

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 1, 2012

The Honorable Ron Kirk
U.S. Trade Representative
600 17th Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20508

Dear Ambassador Kirk:

The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) partners have committed to seeking a high-standard, 21st century trade agreement that promotes economic growth and jobs through enhanced trade and investment opportunities. This includes tackling trade-related environmental challenges that often undermine economic gains by frustrating legitimate trade, underwriting the activities of criminal gangs, and destroying valuable natural capital. We believe that with a strong environment chapter the TPP provides a significant opportunity to improve environmental enforcement and protection across the Pacific region, while enhancing legal and sustainable trade of natural resources.

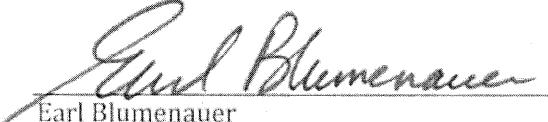
For this reason, we strongly support your efforts to advance provisions in the TPP curbing the illegal trade of resources (such as wood, wood products, and fish), illegal wildlife trade, marine and shark conservation, and the unfair competition and overfishing caused by fisheries subsidies. Looking at illegal logging alone, the World Bank estimates it costs developing nations \$15 billion each year and translates to an approximate loss of \$1 billion dollars annually to U.S. industry. This coupled with the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization's finding that 85 percent of the world's commercial fish populations are fully exploited, overexploited, depleted, or recovering from depletion, paints a challenging economic future. Adoption of these provisions in the TPP in an enforceable manner subject to dispute resolution will enhance efforts regionally and within each partner nation to tackle these conservation challenges and their economic impacts.

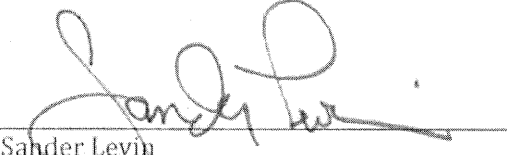
We also commend the inclusion of the provisions of the May 10th bipartisan deal on trade. These provisions were included in the Peru Free Trade agreement and all three of the recent trade agreements with Colombia, Panama, and South Korea. These environmental provisions include, *inter alia*, the effective enforcement of multilateral environmental agreements, the non-derogation from a party's environmental laws, and the application of dispute settlement provisions to the environmental obligations in the same manner as commercial obligations. These provisions are an essential part of the basic framework of any trade agreement.


While we recognize there are still important environmental concerns that need attention in other areas of the TPP, we believe that these strong provisions in the environment chapter provide a significant opportunity to improve environmental enforcement and protection across the Pacific region, while enhancing legal and sustainable trade of natural resources. We appreciate and support your efforts to achieve a strong environmental agreement that sets the standard for future TPP members as well as future trade agreements.

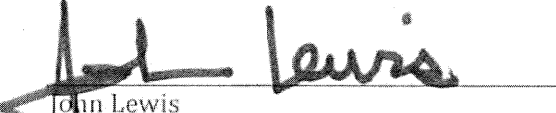
Thank you for your consideration. Please feel free to contact David Skillman in Congressman Blumenauer's office with any questions at 202-225-4811 or David.Skillman@mail.house.gov.


Sincerely,



Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



Sander Levin
Member of Congress

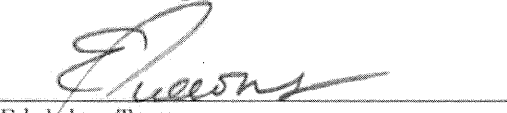

Jim McDermott
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Jesse L. Jackson, Jr.
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Pete Stark
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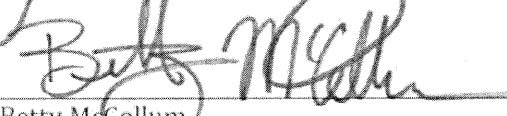

Ron Kind
Member of Congress



Edolphus Towns
Member of Congress



Mike Thompson
Member of Congress

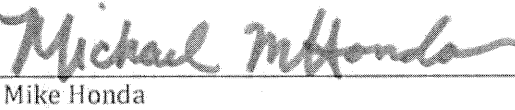

Joe Crowley
Member of Congress

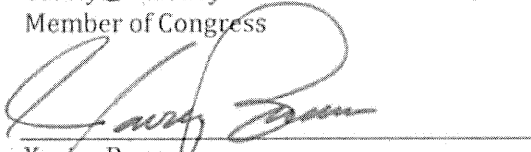

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