



News Release

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Dozens of NY, NJ Organizations and Allies Condemn Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), Commit to Coordinated Effort to Defeat Trade Agreement in Wake of Deal Announcement in Atlanta

New York – In response to the announcement today by trade negotiators in Atlanta that they had reached a deal in controversial Trans-Pacific Partnership trade agreement talks, member organizations of TradeJustice New York Metro, a diverse coalition of 68 New York and New Jersey labor, environmental, human rights, health, economic justice, feminist, faith, food justice, international solidarity, internet freedom, animal rights, peace, and community advocacy groups, has announced the launch of a coordinated effort to ensure that all members of the New York and New Jersey House and Senate delegations vote against the highly unpopular trade deal. Member groups of the coalition offered statements explaining why TPP must be defeated:

“TPP is a raw deal for New Yorkers, which is Mayor DeBlasio called the agreement “a huge mistake” and the New York City Council passed a resolution condemning it. Extensive leaked negotiating text reveal the Trans-Pacific Partnership to be little more than a sweetheart deals for big pharma, big banks, agribusiness giants, the fossil fuel industry, and other megacorporations at the public's expense. The 68 member groups of TradeJustice New York Metro are committed to defeating this bad deal for New York Metro residents and will hold any member of Congress accountable in the next election if they sell out the 99% by voting for TPP.”

– Adam Weissman, Organizer, TradeJustice New York Metro

"TPP is nothing more than a corporate coup d'etat. It is dangerous for people and devastating to the planet. The NJ State Industrial Union Council finds this unfair trade deal to be totally unacceptable because, not only does it hurt workers around the world, by dragging us all down together, it also potentially prevents us from ever improving conditions. Any protections for workers or the environment will be considered impediments to profits and can be overridden. TPP threatens everything we care about - good jobs, health and safety, clean air and water, and even democracy itself. We will do everything within our power to stop the TPP and any other unfair trade deal."

– Carol E Gay, President, NJ State Industrial Union Council

"The Trans-Pacific Partnership is wrong for New Yorkers who care about keeping their jobs, breathing clean air, and drinking safe water. We'll continue to work with a broad coalition to make sure this deal is brought into the light of day and exposed for the environmental disaster that it is."

– Stephanie Low, TPP Task Force Chair, Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter

“Despite Obama administration claims that TPP will advance wildlife conservation, leaked texts reveal a toothless agreement that threatens to increase shark finning and rapacious commercial fishing. TPP's lack of strong and enforceable wildlife protections is particularly troubling given Malaysia's stated intention to use TPP to increase exports of palm oil – at the expense of rainforests, orangutans, pygmy elephants, and Malayan tigers.”

– Wendy Scher, Organizer, Global Justice for Animals and the Environment

“The vote in June for Fast Track, also known as Trade Promotion Authority, was just the curtain raiser. With Trade Promotion Authority, it will be harder to defeat the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). While TPA is mostly a zombie process bill, the TPP is the real deal—a trade agreement that will actively undermine access to health care for those who need it most around the world.”

– Michael Tikili, National Field Organizer, Health Global Access Project

“The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) will undermine key consumer, public health and environmental protections, and other trade deals that follow. We now must turn our attention to stopping it.”

– Alex Beauchamp, Northeast Region Director, Food & Water Watch.

“The TPP is a terrible deal for workers, but is even worse for those who are subject to forced labor and human trafficking. Granting favorable trade access to nations engaging in these barbaric practices would be a huge step back for humanity in the name of commerce.”

- Jamie Kemmerer, Regional Organizer, MoveOn NYC

“The broken, outdated, and anti-democratic trade negotiations process provides the perfect venue for the same lobbyists that brought us censorship bills like SOPA to push for Internet policy that benefits a select few Industries at the expense of everyone's basic freedom to connect, communicate, and express themselves online.”

– Evan Greer, Campaign Director, Fight for the Future

“The American worker faces yet another obstacle in their struggle to support themselves and their families. TPP will create a large of pool of desperate American workers fighting for whatever jobs are left here. This will weaken unions and create a new class of working poor. We need to hold the elected officials that failed to represent the interests of American workers accountable for their actions.”

