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Obama Shifts Away From Jobs Message to Promote Bush-Signed Trade Pacts Projected by Official Government Studies to Increase Trade Deficit

Statement of Lori Wallach, Director, Public Citizen's Global Trade Watch

It is bizarre that President Barack Obama has switched from his long-awaited focus on jobs to spending effort passing three George W. Bush-signed, NAFTA-style trade deals that official government studies show will increase our trade deficit even as polls show most Americans oppose NAFTA-style trade pacts and recognize that they kill American jobs.

The only way these deals will pass is if congressional GOP lawmakers expose themselves to the foreseeable election attack ads and provide President Obama almost all of the votes; most congressional Democrats will oppose these deals, which are loved by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and despised by the Democratic base groups.

Apparently, the Obama team has a way to win re-election that does not involve Ohio or other industrial swing states. We saw with NAFTA in 1993 the dire political consequences of a Democratic president blurring distinctions between the parties on this third-rail issue of trade and jobs. And unlike NAFTA, this time, even official government studies show that these pacts will increase our trade deficit.

Note: For information about Korea free trade agreement (FTA) deficit and job loss projections as well as the politics of the FTA votes, please contact Bryan Buchanan to arrange an interview with a representative of Public Citizen's Global Trade Watch.

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