many to exploitative sweatshops.
- exacerbate the destruction of the Amazon and other endangered ecosystems by oil, mining, logging, gas, and plantation agribusiness.
- encourage more assassinations of labor and community organizers in Colombia. Since Crowley's Colombia FTA vote, assassination victims include an election observer, an indigenous leader, an advocate for the rights of displaced persons, and a union organizer.
- limit access to AIDS drugs and other life saving medications by expanding corporate patent rights on drugs.

According to Adam Weissman of OWS Trade Justice, “With Obama negotiating the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a new, 9 country free trade agreement that looks to be even worse than the Panama, Colombia, and South Korea Free Trade Agreements, it's vital that we let Congressman Crowley and other Wall Street Democrats know that they will be held accountable when they sell us out to the 1%!”

Additional Info: <http://tradejustice.net/crokit>