

U.S. Business & Industry Council
Sierra Club
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Read the full poll results at <http://fasttrackpoll.info>

Nationwide, Bipartisan Survey Finds Strong Voter Opposition to Fast Track Authority for Trade Deals Such as the Trans Pacific Partnership

Washington, D.C. -- A nationwide, bipartisan survey of voters' attitudes about "fast track" authority and the Trans Pacific Partnership found strong opposition to Congress's approving "fast track" authorization, with a strong majority of Americans indicating their belief that trade agreements make the country worse off.

The survey was conducted Jan. 14-18, 2014 by Hart Research Associates, a Democratic pollster, and Chesapeake Beach Consulting, a Republican polling firm. It was jointly sponsored by the Sierra Club, the U.S. Business and Industry Council and the Communications Workers of America.

Voter opposition to fast track authorization is broad, with 62 percent saying they oppose fast track authority for the TPP trade deal, versus 28 percent who say they favor it. After hearing an equal number of arguments that have been made by organizations supporting and opposing fast track, voter opposition grew to 65 percent, including 45 percent indicating that they are strongly opposed.

In households where a voter either owns or works for a small business, the verdict is clear: 64 percent say they expect TPP to hurt more than help small business.

On wages and jobs, the environment and food safety, voters clearly believe that TPP will make things worse. By a 35 point margin, voters believe that TPP would make things worse in terms of American wages (56-21). By a 30 point margin, voters believe that TPP would make things worse environmentally, not better (48-18). Among voters under age 35, 54 percent say that TPP would have an adverse environmental impact. A full 63 percent believe that TPP would make U.S food safety worse.

"We're up against big corporations and deep-pocketed polluters, but environmental groups, labor unions, and other allies have the support of American voters. We need to work together to let people know how this behemoth of a trade deal would affect our jobs, our wages, our access to clean water and air, and our safety as consumers. And we need Members of Congress to oppose fast-tracking the Trans-Pacific Partnership," said Ilana Solomon, director of the Sierra Club's Responsible Trade Program.

"Republican Members of Congress and their political advisors ignore at their peril the massive opposition of Republican and Independent voters to Congressional passage of fast track trade authority.

They are also gravely concerned about the negative impact the proposed TPP will have on jobs in this anemic recovery. These voters know firsthand what the Republican leadership studiously ignores: Since the U.S. runs persistently high trade deficits under current outmoded trade policies – a cumulative deficit of \$10 Trillion in goods since NAFTA – trade displaces many more jobs than it creates and small businesses and their employees suffer disproportionately,” said Kevin L. Kearns, president of the U.S. Business and Industry Council.

“Trade agreements are no longer just about tariffs and quotas. They are about the food we eat, the air we breathe, the jobs we hold. We cannot abdicate this process to non-elected representatives. Trade policy, done correctly, is a win for the U.S. economy and U.S. workers. But fast tracking this TPP will reduce the quality of life for Americans,” said CWA President Larry Cohen.

Among other survey findings:

- Opposition to fast track authority remains strong across incomes, with 60 percent of voters in households with incomes under \$50,000 and 65 percent of those with incomes over \$100,000 expressing opposition to fast track authority.
- Republicans overwhelmingly oppose giving fast track authority to the president (87 percent oppose), as do Independents (66 percent). Only Democratic voters give a slight edge to favoring fast track, with 52 percent in favor and 35 percent opposed.
- More than half of non-college white voters, or 53 percent, are less likely to re-elect a Member of Congress who supports fast track.