



## **Washington Fair Trade Coalition**

606 Maynard Ave S, Suite 252 – Seattle, WA 98104 – (206) 227-3079

*Working on behalf of people and the planet for a fair global trading system*

### **WFTC Statement on Peru and Panama FTAs Washington State-specific reasons why we oppose these agreements**

The Washington Fair Trade Coalition is composed of 28 labor, environmental, social justice and faith-based organizations that are working to ensure that the world trade system – including all free trade agreements that the United States signs – are fair and beneficial to all.

While the FTAs that were negotiated between the US and Peru and Panama include important improvements regarding protection of labor, the environment, and access to medicines, we remain opposed to the passage of these agreements because many of our key concerns about trade policy were not addressed. These concerns are well articulated by the Citizens' Trade Campaign's statement on the Peru and Panama FTAs. In addition, there are some issues of particular concern to Washington State residents that warrant attention.

#### **Agriculture**

- The Peru FTA is a concern for Washington State asparagus growers along with the growing number of Washington State consumers advocating for locally-grown foods. The FTA missed the opportunity to include reasonable, seasonally-based provisions to maintain viable local production of this important crop while also allowing for import opportunities.
- More generally, Washington State consumers increasingly favor locally-and sustainably-grown foods. However, procurement and other provisions of these FTAs constrain the ability of local and state governments to support these values.

#### **Product safety provisions**

- The amended text does not address limits on imported product safety and inspection. These FTAs still contain language requiring the United States to accept imported food and other products that do not meet our safety standards.
- As some Washington public officials have sponsored bills mandating food labeling requirements in this state, there is understandably significant concern about whether these FTAs will counteract such aims.

#### **Environmental provisions**

- It is laudable that the Peru and Panama FTAs for the first time include enforceable environmental standards. However, most of the seven specific International Treaties included as "enforceable" (dealing with such issues as the Antarctic, whaling, tuna, the Montreal Protocol, and pollution from ships) are largely irrelevant to the critical environmental threats facing these countries, particularly Peru. Only CITES (dealing with trade in endangered species) is of any significant value in ensuring activities under the Peru FTA will promote environmental quality.
- More generally, for FTAs to truly support sustainable commerce, they must ensure that reasonable protections are in place in the areas of natural resource

management, energy use, and air and water pollution. These FTAs fail to meet that standard.

- Washington state citizens recently defeated an environmental "takings" initiative (I-933) in a landslide vote. This signals broad state-based opposition to the type of investor-to-state "takings" lawsuit provisions initiated in NAFTA and maintained in the Peru and Panama FTAs. These provisions need reform.

Despite the improvements, these agreements do not go far enough to protect people and the planet, and thus our Coalition opposes their ratification. We look forward to working with Congress to build on the improvements made to date so as to ensure future trade agreements can obtain broad support.

---

**Washington Fair Trade Coalition members:**

America In Solidarity

American Friends Service Committee - Pacific NW

Audubon Washington

Church Council of Greater Seattle

Comité Pro Amnistia General y Justicia Social

Community Alliance for Global Justice

CWA – Washington and Northern Idaho State Council

International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, District 751

IBEW Local 46

IFPTE Local 17

ILWU – Puget Sound District Council

King County Labor Council

Lutheran Public Policy Office of Washington State

Pierce County Central Labor Council

Seattle CISPES

Sierra Club – Cascade Chapter

Snohomish County Labor Council

South Sound Clean Clothes Campaign

SPEEA

Spokane Regional Labor Council

Students for Fair Trade

Temple Beth Am Social Action

UFCW Local 21

USW District 12

Washington Association of Churches

Washington State Labor Council

WashTech/CWA

Witness for Peace NW