

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

October 8, 2015

The Honorable Barack Obama  
President of the United States of America  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Obama:

We write today to express concerns about the potential conflict between free trade rules and the urgency to address climate change. Climate change is an enormous threat to our nation and our planet, and the 21st Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Paris is a key opportunity for the global community to agree to a strong framework to combat the crisis. As the administration pushes towards an agreement in Paris, we must not let trade rules, including those incorporated in the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), undercut the prospects for or implementation of a strong climate deal.

In recent years we have witnessed an alarming rise of international trade and investment disputes related to renewable energy and climate policies. Foreign investors and corporations are increasingly using investment rules in free trade agreements and bilateral investment treaties to challenge climate and clean energy policies. Recently there has been a significant increase in investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) cases in which corporations bring legal action against governments with policies contradicting the parameters of a trade agreement. In fact, since 2011 the number of ISDS cases, which often target environmental regulations and standards, has exploded to an average of nearly fifty cases each year.

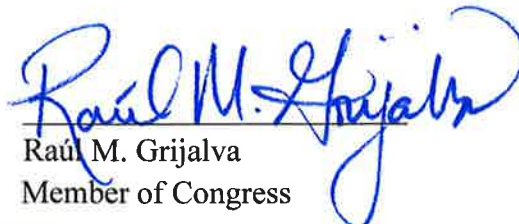
In order to combat the climate crisis every nation will need to transition to a new, low carbon future. There are many ways this can be accomplished, but countries and localities will need flexibility to realize this goal. All countries should be incentivized to implement policies to combat climate change. For this reason, we cannot adopt trade rules which empower foreign investors to challenge state and federal renewable energy programs.

The Paris climate deal and free trade agreements cannot be discussed in silos. Further, the United States must not perpetuate the ability of foreign companies to undermine sovereign governments' efforts to combat climate change. We urge the administration to ensure no provisions within any trade agreement under consideration by the United States undermine the ability of countries to reach or implement a strong agreement to address climate change.

Sincerely,



Mark Pocan  
Member of Congress



Raúl M. Grijalva  
Member of Congress



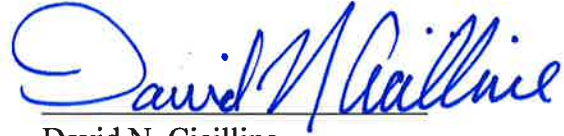
Brendan F. Boyle  
Member of Congress



Matt Cartwright  
Member of Congress



Judy Chu  
Member of Congress



David N. Cicilline  
Member of Congress



John Conyers, Jr.  
Member of Congress



Peter DeFazio  
Member of Congress



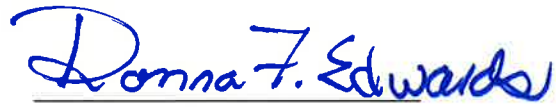
Rosa L. DeLauro  
Member of Congress



Mark DeSaulnier  
Member of Congress



Debbie Dingell  
Member of Congress



Donna F. Edwards  
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Keith Ellison  
Member of Congress



John Garamendi  
Member of Congress



Luis V. Gutiérrez  
Member of Congress



Michael M. Honda  
Member of Congress



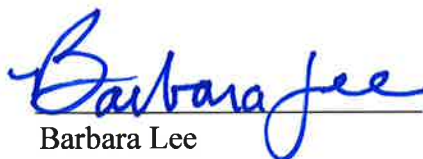
Jared Huffman  
Member of Congress



Marcy Kaptur  
Member of Congress



William R. Keating  
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Barbara Lee  
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Ted Lieu  
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Daniel Lipinski  
Member of Congress



Zoe Lofgren  
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Alan Lowenthal  
Member of Congress



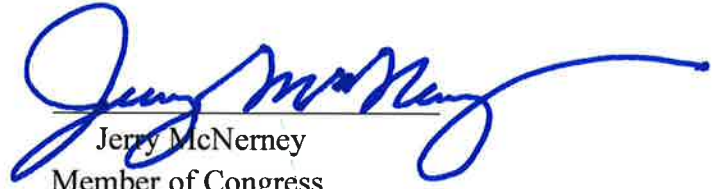
Carolyn Maloney  
Member of Congress



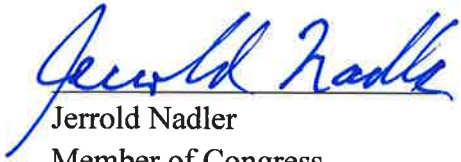
Betty McCollum  
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress



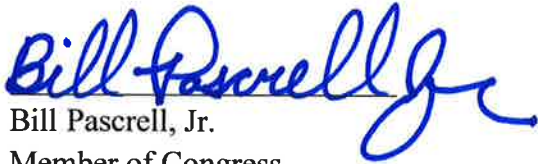
Jerry McNerney  
Member of Congress



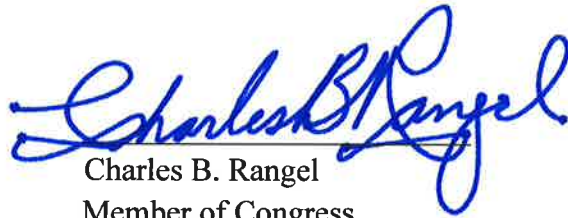
Jerrold Nadler  
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress



Bill Pascrell, Jr.  
Member of Congress



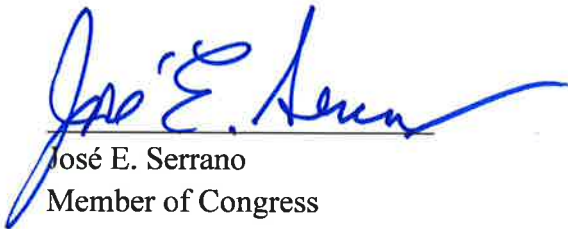
Charles B. Rangel  
Member of Congress



John Sarbanes  
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Robert C. "Bobby" Scott  
Member of Congress



José E. Serrano  
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress



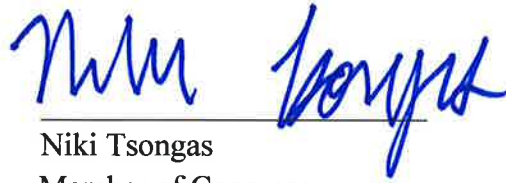
Brad Sherman  
Member of Congress



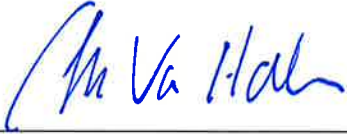
Louise McIntosh Slaughter  
Member of Congress



Paul Tonko  
Member of Congress




Niki Tsongas  
Member of Congress




Chris Van Hollen  
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Maxine Waters  
Member of Congress



Bonnie Watson Coleman  
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John Yarmuth  
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