

February 3, 2014

Michael Froman
United States Trade Representative
Office of the United States Trade Representative
600 17th Street NW
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Ambassador Froman:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we write to express serious concerns about the high level of secrecy in the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) negotiation process. Despite promises of significant stakeholder engagement, your office has failed to adequately inform the public about the content of the TPP and its potential effect on U.S. laws and policies. With your stated goal being to conclude negotiations early this year, we urge you to immediately release the current draft text of the TPP to the American public.

The TPP is a comprehensive agreement that addresses a wide range of issues, including laws and policies related to consumer protection, public health, natural resources and the environment, labor, healthcare, patents, copyright, agriculture, government procurement, immigration, the financial services, energy and telecommunications industries, and more. If the TPP is finalized and implemented, the U.S. Congress and state legislatures would be legally obligated to conform current and future laws to its terms. And once completed, the TPP's terms would not be alterable absent consensus by all signatory countries.

Furthermore, the draft text of the TPP's Investment Chapter, which was leaked in 2012, shows that the pact includes the investor-state dispute resolution system. This would empower foreign corporations to demand monetary compensation from the U.S. government for government actions or policies – including those intended to protect public health and the environment – that negatively impact their expected profits. Given the significant impact the agreement could have on local, state and federal laws and regulations passed pursuant to the democratic process and the new liability to which the investor-state regime would expose U.S. taxpayers, the public has a right to know precisely what is being negotiated.

Although the United States entered TPP negotiations in 2008 and the Obama administration has conducted 19 rounds of TPP negotiations since 2009, the draft text of the TPP has not yet been released to the public, nor has it been made available to all elected representatives in Congress. By contrast, hundreds of advisors from the business community have been provided with the opportunity to review confidential TPP draft chapters and influence the negotiation process. We are gravely alarmed by this disparity in access. The business community does not unilaterally represent the American public with respect to the many changes to U.S. law and policy that the TPP may entail.

Without access to the draft text, the public cannot participate in the TPP negotiations in a meaningful and informed manner. We respectfully request that you release the current draft text of the TPP as soon as possible and engage the public on its content before the parties finish

negotiations. Democracy demands a greater level of transparency and public participation than has been afforded to date.

Sincerely,

Heather White
Executive Director
Environmental Working Group

Allen Johnson
Coordinator
Christians For The Mountains

Pam Solo
President
Civil Society Institute

Vernon Haltom
Executive Director
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