

Second Amendment right is exercised individually and belongs to all Americans.

You see, for more than 100 years, the 14th Amendment has been used to link the rest of the Bill of Rights to the State. Somehow, the same folks that are onboard with applying the First Amendment to States, whether it is free speech, voting rights, or freedom of religion, in some cases, they are reluctant to let the same be true for the Second Amendment.

When they want a uniform view of things that aren't even addressed in our Constitution, like marriage, they are not willing to apply the same logic to our Constitution with something that is very plainly stated: The right to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.

I take that right very seriously. Those of us who served in the military know all too well what a society looks like when freedoms are squashed. We have seen these places and met the people who have lived under tyranny.

Our Founding Fathers knew the battle between freedom and tyranny too well, many sacrificing their lives in the struggle to establish this Nation. It is not an accident that they enshrine that right to keep and bear arms squarely right after the right to speech and freedoms of religion. It is so essential to stave off oppressors that we cannot be truly free without it.

After these men sacrificed life and limb, let us not besmirch their legacy by subjecting it to an agenda which would seek to attack away this freedom one firearm or one freedom at a time.

The threats are real. It is hard to imagine. It is not just rhetoric. Those words, "freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction," sound like political rhetoric, but it is just so real and we have to take it very seriously. It is an honor to be here to talk about it.

Mr. GIBSON. Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues, and I really want to express what a privilege it is to serve in this House. I believe in this country and this exceptional way of life. Not that we don't have warts and challenges—we certainly have those—but there is nothing that we can't solve together.

We also need to recognize that what we did in the 18th century that allowed for the most freedom and the opportunity in the history of mankind is not a birth right. It is not a foregone conclusion. Every generation has to defend it. They have to defend it from threats from abroad and also be vigilant for unintentional or perhaps intentional encroachment here at home.

Our colleagues here believe deeply in protecting this exceptional way of life. As I stated earlier, we love our family, we love our friends, we love our communities. We want to ensure that they are safe. We are ready to work with our colleagues on that. As we do, we need to keep forefront this exceptional way

of life which the first generation of Americans fought to provide for us and that every successive generation has fought to preserve and that we also take commonsense approaches that are based on data and that are focused on actually solving the problem.

We identified some of those problems tonight and areas where we think we can find some common ground. I mentioned one of them we already have in terms of the law enforcement and cracking down on the narco-traffickers.

Madam Speaker, we are here tonight because we also wanted to make it very clear that—while there are passions and emotions in every direction, we wanted to make it very clear that what we hold so dear, this exceptional way of life, the liberties, the Bill of Rights, the Constitution, this is something we will defend. We have defended it and we continue to defend it. May God bless this country.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS: TPP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. POCAN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. POCAN. Madam Speaker, I am here on behalf of the Progressive Caucus, which is in charge of this hour. We are here today to talk about the Trans-Pacific Partnership and trade.

The people in the Progressive Caucus have been some of the leaders in the movement to make sure that we have trade deals that protect American jobs and lift our wages here in the United States.

We want to make sure that there are environmental protections across the globe. We want to make sure our food is safe and our prescription drugs are affordable. We want to make sure there are human rights in countries that do trade with the United States. And we want to make sure we are addressing issues like currency manipulation. All of those issues are important when you want to advance trade.

No one in this room is against trade. We are all for increasing our ability to have more exports and to have imports into this country, but you have to have trade deals that work on behalf of the American worker. And all too often, past trade deals have cost us jobs here in the United States. They have made our wages continue to be depressed.

That is not a good trade deal, in the minds of the members of the Progressive Caucus. That is why we are here at this hour to talk specifically about what is good trade, why we are skeptical of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, and why we especially don't want to see a vote during the lameduck session after the election in November. With people who are no longer going to be serving in Congress, taking that vote at that time would be an especially bad idea.

Today is a national call-in day of action on the Trans-Pacific Partnership. There are over 90 public interest groups that have been calling our offices. I heard my staff picking up the phone over and over again, responding to people who want to make sure that we have trade deals that take care of all those things that we talked about, all the things that members of the Progressive Caucus have been leaders in this Congress and trying to advocate for.

In conjunction with the tens of thousands of people who have called Congress today to urge their Members not only to not support the Trans-Pacific Partnership, because it is really not a trade deal, there are parts about a trade—this is a rewriting of corporate rules that could have huge ramifications.

