



NEWS

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No Time for Tom Daschle to Stall on Trade Bill

Job-creating Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) bill passes House, but Senate leader may stall it.

WASHINGTON — International trade has long been a backbone of both America's economy and foreign policy. But recently, politics has gotten in its way.

On Saturday morning, the U.S. House of Representatives passed Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) legislation by a vote of 215 to 212. The version, which came out of the House-Senate conference committee, would give the President power to negotiate trade agreements with other nations, where Congress could approve, but not amend, the treaties.

However, **last week Senate majority leader Tom Daschle (D-SD) said he was in "no hurry" to pass TPA.** Daschle previously said a trade bill would come out of the Senate by April 2002.

"Politics is politics, but this is health of the American economy we're talking about," said taxpayer advocate Grover Norquist, who heads Americans for Tax Reform (ATR) in Washington. **"Every day that passes without TPA sees the loss of American productivity and jobs,"** he continued **"and for a so-called leader to stall TPA's inevitable passage as a payoff to his Big Labor cronies is shameful."**

Every American President since 1974 has been granted trade promotion powers, but Congress let the measure lapse in 1994. This is especially noteworthy, considering that of 131 trade agreements worldwide, America is party to only three, with Israel, Jordan, and NAFTA partners Canada and Mexico.

Increasing trade by lowering tariffs and subsidies worldwide provides new markets for American manufacturing and agricultural products. Indeed, **the *Washington Post* editorialized today: "Poor countries would get a better chance to export their way out of poverty. Rich countries' taxpayers would benefit, because they would finance fewer subsidies. Consumers the world over would pay less for goods that had previously been subject to tariffs."**

Norquist then continued, "Those members of Congress who oppose free trade in general and TPA in particular have pessimistically decided that American enterprise cannot compete with foreign business. **The globalization of the American economy demands passage of TPA, and to stall now unfairly disadvantages American enterprise.**"

Americans for Tax Reform is a non-partisan coalition of taxpayers and taxpayer groups who oppose all tax increases. For more information or to arrange an interview please contact Jonathan Collegio at (202) 785-0266 or by email at jcollegio@atr.org