



**Ohio Senate**  
Statehouse  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

March 31, 2004

Governor Robert Taft  
77 South High Street  
30<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Governor Taft,

In September 2003, the United States Trade Representative (USTR) Robert Zoellick sent a letter to governors around the country urging them to sign on to the government procurement provisions in trade agreements currently under negotiation - as well as all future trade agreements.

What the Zoellick letter fails to explain is that signing on to these procurement agreements effectively overturns many current state procurement policies and ties the hands of states that want to control their own state procurement policies, create good local jobs, and protect the interest of consumers.

Not only does consent to the U.S.T.R.'s request constrain our state's ability to implement sound public policies that benefit the citizens of our state- it also upsets the delicate balance of power between the state's executive and legislative branches. Good government demands that the state legislature - after public hearing and debate - vote on any decision that permanently binds a state to international rules on procurement.

Stopping the export of American jobs has become one of the top issues in voters' minds. The national news media as well as state and local newspapers run stories on this issue each day. Fortunately, our state has not yet signed on to existing and proposed agreements that deal with procurement issues.

On behalf of our constituents, we urge you not to give consent to be bound by these or any other future trade agreements dealing with procurement issues. Instead, any decision about whether or not to be bound by future trade agreements should be submitted to the state legislature. I hope you will work with us to preserve our ability to use state tax dollars to support working families and good jobs right here in Ohio. We look forward to working with you on this important issue.

Gregory L. DiDonato  
Senate Minority Leader

Sincerely,

Mark Mallory  
Assistant Minority Leader



C.J. Prentiss  
Senate Minority Whip



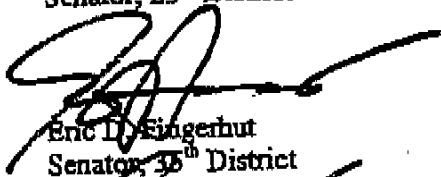
Teresa Fedor  
Senate Assistant Minority Whip



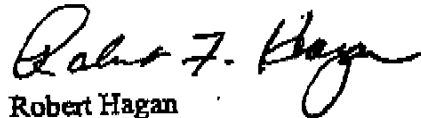
Dan Brady  
Senator, 23<sup>rd</sup> District



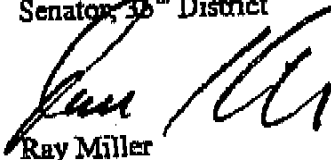
Marc Dann  
Senator, 32<sup>nd</sup> District



Eric D. Fingerhut  
Senator, 35<sup>th</sup> District



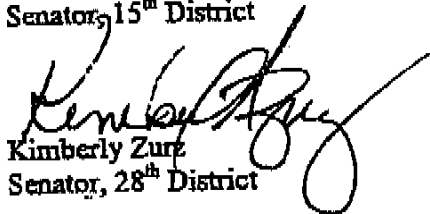
Robert Hagan  
Senator, 33<sup>rd</sup> District



Ray Miller  
Senator, 15<sup>th</sup> District



Tom Roberts  
Senator, 5<sup>th</sup> District



Kimberly Zure  
Senator, 28<sup>th</sup> District