



UNITED BROTHERHOOD OF CARPENTERS AND JOINERS OF AMERICA

Douglas J. McCarron

General President

January 10, 2014

Dear Representative/Senator,

On behalf of our union's nearly 500,000 members, I urge you to oppose the Bipartisan Congressional Trade Priorities Act of 2014. This "Fast Track" bill cedes to the Executive Branch all of Congress' constitutional authority for regulating foreign trade, including agreements such as the harmful Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).

Fast Track was devised by Richard Nixon in the 1970s, when trade talks focused on tariffs and quotas. In reality, the TPP is hardly a "trade deal" at all; only 5 of its 29 drafted chapters mention anything at all about trade. It blatantly diminishes rather than strengthens America's control over economic issues such as patents, copyright, food and water safety, financial regulation, healthcare, energy, the environment, labor rights and more.

Given Fast Track authority, the President can unilaterally create a complex, so-called trade deal such as TPP before Congress has any knowledge of its contents, and thus relegate Congress to a rubber-stamp role of voting yes or no.

The overwhelming majority of trade agreements, both large and small, have been successfully negotiated without this egregious Fast Track authority. **Congress *must* assert its constitutional authority over trade agreements and prevent this Fast Track nightmare from becoming reality.**

It is striking that this newest assault on congressional authority over trade comes on the anniversary of the widely reviled NAFTA, which has cost America more than 700,000 middle-class jobs. There are many views on the value of such trade deals, but this Fast Track proposal has generated broad, bipartisan opposition—for its impact on jobs and the role of Congress, and the ways it weakens U.S. control in economic areas like intellectual property, food and water safety, consumer protection, pharmaceuticals and healthcare, the environment, labor rights, and more.

I need you to stand with our 500,000 member families to help protect our middle class by saying NO to Fast Track.

Sincerely,

Douglas J. McCarron
GENERAL PRESIDENT