



Wisconsin Resolution to Replace “Fast Track” Trade Authority: A First Step in Fixing Washington’s Failed Trade Policies

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Milwaukee -- The Wisconsin State Senate passed a resolution calling on Congress to replace the President’s “Fast Track” trade authority with a “more democratic, inclusive mechanism that enshrines the principles of federalism and state sovereignty,” reinforcing a prominent theme from the midterm elections: Americans want to rethink our course on trade.

Passing in the same week that the Bush administration released the legal texts for free trade agreements with Peru and Panama under Fast Track, which is set to expire at the end of the week on June 30, the resolution represents “an increasing concern from state lawmakers about the impact of trade agreements on our ability to act in the best interest of our citizens,” said David Newby, President, Wisconsin State AFL-CIO.

Fast Track delegates to the president the trade policymaking authority that the Constitution designated for Congress. Fast Track has enabled passage of controversial trade deals including NAFTA and CAFTA which have accelerated a trade and jobs crisis, marked by a nearly \$800 billion trade deficit. NAFTA and CAFTA and many other trade agreements also contain provisions which give foreign companies rights as investors that American citizens do not have.

“Fast Track has delivered bad trade deals that hurt workers and family farms and challenge the sovereignty of our state by dismissing checks and balances in the trade policymaking process,” said Sue Beitlich, President, Wisconsin Farmers Union.

The resolution calls on Congress to replace Fast Track with a new trade negotiating process that includes “an explicit mechanism for ensuring the prior informed consent of state legislatures before states are bound to the nontariff terms of any trade agreement that affects state regulatory authority to ensure that the United States trade representative respects the decisions made by states.” Under current Fast Track trade policies, Wisconsin’s ability to create and enact its own laws is in jeopardy due to overreaching trade agreements that include rules having little to do with trade.

“We are talking about arcane services, investment and procurement rules that have nothing to do with trade that are included in binding international trade agreements,” said Nino Amato, Madison business executive and member of the Wisconsin Fair Trade Coalition. “Such provisions take direct aim at areas that have historically been under the purview of state and local governments.”

The resolution can be viewed at: www.legis.state.wi.us/2007/data/SR-8.pdf