– John Kubinski, Co-founder, Middle Class Action Project

“Women, especially women of color have long been at the bottom of the economic ladder. These so-called free trade agreements intensify the global race to the bottom for worker treatment. The investor rights provisions will allow the multinationals to sue any government which attempts to rectify long-term discrimination against women or to ease the social burdens on women.”

- Deb Huber, President, National Organization for Women of New Jersey

“The campaign to stop the TPP and two other supersized corporate trade treaties negotiated in secret by the Obama administration begins today. Those who vote to sell governance of the country to transnational corporations will not be forgotten by voters and will be held accountable. The largest movement against corporate trade has a strong foundation on which to revolt against the first treaty, the TPP.”

– Kevin Zeese, Co-Director, Popular Resistance

“Stopping the police to prison pipeline in New York will require disentangling the struggling upstate economy from the prison industry. One way we can do this is by strengthening New York agriculture, but TPP threatens the survival of New York farms. Under TPP, upstate farmers will have to contend with a flood of cheap and possibly unsafe imported food, a prohibition on state and local Buy Local government purchasing rules that could help support local farms, and the threat of contamination of our farmland if a foreign corporation uses TPP's investor rights provisions to pressure NY to lift our ban on fracking.”

– Lisa Drapkin, Organizer, NY Books Through Bars

“The Trans-Pacific Partnership is the worst trade deal ever for human rights in Peru. My country is going to become more vulnerable and is going to be absorbed by big corporations, who will assert intellectual property rights to Peru's biodiversity. TPP will destroy local businesses and entrepreneurial opportunities, in the process eliminating jobs and expanding poverty. Only the biggest businesses will survive, concentrating wealth in the hands of the economic elites. Joblessness will force people to turn to crime and public safety will suffer. TPP will also expand the power of corporations to challenge environmental laws, exacerbating climate change.”

– Leandra Requena, Founder and President, Peruvians in Action

“We can't allow legislation that would override pretty much EVERY democratic freedom and environmental protection, from the petty to the life-threatening and life-shortening.”

– Ken Gale, Producer/host, Eco-Logic (WBAI-FM); Founder, NYC Safe Energy Campaign

“The TPP is currently the economic centerpiece of Obama's Asia Pivot. It's goal is to ensure US hegemony at the cost of human lives and livelihood in the region. Coupled with increased US militarism, our economies will be destroyed, our lives less secure, and our territorial integrity violated for superprofits. That's why we are resisting. We are not for sale!”

– Bernadette Ellorin, Chairperson, Bayan USA

“For workers in Asia and Latin America, the completion of TPP negotiations is terrible news, like a State Coup of the world imposed a dictatorship that will decide the fate of millions deprived of the freedom to be informed and comment on their future. Peruvian know from our experience with the US-Peru Free Trade Agreement that trade deals with the US are absolutely disadvantageous – tariff elimination leaves our farmers vulnerable to subsidized US exports yet our farmers receive no government support. Social movements are active to block the TPP and the entry of 3,600 soldiers and officers of the US Army in violation of Peru's sovereignty.

– Carlos Bernal, Press Committee Member, Frenvidas (Frente por la Vida y la Soberanía / Front for Life and Sovereignty)

“TPP threatens all the environmental laws we have worked so hard to put in place. 'Investor-state' provisions in the agreement allow multinational corporations to sue governments for enforcing their own laws. Corporations could bring suit in international tribunals not only for profits lost, but for the profits they predict will be lost if we protect our air, our water, and our climate!”

– Edie Kantowitz, President, NYC Friends of Clearwater

“The Trans Pacific Partnership has the potential harm to animals worldwide. Free trade agreements negate the positive effects of animal protection laws by allowing the products of cruelty to be sold in areas where that cruelty is banned. For example, trade agreements could weaken laws that ban cosmetics testing on animals, protect habitat, restrict trade in endangered and threatened species, protect working animals, ban unethical fishing methods, and prohibit cruel factory farming practices.”

– Doris Lin, Esq., Director of Legal Affairs, Animal Protection League of New Jersey

“Citigroup gave their former executive Michael Froman a payout of more than 4 million when he left the company to become US Trade Representative, ensuring they'd have a well-paid fox using international trade negotiations to push a stealth agenda of rolling back and prohibiting essential financial industry regulations put in place to prevent another collapse.”

