Senator Lugar joins group advocating bipartisan trade legislation

April 17, 2015

*Senator Lugar signed onto the letter below advocating bipartisan trade legislation:*

As former members of Congress, we’re encouraged to see our nation’s lawmakers advancing a bipartisan priority that will support American jobs and put more money in the pockets of middle class families. We know from experience how challenging an effort like this can be, but out of those challenges comes great opportunity.

Leading on trade is one of our nation’s longest-running bipartisan projects. Beginning with FDR and the New Deal Congress, that leadership has always required close cooperation between Congress and the Executive branch.

Trade promotion authority provides the best mechanism for that cooperation, which is why Congress has granted some version of it 19 times, putting politics aside and working with presidents from both parties. That includes every president during the last four decades.

The Bipartisan Congressional Trade Priorities and Accountability Act is a historic improvement upon this American tradition. It breaks new ground by raising negotiation, transparency, and accountability requirements, and it responds to major changes in the global economy that have occurred since TPA was last passed in 2002.

If this legislation is enacted, the United States can speak with a single voice while negotiating tough new agreements that protect American workers. Agreements like the Trans-Pacific Partnership will level the playing field for our workers and businesses in the world’s fastest growing markets.

America’s leadership on trade is needed more now than ever. We can either set the standards or we can have them set for us in this global economy as China and others push ahead with their own trade agreements. With 95 percent of the world’s customers living outside our borders, we cannot afford to sit on the sidelines.

The Bipartisan Congressional Trade Priorities and Accountability Act has the potential to catalyze cooperation across party lines on other issues as well. That’s because it is the product of tough compromises, and a substantive victory of the broader national interest over narrow parochial interests.
How the 114th Congress handles this legislation will say a lot about its ability to navigate our nation’s many other pressing matters. We have, within our reach, a real opportunity for bipartisanship. Let’s take it.

Senator Tom Daschle (D-SD) 1979-2005
Senator Trent Lott (R-MS) - 1973-2007
Senator John Breaux (D-LA) 1972-2005
Senator Chris Dodd (D-CT) 1975-2011
Senator Blanche Lincoln (D-AR) - 1993-2011
Senator Richard Lugar (R-IN) 1977-2013
Representative Howard Berman (D-CA) - 1983-2013
Representative Dave Camp (R- MI) - 1991-2015
Representative Cal Dooley (D-CA) - 1991-2005
Representative David Dreier (R-CA) - 1981-2013
Representative Vin Weber (R-MN) 1981-1993
Representative Dan Glickman (D-KS) - 1977-1995
Representative Nancy Johnson (R-CT) 1983-2007
Representative Mark Kennedy (R-MN) - 2001-2007
Representative Jim Kolbe (R-AZ) - 1985-2007
Representative Ray LaHood (R-IL) 1995-2009
Representative Jim Matheson (D-UT) 2001-2015
Representative Jim Moran (D-VA) 1991-2015
Representative John Porter (R-IL) 1980-2001
Representative Mike Rogers (R-MI) 2001-2015
Representative Charles Stenholm (D-TX) 1979-2005
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Representative John Tanner (D-TN) 1989-2011
Representative Ellen Tauscher (D-CA) 1997-2009