

KEY VOTE ALERT!

June 18, 2015

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce strongly urges the House to approve Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) as expeditiously as practicable. Last week's vote on TPA demonstrated bipartisan support for this important legislation, and the House should not delay its approval.

TPA is vital because economic growth and job creation at home depend on our ability to sell American goods and services to the 95 percent of the world's customers living outside our country. Many Americans are already seizing these opportunities in our states and communities: one in four manufacturing jobs depend on exports, and one in three acres on American farms is planted for consumers overseas. 98 percent of the 300,000 U.S. companies that export are small- and medium-size businesses.

Unfortunately, the international playing field is often unfairly tilted against American workers and companies. While our market is generally open, U.S. exports face foreign tariffs that often soar into double digits as well as a thicket of non-tariff barriers. Trade agreements are negotiated to tear down these barriers. By creating a level playing field, trade pacts help U.S. manufacturers, service providers, workers, farmers, and ranchers to compete in overseas markets.

The record of America's trade agreements is outstanding. While our 20 trade agreement partners represent just 6 percent of the world's population, they buy nearly half of U.S. exports. U.S. trade agreement partners purchase 12.8 times more U.S. exports per capita than other countries. These agreements have generated an expansion in trade that supports more than five million American jobs, according to a Chamber study.

To expand on these benefits, the United States is negotiating the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement with 11 other Asia-Pacific nations, including some of the world's fastest growing economies. The United States is also negotiating the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership with the European Union, the largest market for U.S. business, as well as the Trade in Services Agreement with more than 50 countries.

However, to make any of these growth-driving trade agreements a reality, Congress must first renew TPA. This legislation would allow Congress to set priorities for U.S. trade negotiations and hold the administration accountable through extensive ongoing consultations during trade talks. TPA also ensures Congress has the final say on



U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
Congressional & Public Affairs
1615 H Street, NW
Washington, DC 20062

202-463-5600

any agreement in the form of an up-or-down vote. A simple form of TPA was first enacted in 1934, but the latest version lapsed in 2007.

The TPA legislation that the House is set to consider reflects many of the best ideas in contemporary trade policy. Negotiating objectives have been modernized to reflect our changing economy, with new provisions on such issues as digital trade and state-owned enterprises. There is nothing “fast” about the manner in which this legislation was prepared, and it plainly reflects input from many quarters.

The Chamber urges the House to approve TPA expeditiously. **Due to the importance of renewing TPA, the Chamber will include votes on, or in relation to, this legislation – including the Rule – in our annual *How They Voted* scorecard.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Bruce Josten". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "R." and last name "Josten" clearly visible.

R. Bruce Josten