



The Honorable Richard Neal
Chair, Ways and Means Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington D.C., 20515

The Honorable Earl Blumenauer
Chair, Ways and Means Trade Subcommittee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington D.C., 20515

September 9, 2021

Dear Chairmen Neal and Blumenauer,

Public Citizen supports the “Trade Adjustment Assistance Modernization Act of 2021” and greatly appreciates your leadership in including it as part of the budget reconciliation package. Your Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) bill is an essential element of President Biden’s Build Back Better agenda.

The duration of the renewal and funding levels in your TAA modernized bill support the Ways and Means Democrats’ and the president’s commitment to a worker-centered trade policy, as does the program’s scope of coverage that is inclusive of affected service sector workers, and farmers and fishers too. We commend your legislation’s reestablishment of TAA for Communities to support not only directly impacted workers, but trade-affected communities; as well as the increased funding for TAA for Community Colleges and Career Training program.

American workers have borne the brunt of decades of a U.S. trade model that protected the interests of job-offshorers and importers to the detriment of workers. It will be critical to alter the underlying trade model to reverse these outcomes and we appreciate that the president has committed to doing so. The TAA modernization bill recognizes that damage to workers from decades of corporate-rigged trade policies is ongoing. And that, if anything, the economic crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic makes a full set of measures that support workers and communities impacted by trade especially critical.

We particularly applaud Congressional Democrats’ commitment to address the disproportionate impact that trade has had on communities of color in the United States by mandating targeted outreach to underserved communities, engagement with civil rights organizations and trade unions that represent diverse populations and support for women- and minority-owned businesses. Black and Latino workers who lost jobs and experienced wage stagnation from the North American Free Trade Agreement, the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the “China Shock” following China’s accession to the WTO have assumed a [disproportionately large share of the damage](#) inflicted by these deals. Requiring special attention and outreach to their communities is a critical first step to start redressing the harm done.

Sincerely,

Lori Wallach, director, Public Citizen Global Trade Watch