

Labor trade panel tells Obama: TPP 'severely undermines' workers

By Mark Gruenberg
PAI Staff Writer

WASHINGTON, D.C. (PAI) — A government-appointed trade advisory panel of 19 union leaders told President Barack Obama that the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) “severely undermines” U.S. jobs, workers, consumers and businesses.

In a letter accompanying their 124-page report, the panel, chaired by retiring Machinists President Tom Buffenbarger, said it believes the agreement should not be submitted to Congress or, if it is, it should be quickly rejected.

“We believe the TPP is unbal-

anced in its provisions, skewing benefits to economic elites while leaving workers to bear the brunt of the TPP’s downside,” says the report. “The TPP is likely to harm the U.S. economy, cost jobs, and lower wages.”

Copies of the letter went to two top Obama officials: Labor Secretary Thomas Perez and U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman. Froman negotiated the controversial pact. Obama has yet to send it, or legislation implementing the TPP, to Congress.

Besides Buffenbarger, union leaders signing the letter and re-

port included Steelworkers President Leo Gerard, Teamsters President Jim Hoffa, AF-SCME President Lee Saunders, AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka and Secretary-Treasurer Liz Shuler, Teachers President Randi Weingarten, Service Employees President Mary Kay Henry, Union Label President Rich Kline and United Auto Workers (UAW) President Dennis Williams.

Unions and their allies have launched a huge campaign to get lawmakers to reject the TPP. The Labor Advisory Committee, mandated by trade law, lays out the anti-TPP case in de-

tail. Among its findings:

- TPP will increase the U.S. trade deficit, costing jobs. “Especially at risk are jobs and wages in the auto, aerospace, aluminum and steel, apparel and textile, call center, and electronic and electrical machinery industries,” the report says. The TPP would increase the U.S. trade deficit by \$55.8 billion over a decade, and cost 330,000 factory jobs. Worst hit would be cars and parts. Steel runs a close second.

- There are no rules against TPP nations importing cars and parts from other countries and labeling them “TPP-compliant” for shipment to the United States. That means 55 percent of a car could be TPP-made and still labeled “domestic” and let in for free. And Japan would get a \$1 billion yearly U.S. break for its auto exports to the U.S., as tariffs disappear. In return it would not have to cut its tariffs and other barriers to U.S. cars or its tariffs on U.S. farm goods.

- Corporations would get “two bites at the apple” to try to

trash U.S. laws and regulations that could harm present or future profits. If they lose in the U.S. court system, including the Supreme Court, they could then take their cases to the TPP-created Investor-State Dispute Settlement system. Unions and their allies have noted that ISDS is a secret pro-corporate trade court whose decisions are final.

- Failure of a foreign firm to pay taxes can disqualify it from bidding on U.S. government contracts under the TPP, but failure to obey labor and environmental standards cannot disqualify it.

- The labor advisory panel had 14 specific recommendations to strengthen the TPP’s labor chapter, starting with requiring TPP nations to sign on to – and obey – International Labour Organization core labor standards, such as the right to organize. Virtually all were ignored.

ONLINE EXTRA


See the complete report at <http://bit.ly/1Z8Y7i3>



Season's Greetings

**Merry Christmas
and a Prosperous 2016
to all!**

**Cement Masons Local 555
Serving Oregon & SW Washington**



Merry Christmas!

from the officers and staff of

ROOFERS AND WATERPROOFERS LOCAL 49

Ray Carpenter Vice President-Executive Board	Russ Garnett Business Manager/ Financial Secretary	James Hale Warden-Executive Board
Darrell Hopkins, Sr. Recording Secretary	Travis Hopkins President/Field Representative	Executive Board James Breneman James Dittmore Sean Maybee, Jason Barthel
Samantha Henson Office Manager		



Season's Greetings
from
**Portland Federation
of School Professionals**

PFSP

AFT Local 111

AFT-OREGON · AFT · AFL-CIO



Merry Christmas

Warm Wishes for a
Wonderful Holiday Season
and a very Happy New Year

from
**IRONWORKERS
SHOPMEN'S LOCAL 516**