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April Fools’ Protests Nationwide Warn Members of Congress That ‘The TPP’s No Joke,’ Take On Falsehoods Used to Try to Sell Beleaguered Pact

*Coast-to-Coast Constituents Deliver Oversized April Fools’ TPP Cards at
Congressional Offices, PhRMA TPP Protests Held in Four U.S. Cities, TPP
April Fools Video Released*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) was the target of April Fools’ Day protests and actions nationwide as the campaign to defeat the beleaguered trade pact intensifies and as opposition to the TPP and America’s failed trade policy play a central role in the presidential and congressional races nationwide.

At rallies and other events at congressional offices from Connecticut and Maryland to California and Oregon and points in between, constituents delivered oversized poster board April Fools’ Day cards, hand-signed by constituents. In Washington, D.C., at the offices of the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA), and in New York, Boston, San Francisco as well as Tokyo, Sydney and other global capitals, protestors rallied against the TPP’s extreme monopoly provisions that will raise medicine prices.

Public Citizen released a [video](#) echoing the cards’ theme that it is April Fools’ Day every day for “TPP groupies.” The video debunks the falsehoods being used to promote the TPP. It features clips from U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman, the presidents of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, National Association of Manufacturers and others. The April Fools’ Day cards also were delivered to Washington, D.C., offices of members of the U.S. House of Representatives.

“The time for exposing the foolishness in passing more job-killing trade deals is now,” said Michael Shannon, executive director of the Oregon Fair Trade Campaign, which is delivering cards in that state. “The legacy of past deals has been increased deficits, lost jobs and depressed wages. Congress should not get fooled again, repeating the same mistakes hoping for a different result.”

Jon Weissman, coordinator of Western Massachusetts Jobs With Justice, explained why his colleagues visited the office of U.S. Rep. Richard Neal (D-Mass.) with a card: “We’re concerned that Representative Neal won’t tell us now how he is going to vote. There’s nothing new for him to learn.”

Pam Wilt, political coordinator of the Maryland Communications Workers of America (CWA), who will be at a rally today at U.S. Rep. Steny Hoyer’s (D-Md.) Greenbelt office, said, “The TPP will reduce service, public and manufacturing jobs in the U.S., lower U.S. wages because we can’t compete with low wages in countries like Vietnam, erode workers’ rights and undermine government preferences for American made goods and services. These are just some of the reasons CWA opposes the TPP and encourages Congressman Hoyer to vote NO.”

Patient advocates joined the nationwide TPP protests today because of their concerns over the provisions of the pact that would lock in monopoly protections and raise prices for lifesaving medicines.

“Patient lives are on the line now. We can’t wait. We demand affordable prices and a stop to practices that block access to care, especially those promoted by the deadly terms included in the TPP. We need the U.S. government to take the lead and to start proposing real solutions to the current global crisis in access to medicines,” said Ali Greenberg, advocacy and campaigns officer for Universities Allied for Essential Medicines.

Today’s actions come at an inopportune time for the Obama administration, which continues to push for congressional approval of the TPP before the end of the president’s term. As the bipartisan trade revolt builds nationwide, prospects for passage decrease for the pact.

Organizations involved in today’s action include the Sierra Club, Communications Workers of America, Jobs With Justice, Alliance for Retired Americans, Alliance for Democracy, Public Citizen, Citizen’s Trade Campaign, the Oregon Fair Trade Campaign, Universities Allied for Essential Medicines, the Student Global AIDS Campaign, ACT UP, DC Fights Back, the Health Equity Committee of the Metro Washington Public Health Association, and Cancer Families for Affordable Medicine.

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