Forty percent of the world's gross domestic product is involved in this one large deal. We want to make sure we get it right, not just fast. That is why we are joining with these groups today to make sure that people know what is in the Trans-Pacific Partnership and why it is vitally important that we don't take this up during a lameduck session.

As I said, not only do we have Members who will no longer be serving here who might even be looking for jobs with some of the very industries advocating for the Trans-Pacific Partnership because it will benefit their bottom line, but also we have two Presidential candidates in the main two parties who both oppose the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

This should be something that, with as much enormous respect I have for President Obama, we should allow the next President to be able to address trade, especially when a deal like this has so much controversy and so many questions about it.

So we are here. During the next hour we are going to hear from various members of the Progressive Caucus. It is my honor to yield to one of my colleagues from the great State of California. The 17th District of California is very lucky to have a representative who has been such an outspoken advocate for middle-class families not just in California, but across the country.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA), my colleague from the 17th District of California.

Mr. HONDA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to voice my opposition to TPP, an unfair trade deal that will hurt our Nation's workers, our environment, and give corporations dangerous new rights.

Through an alarming expansion of the Investor-State Dispute Settlement process, the ISDS, TPP will give corporations a legal weapon to enforce their agendas on sovereign nations. Corporations have already used ISDS to bring over 700 lawsuits against more than 100 governments around the world.

When my home State of California banned the use of MTBE as an additive in gasoline because it was polluting the ground water, the Canadian company sued, costing the State and Federal Government millions of dollars to defend the case. TPP would extend these rights to 1,000 additional corporations owning more than 9,200 subsidiaries.

We need to stop foreign corporations from suing the U.S. Government before unaccountable panels of corporate lawyers. And while giving these rights to corporations, TPP will provide little benefit to the American economy.

The widely cited estimate of 0.13 percent growth in U.S. GDP under TPP is over 10 years. It is not an annual gain. A gain that benefits only a few is undone by the negative impact TPP will have on workers at home and abroad.

Under NAFTA, 700,000 American jobs moved to Mexico to take advantage of Mexican workers making 30 percent less than American workers, even after adjusting for differences in living costs.

While TPP requires nations to implement minimum wage laws, nothing in the language of the deal prevents them from setting the wage as low as 5 cents an hour. TPP is a small win for high-income earners at the huge expense of low-income workers.

TPP also lacks strong provisions to deal with countries with repulsive human rights abuses, including human trafficking and intolerance of the LGBTQ communities.

Singapore, Malaysia, and Brunei criminalize consensual same-sex sexual relations. Rewarding them with a trade agreement is really very unacceptable.

Throughout my tenure in Congress, I have evaluated each trade agreement based on whether it ensures strong, clear, and enforceable labor, environmental, and human rights standards. I do not believe that the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement that was sent to Congress meets my standards. It does not deserve to be considered during a lameduck session.

As it is currently written, TPP should not be brought to a vote. It should not be brought to a vote, period.

Mr. POCAN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from the 17th District of California for his words. As he mentioned, there are a number of provisions that you can start to drill down to. In the giant volumes that make up the Trans-Pacific Partnership, there are provisions that I think the American people have no idea about. In fact, I would argue there are some people in Congress who have no idea what is in the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

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Just one of those provisions that Representative HONDA mentioned is the investor-State dispute settlement process, the ISDS provisions, where you have a three-person tribunal of unelected, unaccountable people, people who are corporate lawyers one day and then fair arbitrators of the law an-

other day, that set up this separate legal process from the American judicial system that international companies, multinational companies, can access if they want to sue a local government for a law that they have passed that they think affects their future profits.

Think about it. Everyone else in the country has to follow the court system we have in the United States, but if a multinational company, because of the provisions in the Trans-Pacific Partnership, decides that they want to go around that system and go to three corporate lawyers who form a tribunal under this ISDS provision and they want to challenge that law, they can sue for monetary damages. Think about it.

For example, if the State of Wisconsin, where I come from, were to pass a higher minimum wage than the Federal minimum wage and it would be challenged, potentially, by a multinational corporation saying that is going to affect their future profits, they could sue the taxpayers of Wisconsin over that law.

This isn't just something that we are dreaming up. Over and over again, we have seen countries in trade deals be sued by multinational corporations because of environmental law and other laws that they have passed that they have said affect their future profits, and it doesn't happen in the American legal system.

