

**350.org * Athens County (OH) Fracking Action Network * Berks Gas Truth *
Catskill Mountainkeeper * Catskill Citizens for Safe Energy * Center for Biological Diversity *
Center for International Environmental Law * Chesapeake Climate Action Network *
Clean Economy Coalition of the Coastal Bend * Clean Water Action *
Delaware Riverkeeper Network * Defenders of Wildlife * Earthjustice * Earthworks *
Energy Action Coalition * Environmental Action * Environmental Health Coalition *
Environmental Investigation Agency * Food & Water Watch * Friends of the Earth * Friends of
Merrymeeting Bay * Greenpeace USA * Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy *
Institute for Policy Studies, Climate Policy Program * League of Conservation Voters *
Natural Resources Defense Council * Oil Change International * Olympic Climate Action *
Partnership for Policy Integrity * People Demanding Action *
PODER (People Organized in Defense of Earth and her Resources) * Progressive Democrats of
America * Progressive Democrats of America Maryland * Rainforest Action Network *
Safe Climate Campaign * Sierra Club * Southern Oregon Climate Action Now * SustainUS *
The SEED Coalition * The Texas Drought Project *
Union of Concerned Scientists, Center for Science and Democracy * U.S. Climate Plan *
Washington Environmental Council * Wild Earth Guardians**

January 21, 2015

Dear Member of Congress:

As leading U.S. environmental and science organizations, we write to express our strong opposition to “fast track” trade promotion authority and to urge you to oppose any legislation that would limit the ability of Congress to ensure that trade pacts deliver benefits for communities, workers, public health, and the environment.

Fast track empowers the president to send already-signed trade agreements to Congress for straight up or down votes with limited debate and no amendments. Fast track was originally designed in the 1970s when trade agreements focused on traditional trade issues such as cutting tariffs and lifting quotas. Today’s trade agreements, however, are about much more than tariffs and quotas and have significant implications for our environment, public health, and global climate.

Under negotiation in the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), for example, are rules that would grant foreign corporations the right to sue governments, in private tribunals, over environmental, public health, and other laws and policies that corporations allege reduce the value of their investment; rules that would require the United States Department of Energy to automatically approve exports of liquefied natural gas to countries in the pacts with no analysis to determine whether exporting natural gas is in the public interest; and a system for “harmonizing” regulations that could significantly weaken public health and environmental protections by offering new opportunities for foreign governments and corporations to intervene early on in our rule-making process.

This new, expansive, model of trade requires a more inclusive and open process to set the terms of how such pacts are negotiated, approved, and implemented. The old fast track is simply not

appropriate given the scope and subject matter covered by today's pacts. Moreover, we believe it is particularly inappropriate to give fast track authority to agreements that are both far along in the negotiation process and that have been negotiated with an astonishing lack of transparency.

U.S. involvement in trade negotiations should be guided by democracy, transparency, political accountability and must lead to a 'race to the top' that provides real protections for communities, workers, and the environment. A new model of trade that delivers benefits for most Americans, promotes broadly shared prosperity, and safeguards the environment and public health is possible. To achieve such goals, however, fast track must be replaced with a new system for negotiating and implementing trade agreements that includes a Congressional role in selecting appropriate trading partners; the publishing of government submissions and composite texts during the negotiations; Congressional certification that trade goals have been met before trade negotiations can conclude; and Congressional authorization for the executive branch to sign and enter into trade agreements.¹

We once again urge you to oppose fast track legislation and replace the outdated fast track procedures with a new trade negotiating and approval process that would help deliver trade agreements that could benefit workers, communities, public health, and the environment.

Sincerely,

350.org	Institute for Policy Studies, Climate Policy Program
Athens County (OH) Fracking Action Network	League of Conservation Voters
Berks Gas Truth	Natural Resources Defense Council
Catskill Mountainkeeper	Oil Change International
Catskill Citizens for Safe Energy	Olympic Climate Action
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Food & Water Watch	U.S. Climate Plan
Friends of the Earth	Washington Environmental Council
Friends of Merrymeeting Bay	Wild Earth Guardians
Greenpeace USA	
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy	

¹ For more information on our proposed elements for a new model of trade authority, [see the civil society letter signed by nearly 600 organizations to Senator Wyden](#).