

Dear Mr. Danilow,

Thank you for contacting me with regards to trade initiatives. I appreciate having the opportunity to learn about your views on issues of importance to Northwest Florida and our Nation.

With 95 percent of the world's consumers living outside the U.S. and as a free trade proponent, I believe that trade is extremely important to our Nation. According to a 2015 Business Roundtable report, by 2013, one in five of all American jobs were tied to trade; in Florida alone, international trade supported 2.4 million jobs, which is more than one in five. Furthermore, jobs tied to trade have saved the American family thousands per year.

Let me be clear, however, when it comes to trade, I adamantly oppose legislation that (1) infringes on United States sovereignty; (2) empowers the Executive Branch to act unilaterally; (3) removes Congress from its Constitutional role; or (4) weakens our economy.

With negotiations on the Trans-Pacific Partnership entering their final stages, U.S. trade policies and the terms Trade Promotion Authority (TPA), Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) and Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) have received increased news coverage. Although these terms are sometimes used synonymously, they are related but different issues, as explained below.

Trade Promotion Authority (TPA)

TPA is an extremely important issue, but it is also important to note that TPA is not a trade deal itself and does not change any laws. Trade Promotion Authority, sometimes referred to as "fast track," authorizes the executive branch to enter into reciprocal agreements governing both tariff and non-tariff barriers, as well as defines the negotiating objectives and procedures for trade agreements. TPA has been in existence in some form or other and has been provided to every President since Franklin Roosevelt. TPA simply sets the ground rules for how trade deals should be negotiated and the procedures that the House and Senate will use to bring these trade deals up after they are finalized. In addition and importantly, TPA does not change the fact that at the end of the day Congress and only Congress must still vote on whether or not to approve any trade deals.

As of now, Congress and the American people are largely left in the dark while trade negotiations are ongoing. This has proven ineffective, slow, and quite frankly, America is slipping in the global economy because of it. That is why TPA for the first time includes transparency measures that will require that all trade deals be made public for at least 60 days prior to Presidential signature. And because trade deals include provisions that impact U.S. laws, any trade deal still has to be approved by Congress before it has the force of law, meaning that after the President signs a deal, Congress still has additional time to weigh in on the measure before it can become law.

TPA also includes a list of negotiating objectives that must be taken into account when we are negotiating free trade agreements. These objectives are what Congress expects a good free trade agreement should look like, and they run the gambit from instructions on agricultural trade and anti-corruption to intellectual property and the internet and beyond. The whole point of free trade agreements is to knock down barriers that prevent free and fair trade between countries, and so if Congress decides that trade agreements don't meet these objectives then either the House or Senate can and should vote these deals down.

As a sovereign Nation with a clear and guiding Constitution, we should never cede the rights of the American people or give away sovereignty to international bodies. That is why TPA for the first time includes a section explicitly reaffirming that no provision of any trade deal overrides local,

state, or federal law, and that any decisions by international tribunals, organizations, or other countries will have no effect on laws passed at the local, state, or federal level or on any local, state or federal governments.

There have also been many concerns raised about granting the executive branch additional authority. As a Member of Congress and a strong supporter of the separation of powers enshrined in our Constitution, I am also deeply committed to maintaining the strict checks and balances needed to maintain our democratic system of government. In response to these concerns, the nonpartisan Congressional Research Service published a report with the finding that TPA grants no new authority to the President.

At the end of the day, TPA increases transparency, solidifies the role of Congress in free trade negotiations ensuring it has a seat at the table, protects American sovereignty, and helps ensure that our trade negotiations can get the best deal possible for American consumers, businesses, and workers, and that is why I voted in favor of TPA when it came before the House on June 12, 2015. Having passed both the House and Senate, TPA was signed by the President on June 29, 2015.

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) provides federal benefits to workers or companies that the government feels have been adversely impacted by free trade. TAA, which I voted against, was considered and passed by Congress and signed by the President on June 29, 2015. Concerns were raised prior to the vote on TAA that additional Medicare sequester cuts could be used to pay for the TAA; however, these provisions were removed from the bill as passed by the House. Although I am a strong proponent of free trade, which helps increase opportunities for American businesses to grow and hire new employees, I voted against the TAA because it is a duplicative, unsuccessful and misguided program that weakens free trade and singles out certain groups of workers, without actually benefiting the workers that it purports to serve. We currently spend approximately \$1 billion per year on TAA programs that are of dubious value, and, given the size and scope of our debt, I believe that these programs should be eliminated.

Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP)

Out of the 48 agreements East Asia countries negotiated from 2000 to 2010, the U.S. only had two in that region. The shocking result of this lack of commitment to the region was that our share of East Asia's imports fell by 42 percent, while our top competitors did better. To address this disparity, we began negotiations on the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), which is a proposed regional free trade agreement (FTA) being negotiated among the United States, Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, and Vietnam. Although TPA and TAA have now passed Congress, Congress has not approved any new free trade deals since the passage of the three separate trade deals with Colombia, South Korea, and Panama, which passed the House on October 12, 2011. As a result of TPA's passage, however, TPA will help ensure we can pursue the best deal possible both with TPP and other pending free trade agreements, while ultimately allowing the American people and their elected representatives to decide if these deals should be approved when they are finalized. As our negotiators continue work on the pending TPP, I will continue to monitor the negotiations to ensure that this deal benefits our Nation. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, with TPA now in effect, TPP must be made publicly available to the American people for at least 60 days before it is presented to Congress, and as TPA reiterates at the end of the day, Congress—and only Congress—can change our laws. Thus, the TPP, or any other free trade deal, cannot go into effect without approval from both the House and Senate.

Our Nation's free enterprise system has served as the catalyst for economic growth throughout our history, and I believe U.S. trade policy should be focused on opening new markets for American

products to allow the ingenuity and hard-work of our Nation's businesses and workers to once again outcompete our global economic competitors. Rest assured, I will keep your thoughts and concerns in mind as Congress continues to address trade policy, and I will do my best to ensure that America's interests and economic well-being are top priority.

If you would like to receive further information on issues of importance to you, please log on to my website at <http://jeffmiller.house.gov/>. As always, please feel free to contact my office if you have any further concerns.

Sincerely,

Jeff Miller
Member of Congress