

Congress Sends Fast-Track Trade Authority Bill to the President, Invigorating Trans-Pacific Partnership Negotiations

Article By:

Dennis A. Cardoza

Christopher M. Swift

Jennifer F. Walsh

After several weeks of legislative wrangling, congressional leaders will send a bill to President Obama this week to give him fast-track authority to negotiate a trade deal that will potentially govern 40 percent of U.S. imports and exports. ***The Trade Act of 2015*** [also referred to as “[Trade Promotion Authority](#)” (TPA) or “*fast-track trade authority*”], will allow the President to negotiate the 12-country ***Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP)*** free trade deal with limited congressional interference.

On June 24, the Senate passed the TPA bill 60-38. Because the House cleared this measure earlier this month, the bill will go directly to the President for his signature by the end of the week.

Shortly after passage of the TPA, the Senate passed a separate, but related, measure to provide *Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)* benefits for workers hurt by trade deals. The TAA provisions are important to the 13 Senate Democrats who broke ranks and voted for the stand-alone TPA measure, and congressional Republicans have assured them that they will bring up that measure in the House on Thursday.

Enactment of fast-track trade legislation will invigorate negotiations over the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), a free trade agreement designed to promote international trade and investment by lowering tariffs, harmonizing regulations, and eliminating Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs) to trade. The TPP will initially cover 12 countries: Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, the United States, and Vietnam. Collectively these countries represent 40 percent of the global economy. The treaty also establishes mechanisms for other countries to join in the future.

The TPP will create new rules governing cross-border trade, including competition, customs duties, market access, rules of origin, and trade disputes. Special arbitration provisions would permit cause of action filings against foreign governments. The TPP will govern foreign exports, imports, and investment implicating several major sectors of the U.S. economy, including manufacturing, intellectual property, textiles and apparel, telecommunications, agriculture and others. It will also cover labor, employment, and environmental issues.

© 2025 Foley & Lardner LLP

National Law Review, Volume V, Number 176

Source URL: <https://natlawreview.com/article/congress-sends-fast-track-trade-authority-bill-to-president-invigorating-trans-pacif>