

TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP: \$24 million given to Congress by companies with access to working documents

By DONNY SHAW

The United States is currently engaged in secret negotiations on the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), a multinational trade agreement with the goal of liberalizing trade among a dozen or so countries that border on the Pacific Ocean. A draft of the TPP chapter on intellectual property that was published by WikiLeaks shows that the U.S. has been pushing the other countries involved in the negotiations to make their laws on copyright, patents and trademarks more agreeable to U.S. companies in the film, telecommunications, and pharmaceuticals industries, among others.

Aside from select members of the Obama Administration, the only people with full access to the working docu-

ments on the TPP negotiations are the members of the United States Trade Representative's (USTR) trade advisory system, including the 18-member Industry Trade Advisory Committee on Intellectual Property Rights (ITAC-15). Members of ITAC-15 include representatives from businesses and industry groups like the Recording Industry Association of America, Verizon, and Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America. No public-interest groups, academics, or other non-industry experts serve on the committee.

The industry trade advisory system was created by Congress, and membership is partly based on recommendations made from senators and representatives. The organizations represented on ITAC-15 include several top politi-

cal spenders, who combined have given millions of dollars to members of Congress in recent years.

A MapLight analysis of data provided by the Center for Responsive Politics (OpenSecrets.org) reveals 18 organizations represented by ITAC-15 gave nearly \$24 million to current members of Congress from Jan. 1, 2003 to Dec. 31, 2012. The contributions are from employees and political action committees (PACs). Excluded are contributions to party committees such as the Republican National Committee or the Democratic National Committee.

MapLight is a nonprofit, nonpartisan research organization that reveals money's influence on politics.

AT&T has given more than \$8 million to current members of Congress,

more than any other organization represented by ITAC-15.

House Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio), has received \$433,350 from organizations represented by ITAC-15, more than any other member of Congress.

Democrats in Congress have received \$11.4 million from organizations represented by ITAC-15, while Republicans in Congress have received \$12.6 million.

The members of Congress sponsoring fast-track legislation, which would allow President Obama to block Congress from submitting amendments to the TPP, have received a combined \$758,295 from organizations repre-

sented by ITAC-15. They include Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (\$140,601), Senate Finance Committee Ranking Member Orrin Hatch (\$178,850), House Ways and Means Committee Chairman David Camp (\$216,250), House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Trade Chairman Devin Nunes (\$86,000), and House Rules Committee Chairman Pete Sessions (\$136,594).

(Editor's Note: This article was submitted to MapLight by reporter Donny Shaw. MapLight is a nonpartisan research organization that reveals money's influence on politics in the U.S. Congress.)

ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTED BY ITAC-15

CONTRIBUTIONS TO CONGRESS SINCE JAN. 1, 2003

| | |
|---|---------------------|
| AT&T | \$8,056,939 |
| General Electric <i>(excludes contributions from GE Financial Assurance)</i> | \$5,261,753 |
| Verizon | \$5,021,681 |
| Johnson & Johnson | \$1,803,170 |
| Cisco | \$1,413,448 |
| Biotechnology Industry Organization | \$551,792 |
| Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America | \$548,155 |
| Recording Industry Association of America | \$493,986 |
| Mylan Inc. | \$473,050 |
| Gilead Sciences | \$196,150 |
| Entertainment Software Association | \$114,650 |
| Zippo | \$25,250 |
| Accessory Network Group | \$4,100 |
| Infectious Disease Research Institute | \$1,500 |
| Copyright Clearance Center | \$860 |
| U.S.-China Business Council | \$0 |
| MDB Capital Group | \$0 |
| Coalition for Intellectual Property Rights | \$0 |
| TOTAL | \$23,966,484 |

LERC to hold Portland Metro Leadership School

University of Oregon Labor Education and Research Center (LERC) will hold its Metro Leadership School Saturday, Feb. 22, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., at the Sheet Metal Training Center, 2379 NE 178th Ave., Portland.

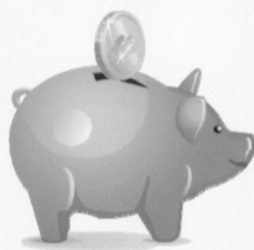
The school is a chance for union officers and activists to develop skills and connect with fellow unionists from around the metro region. Participants take one of two classes:

In Advanced Grievance Handling, instructor David Alexander will focus on effective strategies for investigating, analyzing and presenting grievances in emerging arenas like hostile work environment and bullying, use of electronic technology in the workplace, and disability accommodation. The class will also look at alternative approaches to filing grievances and their impact on worker morale and union solidarity.

In Tools for Effective Union Leadership, instructors Raahi Reddy and Bob Bussel will present different approaches to leadership, and discuss techniques of motivating members to become more active trade unionists.

The class fee is \$65 per person, and the registration deadline is Feb. 14. For more details and registration information visit lerc.uoregon.edu or contact Barbara Byrd at bbyrd@uoregon.edu.

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