Now, as bad as this sounds, to skirt the American legal system, a special system for multinational corporations, let me tell you what is even worse about that provision. It is only a tribunal for those corporations. But the parts of the trade agreement that affect labor law or environmental law don't have access to the same provisions. They have to go through the normal legal court system.

Recently, there was a labor dispute with the country of Honduras with a company, and it took us 6 years to get that resolved. So for environmental law, for labor law, for things that are going to affect most people, we still have to follow the court system, which is the way it should be. But for multinational corporations, they have a special, streamlined process with, basically, their own arbitrators making the decisions, allowing you to sue taxpayers within a local government or a State government that may pass a law. Clearly, that doesn't make any sense whatsoever. That is just one of those provisions that is a real problem.

Another thing that MIKE HONDA from the great State of California said, he talked about some of the human rights violations. There are explicit human rights violations with some of the countries that don't respect things like single mothers, who don't respect the LGBT community, and those are things that we absolutely can't allow.

Our country has done so much to work with other countries to raise human rights standards, and yet, in

this bill, this trade agreement, the Trans-Pacific Partnership, it does not have those things in place to make sure that we have got those protections for so many different people and so many different provisions. So what he mentioned are just a couple of the provisions.

Let me mention something I think that people don't know about. As I mentioned at the very beginning, the Trans-Pacific Partnership is made up of countries that are going to make up for 40 percent of the world's gross domestic product.

Now, it is one thing to have a trade agreement with a country that is very similar, like Canada, or a country like Japan that also has a lot of similar goods that they are producing; but we also have countries in here like Vietnam, where they don't allow trade unions, where people make, on average, 65 cents an hour.

As you can tell, there is going to be a huge difference in a trade agreement that you have with a country like Canada and a country like Vietnam. But in this trade agreement everyone is lumped together, and there is a long lead time that Vietnam would have to try to get their act together, especially just around issues like having a trade union, much less around those wage issues.

But you can just imagine that if you open that door to have trade preferences for a country like Vietnam, at 65 cents an hour, yes, I will contend that we will lift their wages ever so slightly; but I will also tell you, based on evidence we have seen from past trade deals, that you will further depress our wages here. You will keep the wages flat because that is what happens with these trade agreements, and more jobs that are done here in the U.S. will go overseas.

I say this from someone who grew up in a very industrial town. I grew up in Kenosha, Wisconsin. We made autos for the entire time I grew up in that town. When I was growing up, it was American Motors Company. We made Pacers and Gremlins and some cars that people actually bought. But thousands of thousands of people worked at those auto plants and supported their families with good family-supporting, middle class wages. That is the type of jobs that we need here in this country, but those jobs aren't going to happen under these trade agreements.

I have watched in my hometown of Kenosha after American Motors sold to Renault, and then Renault sold to Chrysler. Chrysler made engines for Jeeps. At some point, finally, they went away, and we lost what was over 5,000 jobs at one time in the city of Kenosha, Wisconsin, and the ripple effects of the industries that fed into that company because, all too often, we watched those jobs go to Mexico, to Canada, to other countries because of wages.

Another thing, for almost three decades of my life, I have had a specialty

printing business. One of the things that we do is screen print T-shirts. So I have been buying T-shirts and goods like that for nearly 30 years. Over the years, I have watched the U.S. mills go away, and more and more of those jobs have gone to countries, literally, that are paying wages that are subpoverty.

I have gone to El Salvador and met with people who work in the sweatshops where people make \$3 a day; and because that sweatshop area is in a special free trade zone that is not near where people live, they spend a dollar of that to get there. Now, this is, granted, a couple of decades ago, but the wages are still severely depressed.

Those jobs that were in America now are going to countries—in fact, one of the things we are hearing out of this trade agreement is Central American countries are afraid they are now going to lose jobs to places like Vietnam because they can have even lower wages. None of those things are going to help the American worker.

So there is a reason why this fall, when you talk and hear from candidates who are running for office—we have two Presidential candidates in the major parties both opposing the Trans-Pacific Partnership as it is currently written.

