

ALGER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Mary Ann Froberg, Clerk
101 Court Street, Munising, MI 49862

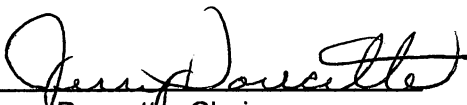
RESOLUTION #2015-10

OPPOSITION TO EXTENSION OF DISASTROUS TRADE POLICIES

- WHEREAS,** U.S. trade deals for the past 25 years have been corporate-driven incorporating rules that skew benefits to economic elites while requiring working families to bear the brunt of such policies; and
- WHEREAS,** The growing trade deficits, driven by the North American Free Trade Agreement, China's accession to the World Trade Organization, and the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement, have displaced 700,000 jobs and 3.2 million jobs and 75,000; and
- WHEREAS,** U.S. employment in manufacturing dropped by 5 million from 2000 to 2015; and
- WHEREAS,** Michigan's reported unemployment rate is 5.4% and Michigan's poverty rate is 17% which requires the expenditure of limited public funds to assist families in crisis; and
- WHEREAS,** Jobs lost due to trade devastate families and entire communities and can permanently reduce lifetime earnings for hundreds of thousands of workers; and
- WHEREAS,** The long decline of the American manufacturing base- exacerbated by bad trade policies that reward outsourcing- has undermined our economic security and poses a direct threat to our national security; and
- WHEREAS,** The offshoring of manufacturing and service jobs deprives local and state governments of sorely needed revenues, jeopardizing the livelihoods of public servants as well as construction workers whose jobs depend upon infrastructure building repair and maintenance; and
- WHEREAS,** Under NAFTA-style trade rules, the U.S. annual trade deficit has increased dramatically from 70 billion in 1993, the year before NAFTA went into effect, to more than \$508 billion in 2014; and
- WHEREAS,** This disproportionate voice of powerful global corporations in the formation of U.S. "Free trade" agreements has advanced the agenda that undermines the public interest and threatens democracy; and
- WHEREAS,** NAFTA and all but two of the U.S. trade deals that followed it include special legal rights for foreign investors, known as "investor-to-state dispute settlement" or ISDS, that allow foreign firms to bypass state and federal courts to challenge state and local laws, regulations, and administrative and judicial decision in international tribunals; and
- WHEREAS,** The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) is likely to include provisions locking in monopoly protections for expensive specialty drugs called biologics and constrict the government's ability to limit spending on drugs, potentially increasing drug costs for the government and all Americans; and
- WHEREAS,** Foreign investors already have used NAFTA's ISDA provisions to challenge decisions regarding local building permits, state bans on toxic chemicals and decisions of state courts; and

- WHEREAS,** Promoting economic growth with equity in Michigan requires an approach that farmers, small businesses, families and communities are heard and their interests addressed; and
- WHEREAS,** The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) has been negotiated in secret, effectively shutting state and local governments out of the process, limiting our ability to influence its rules to ensure the people of Michigan can participate in the benefits of trade; and
- WHEREAS,** Given the enactment of fast track trade negotiating authority, states and their citizens will have no opportunity to correct shortcomings in the TPP since its text will not be made public until it is final and can no longer be improved; and
- WHEREAS,** Repeating old mistakes in negotiating new trade agreements such as TPP represents a missed opportunity to strengthen our economy, reduce income inequality and promote sustainable growth; Therefore Be It
- RESOLVED,** That the Alger County Board of Commissioners calls upon our elected officials in the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives to oppose the TPP and any similar trade deals if they fail to restructure the misguided and failed policies of the past; Be It Finally
- RESOLVED,** The Alger County Board of Commissioners calls upon our elected officials in the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives to support new trade deals such as TPP only if they will:
- Exclude investor-to-state dispute settlement (ISDS) and other provisions that favor foreign companies over domestic ones and undermine public choices;
 - Ensure that countries cannot undercut U.S.-based producers with weaker labor and environmental laws and enforcement;
 - Ensure that the U.S. will engage in robust enforcement of trade rules, including labor and environmental rules;
 - Include strong rule of origin to promote economic growth and job creation in the U.S.;
 - Promote high standards of protection or workplaces, products, and natural resources rather than promoting a race to the bottom; and
 - Put the interests of people and the planet over interests of private profit.

Dated: December 21, 2015


Jerry Doucette, Chair
Alger County Board of Commissioners

