



215 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE • Washington, D.C. 20003 • 202/546-4996 • www.citizen.org

For Immediate Release:
July 10, 2014

Contact: Dan Hockensmith (202) 454-5108
dhockensmith@citizen.org

Civil Society Organizations Oppose U.S.-EU ‘Trade’ Pact Proposals That Would Undermine Chemical Safety Protections

111 Consumer, Health, Environmental, Labor Groups Warn Trade Ministers About TTIP Proposals That Would Endanger Public Health

WASHINGTON, D.C. — In a letter today, a broad array of major U.S. and European chemical safety, health, environmental, labor, consumer and other organizations expressed strong opposition to proposed rules for the [Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership \(TTIP\)](#) that could chill or roll back robust chemical safety standards on both sides of the Atlantic.

The letter was sent to U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman and EU Commissioner for Trade Karel de Gucht, in advance of the sixth round of TTIP negotiations, which are to begin in Brussels next week.

“EU and U.S. trade policy should not be geared toward advancing the chemical industry’s agenda at the expense of public health and the environment – but that appears to be exactly what is currently underway with TTIP,” [the letter states](#). “The presence of toxic chemicals in our food, our homes, our workplaces, and our bodies is a threat to present and future generations, with staggering cost for society and individuals.”

“U.S. and EU negotiators appear to have bought the chemical corporations’ argument that this so-called ‘trade’ deal should go well beyond trade and target our safeguards from toxic chemicals as ‘barriers to trade,’ which could continue public exposure to hazardous substances in unsafe workplaces, toxic lakes and rivers, and tainted food and toys” said Lori Wallach, director of Public Citizen’s Global Trade Watch and one of the letter’s signatories. “If the U.S. and EU governments want to have any hope of stemming the controversy surrounding this proposed pact, they must reverse course and keep our chemical safety protections out of their closed-door ‘trade’ negotiations.”

At next week’s TTIP negotiations, draft text will be presented for the first time for several of the proposed pact’s chapters that could directly undermine strong chemical safety rules. The texts will be kept secret from the public during negotiations, but the rules that would be established would be binding on the United States and EU member nations, with trade sanctions or cash fines ordered against domestic policies that do not comply with TTIP rules.

The letter highlights specific TTIP proposals that the U.S. and EU governments and industry interests have put forward that could chill U.S. efforts to strengthen chemical regulations while

weakening tighter EU chemical protections. This includes a U.S. proposal for regulatory coherence that could “thwart the timely promulgation of important regulations” and an EU Regulatory Cooperation Council proposal that would require regulators to calculate “chemical regulations’ costs to transatlantic trade, not the benefits of such protective laws for society.”

The letter also rejects a controversial proposal – opposed by U.S. state legislators, some EU member states and a transpartisan array of U.S. and EU civil society groups – to include “investor-state dispute settlement” terms in the TTIP. Already inclusion of such terms in other pacts has empowered corporations to circumvent domestic courts and directly challenge controls for the use of hazardous substances, pollution cleanup requirements and other chemical protections before extrajudicial tribunals authorized to order unlimited taxpayer compensation for violations of broad foreign investor “rights.” Such extraordinary provisions, according to the letter, “would force the public and their representatives to decide between compensating corporate polluters for lost profits due to stronger laws, or continuing to bear the health, economic and social burdens of pollution.”

The letter concludes by criticizing the negotiations’ lack of transparency: “In a deal where fundamental changes to sub-national, national and regional policies and lawmaking processes are being proposed and negotiated, the non-disclosure of TTIP negotiating positions or texts is inexcusable and inconsistent with the principles of a modern democracy.”

###