

# House rejects Obama's trade bill

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Led by union-backed Democrats, the House delivered a stinging blow to President Barack Obama on Friday and left his ambitious global trade agenda in serious doubt.

Republican leaders, who generally support Obama's trade objectives, signaled they might try to revive the package as early as next week. But that could require the shifting of at least 90 votes within either or both parties, a heavy lift.

Friday's setback was deep and personal for Obama, who made a surprise, last-minute trip to the Capitol to ask House Democrats to back him.

Not only did they reject him by the dozens, they were led by party leader Nancy Pelosi of California, who has often expressed deep admiration for the president. She joined in a tactic that even some Democrats called devious and cynical: voting against a favorite job-retraining program in order to imperil the trade package's main component: "fast track" negotiating authority for Obama.

Hours earlier, Obama had specifically asked Democrats not to do that. But in a crowded House chamber, Pelosi urged her colleagues to ignore him.

"Slow down the fast track to get a better deal for the American people," she said, drawing praise from labor unions, liberals and others who say free-trade deals send U.S. jobs abroad. Pelosi added possible new burdens to the legislative package, saying new highway funding and "environmental justice" should be linked to its passage if it's revived.

In a statement, Obama said the job retraining program "would give roughly 100,000 American workers access to vital support each year," and he urged the House to pass it as soon as possible and send the entire trade package for him to sign.

Other presidents have had fast track authority, which lets them propose trade agreements that Congress can ratify or reject but not amend. The administration currently is trying to conclude negotiations with 11 Pacific-rim countries including Japan and Canada. Other trade agreements could follow.

One possible route for pro-trade forces in Congress is to send revised legislation back to the Senate. But senators approved the larger package only narrowly last month after intense battles, and the White House desperately wants to avoid giving opponents there another chance to strangle the legislation.

White House spokesman Josh Earnest said Friday's vote showed congressional support for fast track, and "our work



AP Photo/Pablo Martinez Monsivais  
**President Barack Obama and House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi of Calif. leave a meeting with House Democrats on Capitol Hill Friday.**

is not done yet." As for Democrats rejecting the retraining program, he said, the administration will contend "they have registered their objections to (fast track) and it didn't work." Earnest said the administration will urge Democrats to "support a policy that they have strongly supported in the past."

Friday's crucial vote came when 144 House Democrats joined 158 Republicans to reject extension of Trade Adjustment Assistance, or TAA. The program, which helps workers who lose their jobs to international trade, has long been a priority for Democrats and unions.

But the Senate had tied it to the broader fast track negotiating authority for the president, which House Democrats overwhelmingly oppose. Egged on by the AFL-CIO, Pelosi and others, the vast majority of House Democrats voted against the retraining program as a means to scuttle the entire package.

Moments later, the House did vote, 219-211, to endorse the fast track portion of the package, but that could go nowhere without the first part. Only 28 Democrats joined 191 Republicans in voting for it. Voting no were 54 Republicans and 157 Democrats.

Pro-trade forces now must either reverse the retraining program's fate or send a revised fast track bill back to the Senate, and hope for the best. GOP aides said more Republicans might possibly hold their noses and vote for the training in order to save fast track, a mirror-image of the Democrats' counter-intuitive strategy.

House GOP leaders suggested it's up to Democrats to revive the trade package. "The president has some work yet to do with his party to complete this process," said Rep. Paul Ryan, R-Wis., a leading author of the trade legislation. "This isn't over yet."

Yet minutes later, Ryan's staff sent reporters lists of headlines highlighting Democrats' rebuke of Obama, a strategy unlikely to improve hopes of a bipartisan recovery for the trade package.

AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka hailed Pelosi, saying, "She stood up against corporate interests and, as always, put first the people who are too often left out of trade agreement discussions."

Obama drew applause when he walked into the morning meeting with Democrats, but sharp words after he left.

Rep. Peter DeFazio, D-Ore., was especially withering.

"He's ignored Congress and disrespected Congress for years," he told reporters, "and then comes to the caucus and lectures us for 40 minutes about his values and whether or not we're being honest by using legislative tactics to try and stop something which we believe is a horrible mistake for the United States of America, and questions our integrity. It wasn't the greatest strategy."

Obama says U.S. products must reach more markets. He says unions and others should stop harping on perceived harm from the 1995 NAFTA, which many critics accuse of shipping American jobs overseas.

# Prison worker arraigned, accused of aiding escapees

PLATTSBURGH, N.Y. (AP) — A worker at an upstate New York maximum-security prison was arraigned Friday night on charges she helped two convicted killers escape last weekend.

Prison tailor shop instructor Joyce Mitchell, 51, was arraigned on the felony charge of promoting prison contraband and misdemeanor count of criminal facilitation. Her lawyer, Keith Bruno, entered a not guilty plea on her behalf.

Mitchell is accused of befriending inmates David Sweat and Richard Matt at the Clinton Correctional Facility in Dannemora and giving them contraband.

She entered the courtroom with her hands cuffed in front of her, clad in jeans and a green top and looking terrified. She did not speak. She was ordered held in jail on \$100,000 cash bail or

\$200,000 bond on felony count and is due back in court Monday morning.

District Attorney Andrew Wylie said earlier the contraband didn't include power tools used by the men as they cut holes in their cell walls and a steam pipe to escape through a manhole last weekend.

Wylie would not elaborate on the charges Friday as more than 800 law enforcement officers continued

to search for the escapees, concentrating in a rural area around the prison in the Adirondacks near the Canadian border. Earlier residents reported seeing two men jumping a stone wall outside Dannemora.

