

# Twin Cities METRO **iBA** Independent Business Alliance

April 15, 2015

The Honorable Senator Klobuchar  
1200 Washington Avenue South, Room 250  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

Re: *Opposing Fast Track of Trans Pacific Partnership Trade Agreement*

Dear Senator Klobuchar,

*On behalf of our over three hundred Twin Cities small business and citizen members, we encourage you to oppose proposed Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) legislation - also known as "Fast Track" - that would limit debate surrounding the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade deal. This legislation would limit Congress' constitutional ability to debate and amend any final deal.*

*We worry that the final TPP agreement may jeopardize US sovereignty and prevent local and state governments from enforcing domestic policies that promote responsible business practices and environmental and social sustainability. We are also concerned about the secrecy behind the negotiations and the fact that the small business community, and even members of Congress, are not being included.*

*Though we appreciate the many economic benefits that can come from trade agreements, we are concerned that the TPP in its current format will create a "race to the bottom" driving nations to provide lower cost and less-regulated market environments. Free trade must also include 'fair' trade values like; environmental stewardship, human rights, financial transparency, living wages, and a competitive playing field that benefits businesses both large and small.*

*While continuing to reduce tariffs that limit growth and competition, trade policy must also encourage sustainable development globally. Prosperity and security are enhanced when each nation can build a vibrant and diverse economy that respects human rights, reflects local conditions,*

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*and preserves natural resources. The economic benefits of such agreements deserve a detailed evaluation, so we call on Congress to prevent fast tracking of the TPP.*

*Expanded growth markets are traditionally welcomed by small businesses like ours. We are concerned about its impact and rumored provisions that would:*

- Discourage innovation by extending patent protection on pharmaceuticals while restricting governments from negotiating lower prices.*
- Prioritize the interests of major banks and financial institutions over credit unions and the emerging sector of public banks.*
- Disadvantage organic farmers and others who adopt safer and more environmentally-sound agricultural practices.*
- Hinder renewable energy growth and extend the dominance of coal and oil by blocking regulations and limiting deployment of smart grid and other infrastructure.*
- Restrict local procurement laws that would hinder small businesses ability to buy and sell goods due to increased regulations.*
- Create an unaccountable, international trade tribunal, giving multinationals the legal standing to challenge American business and legal practices with no appeal to U.S. courts.*

*We need an open, honest debate on this trade deal so we can fully understand all of the impacts it might have on American businesses. That is why we are asking you to not approve Trade Promotion Authority for the Trans-Pacific Partnership.*

*Thank you,*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Hanson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

*Chris Hanson  
President  
MetroIBA*