

Rebuttal to comments made in Orange County Register 5/12/15

First and foremost, Free Trade Agreements bring a level playing field for American Manufacturers. In looking at the world's population, 95% of potential customers are outside of the United States, and this is why the U.S. Department of Commerce and the District Export Council of Southern California support Free Trade Agreements as it is a two way street and it is all positive for American Companies!! We hold seminars and events on international trade on how to understand the process, and offer any necessary help they may need such as resources to make things happen! Exports create jobs, and two of our biggest trading partners are indeed Canada & Mexico which has created billions of dollars in US Goods exported. Remember, trade is a two way street, and international trade does create peace as business people do not want to have any conflict that would hamper commerce!

TPP is a good thing in that we presently have 12 countries that would like to participate in TPP. We already have Free Trade Agreements (FTA) with Australia, Canada, Chile, Mexico, Peru and Singapore, but we do not have them with Brunei, Japan, New Zealand, Malaysia or Vietnam. TPP would form America's largest goods and services "Export" market as all of these countries want to have goods made in the USA! TPP would also enhance using Southern California as a "Hub" to and from Latin and South America thus creating more new jobs!

While Unions are touting that jobs will be lost, that is not the case as jobs will indeed increase with all of the new business. We want US Companies to export US Goods as that will indeed build our economy. Unions should get "On Board" and support Free Trade Agreements as it creates new jobs. In fact, international trade is increasing at such a fast pace, we need more infrastructure and labor to handle this new business, and with "Harbor Maintenance Fees" that are collected by CBP, goes to funding this infrastructure. People such as Congresswoman Janice Hahn is on top of these things to help build and maintain our business communities. Just so you know, 43% of all of the goods coming to and from the USA, goes through Southern California, and has created in excess of a million jobs. In fact Congresswoman Janice Hahn formed the "Port Caucus" in Congress to address this very issue and we applaud her for that!

Free Trade Agreements are a "Godsend" to SME's (Small, Medium sized Enterprises)! They do not have the financial strength to fight trade barriers, and FTA's will eliminate these barriers for them and reduce tariffs so they can become competitive in the foreign markets!

TPA (Trade Promotion Authority) is absolutely necessary for the President, which allows the President to enter into reciprocal trade agreements and requires that legislation for implementing the agreement be considered on a defined time line without amendments. In return, the President must keep Congress informed throughout the negotiations and abide by certain notification and consulting requirements. It will improve the administration's position in the negotiations by ensuring the agreed-upon terms will be binding. This would give the ability to have an up and down vote without adding any "Pork" to the agreement!

We also have T-TIP (Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership) coming up that would indeed put us on a level playing field with the EU. While many of the EU countries would like to have American products, they cannot afford them because of the high tariffs and trade barriers. This would eliminate that and make us players!

The bottom line is, Free Trade Agreements are necessary in order to have two way trade, and this would indeed shrink the trade deficit in favor of the United States, and we do that by expanding the business of US Companies that will create more jobs through "Exports"!

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District Export Council of Southern California
"By Appointment of the Secretary of Commerce"