

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 30, 2015

The Honorable Michael Froman
United States Trade Representative
600 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Ambassador Froman,

In advance of upcoming work to conclude the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), we write in strong support of provisions in the investment chapter to protect public health. Unwarranted challenges related to tobacco threaten the sovereignty of member countries to enact independent regulations in the public interest. It is essential that effective safeguards are put into place to explicitly protect the ability of countries to implement public health measures. Specifically, we urge you to ensure tobacco-related disputes are excluded from the investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) mechanism.

Tobacco is the leading cause of preventable death worldwide, killing close to 6 million people each year. Throughout the world the vast majority of the 1 billion smokers live in low- and middle-income countries. In recognition of the grave health and economic consequences of tobacco use, countries representing more than 90 percent of the world's population, including all other member countries engaged in TPP negotiations, have made international commitments to prioritize public health with regard to the tobacco epidemic.

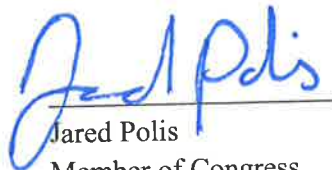
At the same time countries are taking meaningful measures to prevent or reduce tobacco consumption, some tobacco companies are increasingly attempting to undermine these policies through trade dispute mechanisms. This deliberate intimidation has created an environment of fear that discourages legitimate policies to protect public health.

We welcome your continued commitment to preserve the sovereign ability of member countries to implement appropriate and balanced regulations in the public interest. We are concerned that failure to negotiate a strong position that prevents foreign investors from weakening or blocking health protections will have a detrimental effect on the global population. We look forward to working with you to advance provisions that are consistent with these U.S. principles and values.


Sincerely,




Ami Bera, M.D.
Member of Congress




Jared Polis
Member of Congress




Jim Himes
Member of Congress




Scott Peters
Member of Congress



Suzan K. DelBene
Member of Congress



Rick Larsen
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Eddie Bernice Johnson
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Jim Cooper
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Kathleen M. Rice
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Debbie Wasserman Schultz
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Gregory W. Meeks
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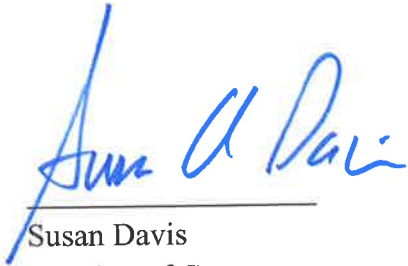
Gerald E. Connolly
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Ron Kind
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Sam Farr
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Susan Davis
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Earl Blumenauer
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Donald S. Beyer Jr.
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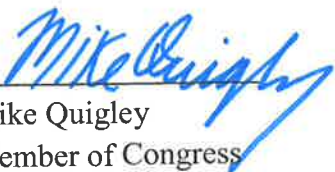
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