

To Members of Congress:
Please Co-Sponsor HR 2293/S. 1644, The Public Health Trade Advisory Committee Act

We're writing to ask you to co-sponsor H.R. 2293/S.1644, the Public Health Trade Advisory Committee Act. Introduced by Reps. Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) and Lloyd Doggett (D-TX), and Sen. Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), the legislation amends the Trade Act of 1974 to require that a Public Health Advisory Committee on Trade (PHACT) be added to the influential Second Tier of the Federal Trade Advisory Committee System.

Global trade agreements increasingly affect the public's health, from the price of medicines to regulations that protect the safety of food and water supplies. **The Government Accountability Office and the Center for Policy Analysis on Trade and Health (CPATH) have documented the absence of public health representation on U.S. trade advisory committees. Advisors from health-related industries including pharmaceuticals, tobacco, processed foods, alcohol beverages and health insurance have had exclusive access to government trade negotiators.**

By establishing a Trade Advisory Committee charged with protecting and preserving the public's health, we can potentially prevent health threats before they happen.

The Trade Advisory Committee System was created to help the President develop U.S. trade policy. The system has three tiers with the Advisory Committee for Trade Policy and Negotiations (ACTPN) on the top tier and the Industry Trade Advisory Committees (ITACs) on the lowest tier. Because advisory committee members are "cleared" advisors, they must hold certain information in confidence. **The new PHACT will enable public health representatives to consult with each other and to express their unique perspectives. The bill also paves the way for greater public health representation on the ACTPN and the ITACs.**

The bill would improve the Trade Advisory Committee system in several important ways:

- **It gives public health concerns consideration** at the onset of trade agreement formation, ultimately making America safer and healthier.
- **It requires greater openness and transparency in the way all of the trade advisory committees operate.** The changes would involve more timely communications among committees, Congress and the Administration, and hold the Administration accountable for responding to committees' concerns.
- It will be the first Trade Advisory Committee to be exclusively composed of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), ensuring that there is fairer and more effective representation of public interests.

Please see the Bill Summary for additional details.

If you would like to co-sponsor HR 2293 or have any questions, please call or email:

Ken Cummings, Rep. Van Hollen: 5-5341
Cameron Arterton, Rep. Doggett: 5-4865

Alternatively, you can contact CPATH: 415-922-6204, ershaffer@cpath.org.

Action Aid International
ACT UP Philadelphia
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN)
American Medical Students Association (AMSA)
American Public Health Association
California Public Health Association – North
California Women’s Agenda
Center for Policy Analysis on Trade and Health (CPATH)
Community HIV/AIDS Mobilization Project (CHAMP)
Congregation of St. Joseph, Office of Peace and Justice
Essential Action
Girl U Can Do It, Inc.
Global AIDS Alliance
Global Health through Education, Service and Training
Health Alliance International
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP)
JOLT, A Catholic Coalition for Responsible Investing, California
Knowledge Ecology International
Maquiladora Health and Safety Support Network
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
Medical Mission Sisters Alliance for Justice
Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate
National Legislative Association on Prescription Drug Prices
National Women’s Health Network
New Rules for Global Finance
Northwest Coalition for Responsible Investment
Oblates of Mary Immaculate
Our Bodies Ourselves
Oxfam America
Physicians for Social Responsibility
Salud y Farmacos
Sisters of Charity, Corporate Responsibility Committee, Region VI Coalition for Responsible Investment
Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet and Associates, St. Louis Province
Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother
Stop HIV/AIDS in India Initiative (SHAI)
Universities Allied for Essential Medicines