We have candidates across the country, for Congress and the Senate, running ads talking about a better vision for what trade should be. With all of that going on, it makes no sense whatsoever that we would take this up after the November elections, between that little period of time between November 8 and the end of the year, when we are going to have a new Congress sworn in in January. To take that up with a Congress of people that may not be serving here and may be looking for jobs from the very companies that advocate for these sweetheart multinational deals is a huge, huge mistake.

So that is why the 90 organizations today are having a day of action; tens of thousands of calls coming into Washington, D.C., to try to make sure that Congress does the right thing around trade. That means making sure that we have trade deals that protect American jobs and, hopefully, grow American jobs; ones that protect our wages and hopefully grow our wages; ones that protect us when it comes to things like food safety; ones that protect us on things like pharmaceutical prices.

We want trade agreements that make sure that you don't have a country—you can have the best language in a trade deal, but if you still allow currency manipulation, you can make that language virtually meaningless. And there is nothing in the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement that addresses currency manipulation, which is a huge, huge problem.

So those are some of the things that we are trying to get done, much less international human rights provisions that should be in any meaningful trade agreement. So many of us are going to

be talking about this over the next few months.

But tonight I would like to yield to another one of my colleagues who has been one of the leaders in Congress on this issue. He represents New York State's 20th District. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO).

Mr. TONKO. I thank the gentleman from Wisconsin for yielding. I thank Representative POCAN for leading us in what I think is a very meaningful discussion this evening in this Special Order.

Mr. Speaker, trade, absolutely critical to our economy, but fair trade, not free trade, a fair trade situation where our manufacturers, our businesses, are operating on a level playing field where they have an equal shot at being able to go forward and be productive and provide for jobs, the dignity of work for Americans from coast to coast.

Recently, I talked to an individual, Representative POCAN, in my district, who had to close his doors. And it was years of assistance that we provided when I was yet in the State assembly, and then after, in the U.S. Congress, to assist them so that they could be competitive. Their major competitors were in China.

If we try to talk about public-private partnerships as being something that don't exist out there, on this House floor, then we are not getting it. It was the public-private coziness of China that really destroyed the competitive edge of a business in my community, one that had spun fibers for many defense contracts.

They alluded to the fact that, in some cases, the government, China, will own the building. The government, China, will pay the utility bill. They will offer subsidies to the industry, and then, as was just mentioned by my colleague from Wisconsin, they will manipulate the currency.

All four of those items drag down the opportunity for American workers. It dulls the competitive edge that we should be able to enjoy in the marketplace. We build smarter, and it doesn't have to be cheaper. But when these sorts of dynamics are working against us, we are really swimming upstream with very difficult challenges facing us.

Now, this factory owner had told me, if you take away one or two of the items that I just mentioned, we win easily. If you take three of the four away, we are a strong winner, and if you take all four away, winners hands down.

So it is about fairness. It is about having an equal shot at the opportunity to function in the international marketplace and be able to be creative and innovative with all sorts of intellectual capacity that comes, oftentimes, with research that should be another counterpart to this equation. When we do that, we are the strength beyond belief, and so our efforts here in the House, Representative POCAN, Rep-

resentative SLAUGHTER from upstate New York, Representative DELAURO from Connecticut, a great number of us who have been working together, Representative DOGGETT from Texas, a great number of us working to make certain that our colleagues know about the damage inflicted if we go forward with the current format of the TPP, the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

It is important for us to be pro-worker, pro-business, pro-trade in a free or, rather, a fair capacity, not a free and open-ended concept that has been part and parcel to negotiated deals before this.

Now, what I hear oftentimes is that the biggest problem that had come, when talking to manufacturers in northeast U.S., is that many of the arrangements in these contracts were never implemented. So the contracts might have been a little weak or unfair to begin with, but when you add to that the lack of genuine implementation, then you really have compounded the damage. The pain is real, and it is the exodus of many, many jobs in upstate New York. That is the territory of the 20th Congressional District.

Now, Mr. POCAN, I have to tell you, I am the host community, my 20th Congressional seat in New York, the eastern end to the Erie Canal corridor. Now, that gave birth to a number of mill towns. They took a little town called New York and said they were going to make it a port, and then, by building the canal, we developed a necklace of communities dubbed mill towns that became epicenters of invention and innovation, and we sparked the westward movement. We inspired an industrial revolution. Because of that, there was a great bit of manufacturing going on.

