

COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

Meeting Date: December 15, 2015	Agenda Item:	Agenda Location: Action Item	Work Plan # N/A	Legal Review:	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 st Reading <input type="checkbox"/> 2 nd Reading
Subject: A resolution opposing the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade agreement.					
Recommended by: Councilmember Goodman			Approved by: Jack Ethredge		Ordinance previously introduced by: _____
Presenter(s): Councilmember Goodman					

SYNOPSIS:

This resolution opposes the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) is a trade agreement involving twelve countries. The agreement has been developed after more than seven years of negotiations. The countries included in the TPP are: The United States, Canada, Mexico, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, Chile, Peru, and Brunei.

RECOMMENDATION:

None

BUDGET/STAFF IMPLICATIONS:

None

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve the resolution.
2. Do not approve the resolution.
3. Approved the resolution with amendment.

BACKGROUND (ANALYSIS/NEXT STEPS/HISTORY): (includes previous City Council action)

Councilmember Goodman made a presentation in opposition to the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement to City Council at the December 8 Planning Session. Council gave direction to bring this resolution forward to a formal Council meeting for action.

R E S O L U T I O N

A RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP TRADE AGREEMENT.

WHEREAS, U.S. trade agreements for the past 25 years have been corporate-driven, incorporating rules that skew benefits to economic elites while requiring working families to bear the brunt of such policies; and

WHEREAS, the growing trade deficits, driven by the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), China's joining the World Trade Organization, and the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement, have displaced 700,000 jobs, 3.2 million jobs, and 75,000 jobs respectively; and

WHEREAS, U.S. employment in manufacturing dropped by five million from 2000 to 2015; and

WHEREAS, jobs lost due to trade devastate families and entire communities and can permanently reduce lifetime earnings for hundreds of thousands of workers; and

WHEREAS, the long decline of the American manufacturing base – exacerbated by bad trade policies that reward outsourcing – has undermined our economic security and poses a direct threat to our national security; and

WHEREAS, the offshoring of manufacturing and service jobs deprives local and state governments of sorely needed revenues, jeopardizing the livelihoods of millions of public servants as well as construction workers whose jobs depend upon infrastructure building, repair and maintenance; and

WHEREAS, under NAFTA-style trade rules, the U.S. annual trade deficit has increased dramatically from 70 billion in 1993, the year before NAFTA went into effect, to more than \$508 billion in 2014; and

WHEREAS, the disproportionate voice of powerful global corporations in the formation of U.S. "free trade" agreements has advanced an agenda that undermines the public interest and threatens democracy; and

WHEREAS, NAFTA and all but two of the U.S. trade agreements that followed it include special legal rights for foreign investors, known as "investor-to-state dispute settlement" or ISDS, that allow foreign firms to bypass state and federal courts to challenge state and local laws, regulations, and administrative and judicial decisions in international tribunals; and

WHEREAS, the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) includes provisions locking in monopoly protections for expensive specialty drugs called biologics and constraining Medicare's ability to limit spending on drugs, potentially increasing drug costs for the government and all Americans; and

WHEREAS, foreign investors already have used NAFTA's ISDS provisions to challenge decisions regarding local building permits, environmental regulations, state bans on toxic chemicals and decisions of state courts; and

WHEREAS, climate change and environmental degradation threaten communities across the globe, and ISDS provisions in the TPP may expose nations enacting policies to fight climate change to ISDS cases that undermine these efforts; and

WHEREAS, promoting economic growth with equity in the City of Thornton requires an approach that reforms the entire trade negotiation process to ensure that voices of workers, farmers, small businesses, families and communities are heard and their interests addressed; and

WHEREAS, the TPP has been negotiated in secret, effectively shutting state and local governments out of the process, limiting our ability to influence its rules to ensure the people of the City of Thornton can participate in the benefits of trade; and

WHEREAS, given the enhancement of fast track trade negotiating authority, states, localities and their citizens will have no opportunity to correct shortcomings in the TPP since its text will not be made public until it is final and no longer can be improved; and

WHEREAS, repeating old mistakes in negotiating new trade agreements such as the TPP represents a missed opportunity to strengthen our economy, reduce income inequality and promote sustainable growth.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF THORNTON, COLORADO, AS FOLLOWS:

1. That the Thornton City Council calls upon our elected officials in the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives to expose the TPP and any similar trade agreements if they fail to restructure the misguided and failed policies of the past.
2. The City of Thornton City Council calls upon our elected officials in the U.S. Senate and U.S House of Representatives to support new trade agreements such as the TPP only if the agreements will:
 - Protect and promote traditional state and local prerogatives and authority under our federal system, including by ensuring that states and localities will not be required to comply with certain commitments, including any restrictions on preferences for local, state, or U.S. goods or services, without prior informed consent of the legislature or local law making body;
 - Ensure balanced trade and address the excessive, job-killing U.S. trade deficit;
 - Include enforceable rules against currency manipulation, which countries such as China and Japan have used to tilt the playing field in their favor;
 - Exclude investor-to-state dispute settlement (ISDS) and other provisions that favor foreign companies over domestic ones and undermine public choices;
 - Ensure that countries cannot undercut the U.S. based producers with weaker labor and environmental laws and enforcement;

- Ensure that the U.S. will engage in robust enforcement of trade rules, including labor and environmental rules;
- Include strong rule of origin to promote economic growth and job creation in the U.S.;
- Promote high standards of protection for workplaces, products, and natural resources rather than promoting a race to the bottom; and
- Put the interests of people and the planet over the interests of private profit.

PASSED AND ADOPTED at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Thornton, Colorado, on December 15, 2015.

CITY OF THORNTON, COLORADO

Heidi K. Williams, Mayor

ATTEST:

Nancy A. Vincent, City Clerk