



February 25, 2015

Dear Member of Congress:

On behalf of National Farmers Union (NFU) and its 200,000 family farmer and rancher members across the country, I write with our steadfast opposition to trade promotion authority. Trade promotion authority ("fast track") would remove an important constitutional check on the president's power to negotiate trade agreements. Trade agreements must be fair for all parties involved and should therefore be subjected to review by the Congress – not conducted secretly.

The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) has been negotiated behind closed doors with little input from the public or Congress. Congress should have full opportunity to review the provisions of a trade agreement, consistent with the authority and power endowed by the U.S. Constitution. The lack of transparency in negotiating TPP is particularly egregious, considering its expansive scope.

Trade is not inherently good or bad, but when considering agreements of this magnitude, the overall trade deficit must be considered. Past trade agreements have served to increase the trade deficit. For thirty years and after several free trade agreements, including the North American Free Trade Agreement and the U.S.-Korea Trade Agreement, the U.S. has grown a significant trade deficit. In 2014, the trade deficit increased to \$505 billion, representing nearly 3 percent of GDP and slowing growth. The positive trade balance of U.S. agriculture trade is good news – but it is massively overshadowed by the alarming overall U.S. trade deficit.

A major factor impacting the trade deficit is currency manipulation. Several countries involved in the TPP negotiations are known currency manipulators including Malaysia, Singapore, and Japan. According to recent reports, the U.S.-Japan trade deficit reached nearly \$80 billion in 2013, and currency manipulation was the most significant cause of the deficit. The Economic Policy Institute estimates that this trade deficit with Japan resulted in 896,600 jobs eliminated in the U.S, in nearly every congressional district. Future trade agreements, including TPP, should directly address currency manipulation and include binding consequences for those that continue to manipulate currency. The current TPP agreement does not contain these important provisions to address currency manipulation according to testimony in January by Ambassador Michael Froman before the Senate Finance Committee.

For the reasons described above, I urge you to oppose trade promotion authority. Please do not hesitate to contact me or NFU's Government Relations Representative Barbara Patterson at [bpatterson@nfudc.org](mailto:bpatterson@nfudc.org) or 202-554-1600.

Sincerely,

Roger Johnson

President