I know that we need to upgrade and retrofit and continually grow the economy by transforming some of the workforce skill sets. I know that. We invest in that. But to put us at a competitive disadvantage by having these situations where we don't require climate change response in the contract, so we are allowing people to live in fifties and sixties standards with the environment—and we are doing our best to respond to climate change. We see the damage that has been ravaging many of our communities, either through extreme dry situations, drought in the Southwest, or flooding in the Southeast and in the Northeast, these are issues that need to be addressed, and we are doing the right thing. But when the left hand is not responding to what the right hand is doing and we are giving people a different level of standards, workforce conditions, workforce protection, these are things that need to be standard across the board and not sinking down to a lowest common denominator, but rising to the highest level amongst us.

□ 1930

I think of the fact that we could end up with situations, having had favored

a labor scale, a payment mechanism, such as 65 cents per hour for Vietnamese workers as being that standard out there across the world. Nothing could be more harmful. That is undignified when it is seen through the lens of the worker.

So there is a lot of work to be done here. There is a lot of improvement that needs to be had.

We have opposed the TPP in its current form. Certainly we are for trade. It is important for us to have that marketplace. We are 4.7 percent of the world's population. Of course we want to advance trade. It needs to be fair trade, and that is what we are asking here. This is the message that we have been resonating so as to make certain that there is progress made here for our communities, our neighborhoods, our workers, and our businesses. We won't stop until we are successful with that. I believe the message is probably not even dealing with this during a lameduck session of Congress.

So I appreciate the opportunity to share some thoughts and stay with you in this Special Order for a while, Representative POCAN, because this is a very important topic to workers from coast to coast.

Again, it is the fairness that we want to bring not only to the workforce but to the business communities that invest in jobs in our neighborhood.

Mr. POCAN. This is my second term in Congress. You have been here a little longer. One of the questions I have is when I was elected 4 years ago I remember New Year's Eve when you were all voting during a lameduck session on things. Tell me more about this lameduck session portion. I think that is the real question. Some people might be amenable to what is in the TPP which we still have arguments about, but to do that in a lameduck session certainly sets up problems.

Could you explain a little more about why that is a problem? I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. TONKO. I think there needs to be strong dialogue here. With the elections being early in November and probably some time to pass before we really gather again and reconvene as a base, as a body, as a House, and then with holidays consuming some of the time during December, it gives you precious little time to really have that dialogue—that conversation—that is so essential. Great things happen when we communicate, when we talk to each other and suggest these are concerns, and let's raise the given solutions that are, indeed, required to make it acceptable. That takes time.

Quite literally, there has been no work on this. People have been advancing the TPP in its original—in its now-given format, and many people see weaknesses, loopholes, and concern for workers. There are situations where labor is not protected by union forces because the governments run the unions. And if you are a dissident to the cause then there are just extreme

outcomes for individuals if you become that whistleblower or that critic, that dissident, you are then maybe finding yourself incarcerated.

So it is important for us to clear up a lot of the issues, to correct them, and fine-tune them, everything from environmental standards, to worker protection, to the cost of pharmaceuticals, which has been raised many times over, and what it might do to the average pricetag out there. So there is not enough time. To rush and get that done, to beat the clock, so to speak, I think is a faulty bit of a scenario. It is not the way to do something as so critically important as this is.

Mr. POCAN. You mentioned there are a lot of areas that we clearly need to make changes on. There are areas of concern around labor rights, environmental rights, consumer protections, the ISDS provisions, and other things. Why not simply amend the trade agreement to fix those things? I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. TONKO. Congress has very little opportunity to adjust. It is basically a thumbs up, thumbs down. We can recommend. It is not like we can make major adjustments.

The administrator overseeing the document will have to take that back and make recommended changes. You have to bring other nations together to get agreement because it is 40 percent of the world's GDP that is the audience for this given negotiated settlement. This TPP covers a huge portion of the world's GDP. So there are a lot of partners that would have a say in the process. We can recommend, and then the changes that we can inspire are quite mild compared to what needs to be done by the framers of the settlement.

Mr. POCAN. Again, I thank you so much for all your work on this.

Mr. TONKO. My pleasure. Back at you because it has taken a lot of time for all of us who have been whipping in the House. I think, to the credit of our group, we have sacrificed a lot of time, but we have been working in a steadfast way that has allowed people to really question how this fits into their given district. When this is done, it has got to be done correctly because it is there. It is a long-term project.