– Carlos Cabeza, Spokesperson, Occupy Wall Street Trade Justice Working Group

“The Trans-Pacific Partnership will undermine the hard work of animal advocates. By expanding market access for the products of industrial animal agriculture, free trade agreements like the TPP will serve to increase worldwide meat consumption. This increase will inevitably lead to greater numbers of animals being exploited and abused in addition to posing serious threats to human health and the environment.”

– Brenda Sanders, Director, Open the Cages Alliance

“God has given us the Earth to take care of and holds us accountable and responsible for the way we treat it, as evidenced in Genesis. The TPP reflects a careless, irresponsible relationship between us and the Earth. Regardless of the choices this nation makes, I will not stay silent. I choose to leverage the authority of the Gospel because God has called me to be a voice for this Earth and to voice the injustice that is so evident in this decision. Creation groans and this ecological system is crying out. I don't want to be around when God decides to punish humankind, as Revelations 11:18 says those who destroy the earth will be destroyed.”

– Minister Reinaldo Daniel Diaz, Spokesperson, NY Faith & Justice

“TPP would undermine the local environmental work we do, allowing foreign corporations to attack and overturn local laws we help pass, from banning Styrofoam or fracking to adopting local clean air laws limiting incinerator and power plant pollution.”

– Mike Ewall, Founder and Director, Energy Justice Network

“TPP would further endanger our ability to purchase safe, locally produced foods by preventing Congress from amending trade agreement rules that attack fracking bans. The agreement permits corporations to contaminate our water and soil, and also forces local farmers to compete with a flood of cheap but unsafe imported foods. The TPP would prohibit the New York legislature from passing a law to require labeling of imported food by country of origin or as containing genetically modified organisms (GMOs). As the largest consumer cooperative in the US, with 16,400 members, these issues are of great concern to us.”

– Susan Metz, Squad Leader, Park Slope Food Coop International Trade Education Squad

“After five years of secret negotiations that excluded and ignored the public, congressional leaders will attempt to ram the TPP through a “fast-track” process. By restricting floor debate, rushing votes and prohibiting amendments, fast-track rules are designed to ensure that Congress will pass TPP and other international agreements that advance the interests of corporations that profit from polluting the environment, offshoring jobs to sweatshops, and limiting access to affordable medicines. With that Congress stripped of the ability to in any way improve this rotten deal, it must be defeated altogether.”

– Pete Dolack, Blogger, Systemic Disorder

“TPP, TTIP, and TISA may expand corporate profits, but they're a raw deal for US workers and consumers, pushing an agenda of deregulation and privatization of education, water, energy, and our vital postal services. President Obama's trade agreements will also roll back financial industry reforms—circumventing regulations, limiting capital controls and prohibiting taxes on Wall Street speculation while blocking governments from boosting job creation. Even our food supply is at risk from trade deals that impose limits on domestic food safety standards and outsource domestic food.”

– Wendie Goetz, Coordinator, Garrett Constituents (NJ-5) for TradeJustice

“Now that TPP negotiations are completed, the Obama administration intends to Fast Track this secretly negotiated trade deals through TPP in an affront to democracy and the Constitution. The Constitution empowers Congress, not the President, “to regulate commerce with foreign nations”. The Office of the US Trade Representative locks TPP texts under “national security” classification, barring the public, while giving over 500 corporate-representatives direct input in negotiations. Worse yet, during the five years of negotiations, Congressmembers were only able to read limited segments, under the trade bureaucrat supervision, without taking notes, vowed to secrecy. Public access to negotiations is not a security threat. Corrupted international negotiations is a total security threat for all generations.”

– Edward Hall, Organizer, Postoccupy

“Obama grandstanded against NAFTA and the Colombia FTA on the campaign trail, then flipped and supported the FTA once in office. It took effect on his watch—over the protests of organized labor and environmentalists. The TPP would undermine democracy in the interests of corporate power on a far greater scale. It's time to raise every voice to stop this one.”

– Bill Weinberg, Writer and Editor, World War 4 Report

“The case of Vattenfall vs. Germany, where a Swedish power company is using the Energy Charter Treaty to bring a billion euro suit against Germany for phasing out nuclear power in the wake of Japan's Fukushima disaster, illustrates the danger of international agreements that grant special rights to foreign corporations. TPP contains these same extreme foreign investor rights. The Obama administration's version of 'free trade' means 'free for corporations to gain more profits without ethics.’”

