

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4502

October 10, 2012

Ambassador Ron Kirk  
U.S. Trade Representative  
600 17th Street NW  
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Ambassador Kirk:

I write to express my concerns with the negotiation of the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPP). I have heard from a number of Vermonters, as well as from organizations represented on your Labor Advisory Committee, who are concerned that the TPP is being negotiated at an extreme level of secrecy. While I understand the sensitive nature of multilateral discussions, I urge you to make these negotiations as transparent as possible and to involve to every extent possible individuals and groups who speak on behalf of organized labor. I believe such coordination and involvement will help your office send an agreement to the Congress that supports U.S. industries and workers.

I generally support free trade because it benefits the U.S. economy and our workers. When the United States improperly restricts trade, our companies lose access to markets that would otherwise become job-creating engines of growth. However, I believe we cannot lose sight of fair labor practices, human rights protections, and securing the environment in our trade negotiations. Because fast track authority makes it impossible to amend an agreement submitted to the Congress, it becomes all the more important to ensure that an agreement's provisions are right before it is signed. I believe that more consultation, not less, will lead to both successful negotiations and final passage in Congress.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



PATRICK LEAHY  
United States Senator