People have seen what faulty agreements can mean in their districts. While we lost many manufacturing jobs, luckily this administration has helped to hold on to several manufacturing jobs and stop the bleeding. But now let's grow this, and let's invest in the intellect for manufacturing. Let's make it smarter, and let's also retrofit our systems so that we do have a heavy hand from a competitive edge. At the same time, let's get the negotiated agreement that is most favorable to a level playing field.

Mr. POCAN. Again, I thank the gentleman so much. I appreciate it.

Mr. TONKO. My pleasure.

Mr. POCAN. I think the point that the gentleman brought up, especially around why we can't amend it, is a real

significant one. Congress gave up its ability when it passed trade promotion authority to allow the President to do the final negotiations. We gave up our ability to have any amendments, and we have limited debate. So when there are so many concerns with this trade agreement, unfortunately, there is very little other than an up-or-down vote that we can do. This is exactly why when you have two major party Presidential candidates and scores of candidates for Federal office across the country in both parties opposing this agreement to allow people who could be kicked out of office, essentially by the voters, to make that decision in a lameduck is certainly undemocratic, with a small D. That is one of the real problems we are facing on this.

The other issue you brought up, gentleman, and I want to talk about too is the accompanying job loss. Other trade agreements we have had in the past, we have seen that we have had a net job loss both, I believe, from the Korea Free Trade Agreement where we were made one promise and a different result happened from NAFTA.

I just last year had a company leave Lafayette County, Wisconsin. Lafayette County is one of the most rural counties in the State of Wisconsin. The largest city is 2,400 people, Darlington. It is one of two counties in the State of Wisconsin that doesn't have a stop-and-go light. This is a rural, rural area.

A company just last year, with about 32 jobs that did auto parts, left to go to Mexico. Now, there is some trade adjustment assistance that can help in the short term to help the workers. But think about it: 32 jobs in a community of 2,400.

I also have Madison, Wisconsin, in my district, with about 240,000 people. That would be like losing 3,000-plus jobs in the city of Madison, Wisconsin. That is the effect that happened to that city, Darlington, because of previous past trade deals. That is why it is so important we get it right and we get it right the first time. In this case, I think there are many people in both parties who don't think we have it quite right, and that is why we need to address it.

Another thing I want to raise that we talked about, and I think it is so important because this is new news from this week, is the provisions around the investor-state dispute settlement, the provisions that allow, essentially, the multinational corporations to sue government if they think something affects their future profits.

Just this week there was a group of academics who have traditionally embraced free trade but are alarmed by the inclusion of the ISDS provisions in the deal who just sent a letter to Congress warning of this system. It is 223-strong, led by Harvard law professor, Laurence Tribe. He warned that the U.S. will be subject to a flurry of suits by profit-seeking actors with no interest in working through a democratic or constitutional process.

Let me read the quote in the letter: “Unfortunately the final TPP text simply replicates nearly word for word many of the problematic provisions from past agreements, and indeed would vastly expand the U.S. government’s potential liability under the ISDS system.”

This is about our sovereignty.

I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. TONKO. Doesn’t this give corporations an opportunity to undo regulations that are established by our country or laws that are established?

Mr. POCAN. The net effect by suing for financial gain will do exactly that if someone is going to have to pay damages.

There is an ISDS provision that happened in Peru over an environmental law change by a company that had toxic contamination. That company is now, because of that change to environmental law in Peru, demanding \$800 million from the country—\$800 million because they are saying that that is somehow going to affect their future profits and because of a violation of a trade agreement.

These are real. This is just one of many, many examples. Canada and other countries have been sued through these provisions. But now we have the experts in the United States telling us not to do that.

So this is something that clearly is one of the biggest problems that is in there. As we said, you can’t amend it out. We are not allowed. As Congress, we gave up our ability to amend that section out.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. TONKO. I think what you are pointing to here is a very important component of the agreement. We do lose the control, the direct authority, required of us by the constituency that places its trust in each and every Representative that is elected to come to Congress. They believe rightfully that we are going to have their best interests.

We vote in accordance with what we hear from them about standards that should be maintained, established, and implemented; and to have that passed on to a court of whatever, of a format that is far removed from a given situation and may be looking at just greed as a factor, an unwillingness to pay abundantly well for what our standards should be maintained for just reasons, moves the process away from us with any control that we might have had taken away. I think that anonymity is a dangerous outcome as a result of this sort of agreement.