"We're coming for you, and we will not stop until you are caught," state police Maj. Charles Guess said in addressing the escapees as he headed a news conference after Mitchell's arrest.



**Mitchell**

# California orders large water cuts for farmers

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — As California grapples with a relentless drought, state regulators on Friday ordered farmers and others who hold some of the strongest water rights in the state to stop all pumping from three major waterways in one of country's prime farm regions.

The order involving record cuts by senior water rights holders in the Sacramento, San Joaquin and delta watersheds followed mandatory water curtailment earlier this year to cities and towns and to farmers with less iron-clad water rights.

The waterways targeted Friday in the order by the State Water Resources Control Board provide water to farms and cities in the agricultural-rich Central Valley and beyond.

Economists and agriculture experts say growing of some crops will shift in the short-term to regions with more water, so the water cuts are expected to have

little immediate impact on food prices.

The curtailment order applies to 114 entities — including individual landowners and water districts serving farmers and small communities — with claims dating back to 1914 or before.

It will force thousands of water users in the state to tap groundwater, buy water at rising costs, use previously stored water, or go dry.

"It's going to be a different story for each one of them, and a struggle for all of them," Thomas Howard, executive director of the water board, acknowledged.

There are several thousand senior rights holders who are the last to have their water rights curtailed in times of scarcity.

The people and entities who were cut off on Friday are the first of many senior right holders who will see curtailments in the coming weeks.

## BRIEFLY

### Hillary Clinton woos party with steps to the left

WASHINGTON (AP) — Union members broke into cheers when Hillary Rodham Clinton said she supported their efforts to create a \$15-an-hour national minimum wage.

"Thank you for giving me this chance to tell you all how much I support your movement," she told a conference organized by the Service Employees International Union. "I want to fight with you every day."

Clinton's words last weekend weren't quite the endorsement they may have seemed. The next day, her campaign clarified her remarks, saying while Clinton supported the general push for higher wages, she wasn't backing the more contentious \$15 hourly minimum.

In the eight weeks since she announced her presidential bid, Clinton has moved cautiously to the left. She's wooing the liberal wing of her party with strong stances on issues like immigration, where there's broad national support for the Democratic position.

### Hack exposed sensitive military officer data

WASHINGTON (AP) — Hackers linked to China have gained access to the sensitive background information submitted by intelligence and military personnel for security clearances, U.S. officials said Friday, describing a cyberbreach of federal records dramatically worse than first acknowledged.

The forms authorities believed may have been stolen en masse, known as Standard Form 86, require applicants to fill out deeply personal information about mental illnesses, drug and alcohol use, past arrests and bankruptcies. They also require the listing of contacts and relatives, potentially exposing any foreign relatives of U.S. intelligence

employees to coercion. Both the applicant's Social Security number and that of his or her cohabitant is required.

"This tells the Chinese the identities of almost everybody who has got a United States security clearance," said Joel Brenner, a former top U.S. counterintelligence official. "That makes it very hard for any of those people to function as an intelligence officer. The database also tells the Chinese an enormous amount of information about almost everyone with a security clearance. That's a gold mine. It helps you approach and recruit spies."

### Airstrikes destroy part of Yemen's UNESCO site

SANAA, Yemen (AP) — Saudi-led airstrikes targeting Shiite rebels and their allies in Yemen destroyed historic houses on Friday in the center of the capital, Sanaa, a UNESCO world heritage site. Rescue teams digging through the debris pulled the bodies of six civilians from under the rubble.

The bombing drew swift condemnation from the U.N. cultural agency, whose chief expressed sorrow at the loss of human life and the destruction of priceless architectural heritage.

Yemen's conflict has left millions of the Arab world's poorest nation in dire need of humanitarian assistance in just about everything — from fuel to water, food, electricity and medical supplies — as civilians are increasingly caught in the crossfire.

Also, early on Friday, random shelling killed 12 civilians in the southwestern city of Taiz, which witnessed some of the fiercest battles between rebels and southern fighters, witnesses and officials said.

In the Sanaa airstrikes, residents initially believed the warplanes had targeted a house occupied by a senior rebel commander, but officials and witnesses later said there were no Shiite rebels among the victims.

### Iraq militias say they don't need U.S. help in Anbar

KESSARRAT, Iraq (AP) — Ali Ahsan paced back and forth carrying a rifle more than half his height in the searing heat as his militia convoy made a pit stop in the Anbar desert to rest and pray.

Unlike the rugged men in fatigues around him, his prepubescent face has barely sprung a whisker. Now that school is out, the petite 14-year-old is spending his summer break fighting the Islamic State group with his father and other members of Iraq's Popular Mobilization Forces, which includes the Shiite militias.

"I'm here because it's my duty," the stone-faced boy in blue jeans said, referring to

an edict from Iraq's highest Shiite religious authority last year. "The Popular Mobilization Forces are not sectarian forces. They represent all of Iraq, and I want to help them liberate Iraq."

Despite concerns over heightened sectarian strife, Shiite militiamen continue to pour into Iraq's Sunni heartland of Anbar province with the initial hope of recapturing Fallujah, the first major Iraqi city to fall to the Islamic State group last year.

As the U.S. prepares to send an additional 450 personnel to Iraq, the Iranian-backed militias say that coalition assistance only hurts their efforts, contradicting statements by the Iraqi government that more support is needed.



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