

# **Citizen Trade Policy Commission**

**Monday, February 12, 2007**

Room 126, State House, Augusta

10:30 AM meeting of the subcommittees

1 PM meeting of the full Commission

## **Meeting Summary**

**Members present:**, Sen. Margaret Rotundo (co-chair), Rep. John Patrick (co-chair), Sen. Bruce Bryant, Sen. Kevin Raye, Malcolm Burson, Carla Dickstein, Leslie Manning, Wade Merritt, Cynthia Phinney, Linda Pistner, Matt Schlobohm and Paul Volckhausen.

**Staff present:** Alison Ames, Legislative Researcher and Sarah Laskowski, intern.

**Full Commission convenes 1:00 PM** (Transportation Committee Room, SH Room 126)

**I. Update on fast track** from Lori Wallach, Public Citizen's Director of Global Trade Watch Division [www.TradeWatch.org](http://www.TradeWatch.org)

Lori Wallach, by conference call, offered a brief history and basic overview of trade policy including the implementation of "Fast Track." Fast Track essentially delegates the authority over trade policy that was originally granted to Congress from Congress to the Executive branch and removes Congressional and state review and input from trade agreements. Fast Track is set to expire on June 30, 2007 and this 'sunset' provides for the opportunity to create a new version that re-inserts the checks and balances originally envisioned by the Constitution.

During a question and answer period, Ms. Wallach indicated that "the sooner the better" was the timeline for getting involved by contacting the Congressional delegation as they were busy working on a new campaign to replace Fast Track. She also said that services such as insurance, hospitals and the au pair system would be increasingly affected by any new trade agreements. As she had a prior commitment at 2 p.m. that she had to leave for, she offered to be available later to answer additional questions. She also said that there were various informative fact sheets concerning Fast Track and on her web site that commission members might find helpful.

**II. Report back from subcommittees' 10:30 a.m. meetings.**

The Labor and Economic Development subcommittee met and discussed the upcoming visit by Alan Tonelson. No other subcommittees met.

### **III. Discussion of upcoming guest speaker, Alan Tonelson.**

Alan Tonelson will be in Maine for a couple of days over the week of April 23<sup>rd</sup> and will address the CTPC at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, April 24<sup>th</sup>. Commission members should continue to coordinate additional speaking engagements for Mr. Tonelson through Cynthia Phinney. Pete Connell will maintain contact with Mr. Tonelson and assist him with final arrangements. Additional speaking engagements suggested by commission members include the University of Maine, Husson, the University of Maine at Lewiston, Auburn, the University of Southern Maine, Colby, and a cable TV interview with Kit St. John. Because of the demands of the legislative schedule, Mr. Tonelson's visit will replace the regular April CTPC meeting.

Additional speakers suggested for upcoming meetings were Howard Rosen (internet) and Jonathon Rubin from the University of Maine with information on global warming and its impact on Maine.

### **IV. Update on Revised fast track resolution.**

Previously the commission had discussed creating a resolution to be introduced to the legislature dealing with Fast Track. A sample document had been distributed to the commission. There was some concern about the tone of the document, as written. The commission agreed to review the document and to email any comments or concerns to Leslie Manning. A subcommittee of Leslie Manning, Rep. Treat, Matt Schlobohm, Wade Merritt and Linda Pistner would work together to edit the document, incorporating the comments received and then get a version to staff by February 26<sup>th</sup>. Staff would then email the updated version to commission members to review in advance of the March meeting. The commission could then discuss and vote on the issue and decide whether to direct the chairs to introduce the resolution to the legislature.

### **IV. Review of Peter Riggs's visit.**

Commission members generally agreed that Peter Riggs's visit was beneficial. Mr. Riggs had a good opportunity to connect with legislators, key committees and the press concerning his work and his assessment of the commission. When the commission has a quorum they will vote to send him a letter expressing their thanks for his visit and for the work he has done on behalf of the CTPC.

### **V. Suggestions for new members to fill vacancies.**

Members discussed the various vacant seats on the commission and made suggestions for groups or agencies that might provide candidates –such as the tourism industry, small business, and health care either through the Maine Hospital Association or the Maine Medical Association. Rep. Patrick indicated he was working with the House staff to get another Representative appointed. Members would check into possible candidates and get their suggestions to staff. Staff would also contact the Commissioner of Agriculture with a reminder that their seat on the commission had been vacant since Mary Ellen Johnston had left the Department.

### **VI. Update on the compilation of public hearing information.**

CTPC Intern Sarah Laskowski told the commission she had reviewed much of the previous CTPC public hearing information and she had spoken to Matt Schlobohm about the best format for the delivery of that information. She said she would be ready to make a presentation to the commission at their next meeting.

**VII. Room Availability for Fri. Mar. 2, 2007 subcommittee meetings.**

Staff informed the commission that legislative committee meeting room availability for next month's subcommittees was limited because of the legislative session. Subcommittees would either have to share meeting rooms or suggest alternate places to meet. Subcommittees decided to suspend meeting temporarily, especially until some of the vacancies had been filled.

**Vii. Adjournment.**

The Commission adjourned its meeting at approximately 3:00 PM.