So I think that, again, there is a lot of fine print in the agreement that has to be really examined and thoroughly reviewed so that we are not putting our situations at risk and our communities at risk.

All in all, it is wanting to maintain standards that will respond to the needs of the environment. We know how critical that is. We know how

much improvement is required and that we make great gains. But for those who signed into the process—some were actually directly communicating to the executive branch saying: let’s get this fast track going.

Why would you circumvent your role? Why would you, as a Member of the House, want to remove yourself from the process when we should be here reviewing, examining, recommending, and at least having some sort of input that won’t pass it over and absolve ourselves of given responsibilities?

So I appreciate, again, your yielding, Representative POCAN.

Mr. POCAN. I thank the gentleman.

As much as this is the Progressive Caucus Special Order hour, and many of us are working against this, I see Republicans in the room. I know Republicans are just as concerned about the sovereignty of this country. When you have the ISDS provisions that you have, you take away that sovereignty. So I don’t care if you are a Democrat, a Republican, or an Independent, you want to make sure that if we have a legal system here it is a legal system for everyone and there is not a special system set up for a few multinational corporations that no one else can access with their own players arbitrating these decisions. That is the real problem.

Mr. Speaker, I will close our hour just by repeating a few of the things that I think are really important for our people who are watching to understand. This is a day of action, and 90 organizations have had calls coming into Congress throughout the day. Tens of thousands of calls have come into Washington, D.C., to ask people not to support TPP, but especially not to support a vote on the Trans-Pacific Partnership in a lameduck Congress.

Don’t let people who have just been rejected by the voters make a decision that could impact this country for decades in the future. Don’t allow a vote that is going to take away more American jobs and further depress our wages here. That is what people have been calling us all day about.

I think that an important question for anyone who wants to serve in this body is: are we going to give up those sorts of sovereignty issues? Are we going to give up the very concerns we have around things like food safety and prescription drug prices; around labor standards and environmental standards?

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Are we going to give all of that up through one giant trade deal that has 40 percent of the world’s gross domestic product wrapped into it and think that any agreement we have with Canada and Vietnam are identical?

I don’t think anyone really believes that is in the best interest of America. That is why we had this Special Order tonight. That is why so many people called in today. We thank those people

for watching, and we hope that they will get active on this issue as well. It is important that we have trade, but we need fair trade, not just free trade.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

IMPEACHING JOHN KOSKINEN

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MACARTHUR). Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JORDAN) for 30 minutes.

Mr. JORDAN. Mr. Speaker, John Koskinen should no longer hold office. John Koskinen should no longer be the Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service. Tonight I am joined by some of my colleagues to talk about why that should happen, why he should be removed from office.

If you remember what took place here, the Internal Revenue Service targeted our fellow citizens for their political beliefs. They did it, and they got caught. Maybe most importantly tonight, thinking about the current Commissioner, the targeting continues.

Now, you don’t have to take my word for it. You can take what the United States Appellate Court for the District of Columbia stated. This is a decision from August 5, 2016, last month, from the opinion.

The IRS has admitted to the inspector general, to the District Court, and to us—the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia—that applications for exemption by some of the plaintiffs have never to this day been processed. They are still targeting conservative groups.

They say it again right here:

It is absurd to suggest that the effect of the IRS’ unlawful conduct, which delayed the processing of plaintiffs’ applications, has been eradicated when two of the plaintiffs’ applications remain pending.

So here is the takeaway: they are still doing it.

Here is the standard for removing someone from office: gross negligence, breach of public trust, dereliction of duty.

Mr. Koskinen has certainly had those things take place under his tenure at the Internal Revenue Service.

Here are the facts. February 2014, John Koskinen’s chief counsel is on notice that there are problems with Lois Lerner’s hard drive and missing emails from during the time of the initial targeting. They wait 4 months before they tell Congress and, therefore, the American people.

During that 4 months, they learn in February: Oh, we have got missing emails, problems with Lois Lerner’s hard drive, an essential figure in this scandal.

They wait until June before they tell Congress and the American people.

During that 4-month timeframe, 422 backup tapes are destroyed. Most importantly, they are destroyed with three orders to preserve all documents, and two subpoenas to get those documents are in place. Now, think about