– Michiko Takatani, Spokesperson, MoveOn Queens Council

“The “investor state dispute settlement” (ISDS) allows foreign investors to sue our national or local government over laws, regulations and even domestic court decisions that affect their current or future profits, and the judgment is final. Giving foreign corporations the right to bypass our domestic courts, sue us in the ISDS, and obtain settlements that bankrupt the country will put pressure on us to change or gut our laws. ISDS undermines our national sovereignty by allowing foreign investors to challenge our laws in a foreign court, to which there is no appeal.”

– Lisa Oldendorp, Regional Organizer, MoveOn Long Island

“TPP is terrible for Americans in many ways, but we're most alarmed about how it will keep us from democratically regulating the way corporations do business. TPP would allow huge companies to claim trade infringement in international trade tribunals made up of corporate lawyers, not our own US courts, which have to take our interests into account. The companies can claim immense payments (based on the loss of expected profits) from us if our laws restrict their business. We can't allow this loss of sovereignty!

– Sally Swisher, Organizer, Big Apple Coffee Party

"Only 5 of TPP's 29 chapters address genuine trade issues. Much of the remainder of the agreement is a stealth attack on domestic public interest legislation. It's perfectly clear why this deal is being negotiated in secret, after mass demonstrations led to the collapse of the Millennium Round of WTO talks and FTAA negotiations, trade bureaucrats and the corporate interests they shill for learned that the biggest threat to negotiating corporate power grabs in the form of trade deals is an informed and mobilized populace. We're also deeply concerned that TPP will go to Congress under Fast Track rules. Fast Track represents a dangerous overreach of executive authority, enabling the President to negotiate corporate power agreements under the guise of trade deals. "

– Noz Cavan, Organizer, Voters Occupy

“TPP will lead to disaster. We have been destroying our industries, decent jobs and democracy for decades with no real opposition, and big corporations are now clearly running the government. This TPP covering 40% of the global market will be the worst ever for the American people, small businesses, and the environment. Lawsuits will sabotage initiatives to promote local products, democratize credit, and protect our natural resources and public health. Monopolies will flourish and small businesses that create 60% of new jobs will disappear. Contrary to the TPP, we must free ourselves from corporate control to rescue our democracy.”

– Freddy Castiblanco, Small Business Owner, Terraza 7; Delegate for North America, Polo Democrático Alternativo.

“The fast track way to hell for millions of Mexican people has just been paved, as if we did not have enough with NAFTA. The US Government claims to defend democracy but is willing to sign secret trade agreements with governments with a proven, abundant record of violations to the most basic human rights like mine – just check the Ayotzinapa case. Since NAFTA, Mexican peasants know what ‘fast track’ means – being dispossessed of your land, forced to become cheap, undocumented labor in the US and then being blamed for all the problems of the American people and insulted by tycoons like Donald Trump.”

– Malú Huacuja del Toro, Spokesperson, OWS Zapatista Solidarity Network; Member, Somos los Otros NY.

“TPP would require the United States to expedite Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) exports with little to no environmental review pursuant to the Natural Gas Act of 1992 to countries like Japan, the second largest importer of LNG globally. TPP could encourage countries developing their energy sector like Peru and Chile to rely on LNG as a primary energy source, creating an impetus for more fracking and fracked gas infrastructure in the United States – practices that are anathema to plans for fighting climate change. Coupled with President Obama's Clean Power Plan, which encourages coal plants to switch to natural gas, more communities and particularly communities of color could face increased and unnecessary risks under TPP. Until we see what the deal entails, we are walking blindly into an uncertain and potentially fracked up future.”

– Anthony Rogers-Wright, Policy and Organizing Director, Environmental Action

“The USA is truly a nation in distress: Every US flag should be flying upside down. The passage of the Fast Track (TPA) bill last summer, via our Sold-Out, rogue congress and the completion of TPP negotiations today by the corporate cronies at the Office of the US Trade Representative (USTR) has sent a clear “middle finger” message to the 99%. The good news? Congress and USTR's unintended consequence is they have awoken a sleeping giant, uniting the far right to the far left, from the Tea Party to Occupy, Anonymous, Anarchists and even the apolitical. Game on!”

