



## Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice

*A national religious organization founded in support of Unitarian values*

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House of Commons Standing Committee on International Trade  
Sixth Floor, 131 Queen Street  
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To Whom It May Concern:

Canadian Unitarians For Social Justice (CUSJ), a national, faith-based organization, is writing to express our grave concerns about the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP). Our concerns are multi-faceted but come down to this: the risks of the TPP to ordinary Canadians far outweigh any benefits that the agreement might have. The TPP is a detriment to the economy, to jobs, and to Canadian sovereignty, and will negatively affect our ability to live up to our commitments on carbon emissions and climate change.

Several organizations, including the World Bank, Tufts University, and the Petersen Institute for International Economics have found that the TPP offers few potential economic benefits to Canada as measured by gross domestic product (GDP). The [Global Development and Environment Institute at Tufts University study](#) estimates GDP growth for the period 2015-2025 at a total of 0.28% while employment drops by 58,000 jobs and the labor share of GDP drops by 0.86%.

The impact on employment is a concern. Under the International Mobility Program (IMP), multinational corporations with businesses in Canada can use intracorporate transfers to bring in thousands of workers from low-wage countries without having to prove that there are no Canadians to fill the jobs. This could lead to loss of jobs and higher unemployment rates.

Further, the TPP poses dangers to our democracy and the sovereignty of Canada. In particular, the Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) process for resolving complaints violates principles of democracy and transparency. Rather than decisions being made in a public court, they would

be settled by corporate lawyers, with no right of appeal and limited public participation. This process undermines the sovereignty of Canada and the democratic power of Canadians to make laws and policies in the public interest. Multinational corporations, with no allegiance to Canada or interest in the public good, would have the power to overrule Canadian laws and policies and be paid compensation if new public interest legislation affects future corporate profits.

The most catastrophic effect is this: the TPP could undermine Canada's ability to live up to its commitments on carbon emissions and reducing global warming. Post-TPP, how will Canada implement laws and policies to stop or limit developments that contribute to pollution, environmental destruction and global warming, when these can be challenged and overturned through the ISDS process? We have already seen precedents for this: US firms filed about 20 investor lawsuits under NAFTA, many of them challenging environmental policies, such as a ban on trade in gasoline containing the suspected neurotoxin MMT. Canada has paid more than \$160 million in fines already and is facing another \$4-5-billion worth of NAFTA lawsuits, including one from Lone Pine Resources, which is seeking \$250-million compensation for Quebec's publicly supported moratorium on fracking in the St. Lawrence River Valley.

Alarmingly, Article 20.15, *Transition to a Low Emissions and Resilient Economy*, omits key data on climate change. The words "climate change" do not appear in the environment chapter and it is not explicit that "low emissions" refers to the greenhouse gas emissions listed in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

These are our main concerns about the TPP. In addition, we are concerned that the TPP would reduce our food security and increase prices of pharmaceuticals, which are already the second highest in the developed world, next to the United States.

Finally, the process of negotiating the TPP has been anything but transparent and open. We urge the House of Commons Standing Committee on Trade to Canada to reject this deal that is clearly in the interest of corporations, not citizens.

Sincerely,



Margaret Rao,  
President  
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*The CUSJ purposes are: to develop and maintain a vibrant network of Unitarian social action in Canada and elsewhere and to proactively represent Unitarian principles and values in matters of social justice... and environmental protection.*