

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RELATING TO CONSIDERATION OF SENATE AMENDMENT TO H.R. 3009, ANDEAN TRADE PROMOTION AND DRUG ERADICATION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 26, 2002

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, global commerce is a force for progress. However, current trade rules are too often used to undermine environmental protections and democratic rights in the name of "free trade." Fast track is the expansion of presidential authority in international trade. However, the Thomas substitute would aid powerful corporations searching the globe for cheap labor, lowering standards for workers' rights, public health and education, consumer rights and environmental laws worldwide, and causing developing countries to become even more impoverished. Fast track legislation consistently overlooks the rights of workers in developing countries.

The Ways and Means Chairman, Representative BILL THOMAS, has created a substitute for the fast track authority which provides that a nation only need enforce its own labor laws, whatever they might be, no matter how inadequate. Furthermore, H. Res. 450 would eliminate Senate amendments that restrict child labor in trade agreements, require countries to cooperate in the war against terrorism, and require a respect for non-discrimination in employment. In addition, the Thomas substitute fails to provide any enforceable environmental protections. The Thomas substitute, also, fails to provide an adequate oversight role for Congress.

Chairman BILL THOMAS is adding a never-before-considered legislative proposals to a rule on a procedural motion. He is denying this body an opportunity to debate, amend or offer a substitute to his proposal. He is denying us our right to free speech. The step of going to conference with the Senate is proforma and non-controversial. However, Chairman THOMAS is proposing a convoluted rule that, if adopted, will add up to a dozen extraneous and new items to the conference process. The Democratic Rules Committee staff is not aware of any other instance in this or any recent Congress in which a self-executing rule has been used to insert never-considered legislation into conference.

Trade authority goes far beyond tariff reduction and involves tradeoffs on intellectual property rights, environmental standards, basic labor laws and other issues of such importance to the American worker. The Thomas substitute includes a new Republican Trade Adjustment Assistance bill. This is an amended version of the House fast track bill, which passed in December by a one-vote margin. Each of these proposals has serious flaws. The Thomas substitute undermines the Senate TAA health care provisions by reducing

the level of support for workers from 70 percent to 60 percent. The Senate bill increases the TAA funding threefold, from \$100 million to \$300 million. This reflects the fact that the TAA annually runs out of money. But the Thomas substitute would only raise TAA funding only slightly, from \$100 million to \$110 million. Under the Thomas substitute, TAA and steelworker health care benefits would be severely limited in availability and cost too much for most workers to afford.

The Thomas substitute guts the Senate TAA non-health care provisions, by narrowing the benefits coverage of secondary workers even further than existing law, by eliminating the pilot wage insurance program for older workers with low-to-medium incomes. In addition, the Thomas substitute cuts almost two-thirds of the increased funding that is in the Senate bill.

During a time when the public has clearly voiced its concern that global trade matters move more into the eye of public scrutiny. This Thomas substitute would make the fast track trade bill the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) on steroids. Since NAFTA's passage in 1995, the trade deficit between the United States and Mexico has ballooned to \$29 billion annually. An estimated 700,000 American jobs have been lost to nations that don't have to play by the same labor and environmental rules that American workers do.

If we approve the Thomas substitute, our Representatives and Senators will limit themselves to having no more than 20 hours to debate any trade deal brought before them for ratification and to vote on the issue within 60 days of when it is introduced. Those limits would curtail public discussions about trade policy. Extended debates on Capitol Hill give ordinary citizens the chance to influence public policy by expressing their opinions to their elected representatives. If trade legislation is sped through Congress, that would limit the opportunities for careful deliberation on the merits and weaknesses of complex trade agreements. Curtailing discussion and debate of legislation is fundamentally undemocratic.

The sole purpose of this extraordinary and unprecedented legislative sleight of hand is, as Rules Committee Chairman DAVID DREIER says, to "strengthen the hand of House conferees before we get to conference." This is a political move. Furthermore, it would do so by short-circuiting the democratic processes of this body. This would deprive all members of the opportunity to consider important legislative proposals in a manner consistent with the parliamentary traditions of this House.

Therefore, I urge my colleagues to strongly oppose H. Res. 450.

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SPEECH OF

HON. DENNIS MOORE

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 26, 2002

Mr. MOORE. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to H. Res. 450, the so called Thomas Rule on the motion to go to conference on Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) legislation. But I also want to make clear that I support Trade Promotion Authority for the President and I hope I have the opportunity to vote in favor of a conference report on TPA later this year.

Globalization is here to stay. With markets now linked globally by computers, satellite communications, and advanced transportation networks, international trade and investment will play an increasing role in American prosperity. We cannot, as a nation, afford to retreat from a proactive strategy of trade expansion that takes advantage of our position as the world's most prosperous and dynamic economy.

Trade liberalization is also an important tool toward developing responsible global relations. It is a tool, as the preamble of the GATT states for "raising standards of living, ensuring full employment, developing the full use of the resources of the world and expanding the production and exchange of goods." Indeed, open markets are an important engine of economic growth, which can expand opportunities, raise living standards, and affect social change. More importantly, however, trade liberalization provides our nation with an additional diplomatic tool with which to deal with international disputes and/or coalition building; trade's national security component cannot be understated.

Unfortunately, however, today's vote is not about trade. It isn't even a pro forma exercise to go to conference and reconcile the differences between the House and Senate. It is a cynical and unprecedented procedural move to expand the scope of the underlying trade bill and to strengthen House negotiators' position in conference.

I understand and accept that the bill approved in the other chamber (H.R. 3009) contained provisions on which this House has spoken and that this Rule attempts to solidify the House's voice on matters such as the Andean Trade Bill, Customs Security, Dispute Resolution, and of course TPA. This Rule also, however, includes provisions on which this House has not yet had a clear debate and vote. I have deep concerns about the House of Representatives making an end-run on its rules and the guiding principles of a democratic body in this matter. It is for this reason that I oppose this Rule.

Mr. Speaker, on December 6, 2001, I voted for TPA. I have supported every piece of trade

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