Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

November 13, 2013

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

Dear President Obama:

We write to express our serious concern with the ongoing negotiations over the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Free Trade Agreement (FTA), a potential agreement of tremendous consequence for our country. Specifically, we remain deeply troubled by the continued lack of adequate congressional consultation in many areas of the proposed pact that deeply implicates Congress's constitutional and domestic policy authorities.

For some time, members of Congress have urged your administration to engage in broader and deeper consultations with members of the full range of committees of Congress whose jurisdiction touches on the numerous issues being negotiated. Many have raised concerns relating to reports about the agreement's proposed content. While your Administration's goal was to sign a TPP FTA at the October 2013 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit, we believe that to date the process has failed to provide adequate consultation with Congress.

Such opportunity for input from Congress is critical as the TPP FTA will include binding obligations that touch upon a wide swath of policy matters under the authority of Congress. Beyond traditional tariff issues, these include policies related to labor, patent and copyright, land use, food, agriculture and product standards, natural resources, the environment, professional licensing, competition, state-owned enterprises and government procurement policies, as well as financial, healthcare, energy, e-commerce, telecommunications and other service sector regulations.

In light of the broad scope of today's trade agreements, it is even more vital that Congress have a fulsome role in shaping these pacts' terms. Given our concerns, we will oppose "Fast Track" Trade Promotion Authority or any other mechanism delegating Congress' constitutional authority over trade policy that continues to exclude us from having a meaningful role in the formative stages of trade agreements and throughout negotiating and approval processes.

Congress, not the Executive Branch, must determine when an agreement meets the objectives Congress sets in the exercise of its Article I-8 exclusive constitutional authority to set the terms of trade. For instance, an agreement that does not specifically meet congressional negotiating objectives must not receive preferential consideration in Congress. A new trade agreement negotiation and approval process that restores a robust role for Congress is essential to

achieving U.S. trade agreements that can secure prosperity for the greatest number of Americans, while preserving the vital tenets of American democracy in the era of globalization.

Twentieth Century "Fast Track" is simply not appropriate for 21st Century agreements and must be replaced. The United States cannot afford another trade agreement that replicates the mistakes of the past. We can and must do better.

We are deeply committed to transforming U.S. trade policy into a tool for creating and retaining family-wage jobs in America, safeguarding the environment, maintaining consumer protection and improving the quality of life throughout the country. We look forward to working with you to ensure that Congress and the Executive Branch are working together to meet that critical goal.

Sincerely,

ROSA L. DeLAURO
Member of Congress

GEORGE MILLER
Member of Congress

LOUISE M. SLAUGHTER
Member of Congress

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