
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

RESPECTFULLY REQUESTING THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO CREATE A REPLACEMENT FOR THE OUTDATED FAST TRACK TRADE AUTHORITY SYSTEM SO THAT UNITED STATES TRADE AGREEMENTS ARE DEVELOPED AND IMPLEMENTED USING A MORE DEMOCRATIC, INCLUSIVE MECHANISM THAT ENSHRINES THE PRINCIPLES OF FEDERALISM AND STATE SOVEREIGNTY.

1 WHEREAS, in general, democratic accountable governance in
2 the states, and specifically, the authority granted to the
3 legislative branch by the Constitution of the State of Hawaii,
4 is being undermined by international commercial and trade rules
5 enforced by the World Trade Organization and established by the
6 North American Free Trade Agreement, and is further threatened
7 by similar provisions in an array of pending trade agreements;
8 and

9 WHEREAS, today's trade agreements have effects that extend
10 significantly beyond the bounds of traditional trade matters
11 such as tariffs and quotas; and
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13 WHEREAS, the North American Free Trade Agreement and other
14 United States free trade agreements grant foreign firms new
15 rights and privileges regarding acquisition of land and
16 facilities and operating within a state that exceed those
17 granted to American businesses under state and federal laws; and
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19 WHEREAS, the North American Free Trade Agreement already
20 has generated "regulatory takings" cases against state and local
21 land use decisions, state environmental and public health
22 policies, adverse state court rulings, and state and local
23 contracts that would not have been possible in United States
24 courts; and
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26 WHEREAS, when states are bound to comply with government
27 procurement provisions contained in trade agreements, common
28 economic development and environmental policies such as buy-



1 local laws, prevailing wage laws, policies to prevent offshoring
2 of state jobs, as well as recycled content laws could be subject
3 to challenge as violating the obligations in the trade
4 agreements; and

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6 WHEREAS, recent trade agreements curtail state regulatory
7 authority by placing constraints on future policy options; and

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9 WHEREAS, the World Trade Organization General Agreement on
10 Trade in Services could undermine state efforts to expand health
11 care coverage and rein in health care costs and places
12 constraints on state and local land use planning and gambling
13 policy; and

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15 WHEREAS, new General Agreement on Trade in Services
16 negotiations could impose additional constraints on state
17 regulation of energy, higher education, professional licensing,
18 and other issues; and

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20 WHEREAS, despite the indisputable fact that international
21 trade agreements have a far-reaching impact on state and local
22 laws, federal government trade negotiators have failed to
23 respect states' rights to prior informed consent before binding
24 states to conform state law and authority to trade agreement
25 requirements and have refused even to send copies of key
26 correspondence to state legislatures; and

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28 WHEREAS, the current encroachment on state regulatory
29 authority by international commercial and trade agreements has
30 occurred due in no small part to the fact that United States
31 trade policy is being formulated and implemented under the Fast
32 Track Trade Authority procedure; and

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34 WHEREAS, Fast Track Trade Authority eliminates vital checks
35 and balances established in the United States Constitution by
36 broadly delegating Congress' exclusive Constitutional authority
37 to set the terms of trade to the Executive Branch such that the
38 Executive Branch is empowered to negotiate broad-ranging trade
39 agreements and to sign them before Congress votes on the
40 agreements; and

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42 WHEREAS, the ability of the Executive Branch to sign trade
43 agreements prior to Congress' vote of approval means Executive
44 Branch negotiators are able to ignore congressional negotiating



1 objectives or states' demands, and neither Congress nor the
2 states have any means to enforce any decision regarding what
3 provisions must be contained in every United States trade
4 agreement and what provisions may not be included in any United
5 States trade agreement; and

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7 WHEREAS, federal trade negotiators have ignored and
8 disrespected states' demands regarding whether states agree to
9 be bound to certain nontariff trade agreement provisions; and

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11 WHEREAS, Fast Track Trade Authority also circumvents normal
12 Congressional review and amendment committee procedures, limits
13 debate to twenty hours total, and forbids any floor amendments
14 to the implementing legislation that is presented to Congress to
15 conform hundreds of United States laws to trade agreement
16 obligations and to incorporate the actual trade agreement itself
17 into United States federal law, which preempts state law; and

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19 WHEREAS, Fast Track Trade Authority is not necessary for
20 negotiating trade agreements, as demonstrated by the existence
21 of scores of trade agreements, including major pacts such as the
22 agreements administered by the World Trade Organization
23 implemented in the past thirty years without use of Fast Track
24 Trade Authority; and

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26 WHEREAS, Fast Track Trade Authority, which was established
27 in 1974 by President Richard Nixon when trade agreements were
28 limited to traditional matters such as tariffs and quotas, is
29 now woefully outdated and inappropriate given the diverse range
30 of nontrade issues now included in "trade" agreements that
31 broadly affect federal and state nontrade regulatory authority;
32 and

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34 WHEREAS, the current grant of Fast Track Trade Authority
35 expires in July 2007; now, therefore,

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37 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
38 Twenty-fourth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular
39 Session of 2007, the Senate concurring, that that the United
40 States Congress is respectfully requested to create a
41 replacement for the outdated Fast Track Trade Authority system
42 so that United States trade agreements are developed and
43 implemented using a more democratic, inclusive mechanism that



1 enshrines the principles of federalism and state sovereignty;
2 and

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4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Congress is requested to
5 include in this new process for developing and implementing
6 trade agreements an explicit mechanism for ensuring the prior
7 informed consent of state legislatures before states are bound
8 to the nontariff terms of any trade agreement that affect state
9 regulatory authority so as to ensure that the United States
10 Trade Representative respects the decisions made by states; and
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12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
13 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the President of the
14 United States, Ambassador Susan Schwab, United States Trade
15 Representative, the President of the United States Senate, the
16 Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the
17 members of Hawaii's congressional delegation.
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