

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 30, 2015

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

We write to express our view that the Bipartisan Congressional Trade Priorities and Accountability (TPA) Act and the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) should not advance without enforceable human rights provisions and enforceable international labor standards.

A number of TPP parties, especially Vietnam, have disturbing records on human rights. The negotiating objective in the TPA bill falls short of providing any guidance on how human rights concerns will be resolved with TPP partner countries.

We fear the TPP does not yet have a mechanism to ensure International Labor Organization (ILO) compliance by TPP parties that have labor laws and practices that fall far short of international standards contained in the "May 10" agreement". This 2007 agreement called for the inclusion of the ILO's core labor standards in pending and future trade agreements, and the establishment of enforcement mechanisms in order to more likely ensure compliance.

Vietnam presents the greatest challenge in ensuring compliance. Workers there are prohibited from joining any union other than organizations controlled by the Communist party. Vietnamese workers must be free to associate with others, bargain collectively, speak freely, and to organize for their own benefit.

The TPA and TPP should not advance unless significant, binding, enforceable advances in human rights and international labor standards are part of the agreement. We are also concerned that Congress has not yet been provided adequate access to the TPP negotiating text to allow members to properly evaluate the proposed agreement.

Support for TPA or TPP agreement will be heavily influenced by whether or not enforcement mechanisms are included in them to ensure that TPP partner countries comply with international labor standards and human rights. We urge the Administration to add such provisions in a timely manner before Congressional consideration occurs.

Sincerely,



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