– Heidi Wendell, Volunteer, Expose the TPP-USA (parent organization of Expose the TPP-NJ and Expose the TPP-NY)

“Direct Action Everywhere NYC is concerned about the implications of the TPP in relation to farmed animals, labor, and the environment. We are against the expanded exploitation of nonhuman animals, human beings, and the shared environment we live in.”

– Sabina Makhdomi, Organizer, Direct Action Everywhere NYC

“With TPP, President Obama has prioritized the profits of Monsanto over food safety and the right of consumers to know what we are eating. The Obama administration wants to use TPP to attack the genetically modified (GM) food labeling laws of our trading partners. If TPP forces US trading partners to drop their GM food labeling requirements, they will make the same demand of the US, derailing movements here in New York and throughout the country to pass state-level GM labeling laws.”

– Michael Basillas, Community Organizer, NYC March Against Monsanto

“George Santayana said “those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.” We are disappointed Obama and the 114th Congress have decided to forge forward despite the disastrous results of NAFTA, CAFTA and the WTO and the objections of hundreds of thousands concerned citizens who begged that they not give away our national sovereignty. We have suffered from the economic crash in 2008 brought about by greedy Wall Street and the elites and what we know from leaked chapters of the TPP, regulations will continued to be eased so they can continue their recklessness at the expense of the citizenry.”

– D'Marie Mulattieri, Organizer/Founder, Americans Organized for Change

"The TPP's governance is unconstitutional. Obama, as a Constitutional law professor, knows this. Giving over US judicial power to a three party board of arbitrators chosen by corporations is a blatant subversion of the constitution by the President and Congress. Obama is intentionally undermining the United States. He and the members of Congress who voted for Fast Track are legally traitors."

-- Alexander Penley, U.S. Attorney at Law/British Solicitor, Founder, Penley Global Law

“The Occupy movement stands for local community, for self-determination. With the various trade agreements proposed, incorrectly called “free trade”, local residents lose the ability to have a voice in decisions that affect them directly—the ISDS, Investor-State Dispute Settlement system, means that corporations can sue governmental entities in off-shore tribunals, cutting residents off from the ability to appear in court. The right to be present and represented when a dispute is settled is lost with these agreements—and Fast Track means that even our representatives cannot amend agreements, but only accept or reject a complete package.”

– Sally Gellert, member, Occupy Bergen County

“Congress' passage of Fast Track authority in June was illustrative of the corrosive influence of corporate money in politics. Members of the US Business Coalition for TPP have invested hundreds of millions to ensure that members of Congress in both parties will sell out their constituents to speed the passage of trade deals that will ensure windfall profits for the giants of the tobacco, pharmaceutical, factory farm, fossil fuel, and financial industries, but that will have disastrous implications for workers, consumers, and the environment. With TPP now headed to a vote in Congress, mass organized popular resistance is the only force that offset corporate influence and ensure that we will not see a repeat of the atrocious Fast Track vote.”

– Mark Chasin, Video Journalist, StopMotionSolo

“Trade agreements enslave for “the greater good.” Sovereign Rights, individuals no longer have standing. Political abuse and corruption run rampant, given free rein by NAFTA, CAFTA, WTO, etc. Benefits of trade are non-existent. Instead they have brought INCREASED environmental destruction and toxic chemical use. Agriculture standards are Decreased, also human and animal welfare. Banks and corporations have priority, not we the people. Corporations entrap with big loans and impossible interest rates. Payback sells out natural resources of entrapped countries. WE THE PEOPLE have the power! Take action with those elected to demand our protection or end their careers. We are watching.”

– Dr. Robin Falkov, Anchor and Producer, "Event Horizons" radio

Founded in 2002, TradeJustice New York Metro is a grassroots coalition of groups and individuals in the New York metropolitan area united in opposition to so-called "free trade" agreements modeled after NAFTA, the infamous North American Free Trade Agreement. Our aim is to prevent the passage of these agreements, instigate the repeal of NAFTA-style agreements that have already passed, create dialogues among diverse communities in New York City and throughout the world on alternatives to the NAFTA model, and to reclaim popular control over the decision-making process on international trade policy. Visit TradeJustice at <http://tradejustice.net>.

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