

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 15-0272R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: Councilmembers Curran, Reisinger, Clarke, President Young, Councilmembers Kraft, Middleton, Costello, Scott, Mosby, Stokes, Welch, Branch, Spector
Introduced and adopted: October 26, 2015

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION CONCERNING

Request for Federal Action – Oppose Misguided Trade Deals

FOR the purpose of calling upon the Baltimore delegation to the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives to oppose the TPP and any similar trade deals if they fail to restructure the misguided and failed policies of the past.

Recitals

WHEREAS, U.S. trade deals for the past 25 years have been corporate-driven, incorporating rules that skew benefits to economic elites while requiring working families to bear the brunt of such policies.

WHEREAS, The growing trade deficits, driven by the North American Free Trade Agreement, China's accession to the World Trade Organization, and the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement, have displaced 700,000 jobs, 3.2 million jobs, and 75,000 jobs, respectively.

WHEREAS, U.S. employment in manufacturing dropped by 5 million from 2000 to 2015.

WHEREAS, The Baltimore City unemployment rate is 7.4%.

WHEREAS, The Baltimore City poverty rate is 25%, which requires the expenditure of limited public funds to assist families in crisis.

WHEREAS, Jobs lost due to trade devastate families and entire communities and can permanently reduce lifetime earnings for hundreds of thousands of workers.

WHEREAS, The long decline of the American manufacturing base-exacerbated by bad trade policies that reward outsourcing-has undermined our economic security and poses a direct threat to our national security.

WHEREAS, The offshoring of manufacturing and service jobs deprives local and state governments of sorely needed revenues, jeopardizing the livelihoods of millions of public servants as well as construction workers whose jobs depend upon infrastructure building, repair, and maintenance.

WHEREAS, Under NAFTA-style trade rules, the U.S. annual trade deficit has increased dramatically from 70 billion in 1993, the year before NAFTA went into effect, to more than \$508 billion in 2014.

EXPLANATION: Underlining indicates matter added by amendment.
~~Strike out~~ indicates matter deleted by amendment.

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1 **WHEREAS**, The disproportionate voice of powerful global corporations in the formation of
2 U.S. “free trade” agreements has advanced an agenda that undermines the public interest and
3 threatens democracy.

4 **WHEREAS**, NAFTA, and all but two of the U.S. trade deals that followed it, included special
5 legal rights for foreign investors, known as “investor-to-state dispute settlement” or ISDS, that
6 allow foreign firms to bypass state and federal courts to challenge state and local laws,
7 regulations, and administrative and judicial decisions in international tribunals.

8 **WHEREAS**, Foreign investors already have used NAFTA’s ISDS provisions to challenge
9 decisions regarding local building permits, environmental regulations, state bans on toxic
10 chemicals, and decisions of state courts.

11 **WHEREAS**, Climate change and environmental degradation threaten communities across the
12 globe, and ISDS provisions in the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) may expose nations enacting
13 policies to fight climate change to ISDS cases that undermine these efforts.

14 **WHEREAS**, Promoting economic growth with equity in Baltimore requires an approach that
15 reforms the entire trade negotiation process to ensure that voices of workers, farmers, small
16 businesses, families, and communities are heard and their interests addressed.

17 **WHEREAS**, The TPP has been negotiated in secret, effectively shutting state and local
18 governments out of the process, limiting our ability to influence its rules to ensure the people of
19 Baltimore can participate in the benefits of trade.

20 **WHEREAS**, Given the enactment of fast track trade negotiating authority, states, localities,
21 and their citizens will have no opportunity to correct shortcomings in the TPP since its text will
22 not be made public until it is final and no longer can be improved.

23 **WHEREAS**, Repeating old mistakes in negotiating new trade agreements such as the TPP
24 represents a missed opportunity to strengthen our economy, reduce income inequality, and
25 promote sustainable growth.

26 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE**, that the
27 Council calls upon our elected officials in the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives to
28 oppose the TPP and any similar trade deals if they fail to restructure the misguided and failed
29 policies of the past.

30 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That Council calls upon our elected officials in the U.S.
31 Senate and U.S. House of Representatives to support new trade deals such as the TPP only if they
32 will:

- 33 • Protect and promote traditional state and local prerogatives and authority under our
34 federal system, including by ensuring that states and localities will not be required to
35 comply with certain commitments, including any restrictions on preferences for local,
36 state, or U.S. goods or services, without prior informed consent of the legislature or local
37 lawmaking body;
- 38 • Ensure balanced trade and address the excessive, job-killing U.S. trade deficit;

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- 1 • Include enforceable rules against currency manipulation, which countries such as China
2 and Japan have used to tilt the playing field in their favor;
- 3 • Exclude investor-to-state dispute settlement (ISDS) and other provisions that favor
4 foreign companies over domestic ones and undermine public choices;
- 5 • Ensure that countries cannot undercut U.S. based producers with weaker labor and
6 environmental laws and enforcement;
- 7 • Ensure that the U.S. will engage in robust enforcement of trade rules, including labor and
8 environmental rules;
- 9 • Include strong rule of origin to promote economic growth and job creation in the U.S.;
- 10 • Promote high standards of protection for workplaces, products, and natural resources
11 rather than promoting a race to the bottom; and
- 12 • Put the interests of people and the planet over the interests of private profit.

13 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the
14 Honorable Members of the House and Senate Leadership, the Honorable Members of the
15 Maryland House and Senate Delegations to the 114th Congress, and the Mayor's Legislative
16 Liaison to the City Council.