



Iowa Fair Trade Campaign: Victory in 2008!

The Iowa Fair Trade Campaign helps facilitate broad-based grassroots activism for a new, fair trade model.

The Race to the Bottom: The NAFTA/World Trade Organization (WTO) model is a proven failure. Iowa has lost thousands of jobs because these agreements reward companies that take jobs offshore wherever they find the lowest wages and the weakest environmental regulations. Meanwhile, wages stagnate and workers face the constant threat of having their jobs sent overseas. Current unfair trade rules hurt Iowa's family farmers by creating an uneven playing field that rewards the unsustainable practices of agribusiness and factory farms.

But We Are Winning: Fair Trade candidates won big in the 2006 Congressional elections, including here in Iowa. Current WTO talks are stalled. With momentum on our side, the election of the next president will likely prove the best hope in a generation to leave behind the NAFTA/WTO model forever.

A Whole New, Fair Model, and Nothing Less! We need candidates committed to reviewing and possibly renegotiating corporate trade deals like NAFTA and the WTO, to replacing Fast Track with a model allowing increased negotiating power to elected Members of Congress, and to implementing trade policies to bring our trade deficit back into balance. We will engage candidates to make specific commitments and to promise big changes that will put an end to the race to the bottom, for good!

Fight for Fair Trade in '08: The Iowa Fair Trade Campaign will question candidates at their public appearances, hold its own educational or visibility events, and engage the press to highlight how trade affects Iowa. *Help us turn up the pressure by volunteering to ask a tough question at a candidate event, or setting up a presentation or event with your union, church group, friends or neighbors.*

Straight Talk on Trade! Suggested Candidate Questions:

1. NAFTA has failed for the US and our trading partners. It has sent family-supporting jobs offshore and fuels environmental damage. NAFTA grants extra rights to investors, bans Buy America initiatives, and limits our ability to ensure the safety of children's toys or the food we eat. *Will you review and potentially renegotiate NAFTA to fix or remove these anti-democratic provisions?*
2. Fast Track is the Nixon-era model still used to negotiate failed trade arrangements like NAFTA and the WTO. It concentrates trade-negotiating power in a small agency where corporate lobbyists have set the agenda away from democratic oversight. Since Fast Track was enacted, we have run a steady and growing trade deficit and wages for American workers have been stagnant. *Will you commit to a new trade-negotiating model that allows our elected Congress increased negotiating power and authority?*
3. The failing "Doha Round" WTO talks seek to expand corporate investor rights and liberalize services – including possible privatization of public goods like education and water utilities. *Will your administration walk out of the Doha talks, and instead champion a new round of WTO negotiations that seeks to remove the many unfair and anti-democratic provisions?*

Don't Forget to Take Notes and Report the Candidates' Answers!

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BACKGROUND:

Corporate Trade Deals Force Iowa into a Race to the Bottom

- **Iowa lost more than 20,000 manufacturing jobs from 2000-2006**, according to the Iowa Policy Project. These jobs provided a living wage, paying an average of \$41,750 per year, and most provided benefits such as health care.¹
- **Average wages are down over the last seven years**, and wages in sectors of the economy that are growing pay ~\$3,000 less on average per year.²
- **Since the first use of the Fast Track process of trade negotiation in 1974:**
 - The US trade deficit has ballooned from roughly \$0 to nearly \$900 million, with China accounting for roughly one third of this amount.³
 - The average worker's wages have increased by *only five cents*, despite a *doubling* of average worker's productivity.⁴
- **In the US, more than 300,000 Family Farms went broke during the first ten years of NAFTA (1994-2004).**⁵ Family farm income continued to decline, while agribusiness profits skyrocketed.
- **NAFTA and unfair trade are a root cause of undocumented immigration to the US:** unfair rules have forced 1.3 million Mexican peasant farmers off their land, and 19 million more Mexicans to fall below the poverty line in their country.⁶ Millions fled northward to escape.
- **Unfair trade rules subject our environmental, food safety and other policies to review by secret international tribunals.** In just 13 years, cases have been brought against the US for banning a gasoline additive shown to cause cancer, for regulating internet gambling and for seeking to protect endangered species.⁷
- Since August of 2007, **more than 21 million toys and products made in China have been recalled** because of dangerous levels of lead.⁸ The FDA estimates it **will only inspect 0.6% of food imports** it regulates.⁹ The US has already been **sued for \$235 million for attempting to block beef potentially infected with mad cow disease** from entering US supermarkets.¹⁰

¹ "The State of Working Iowa 2007: A Look at Growing and Declining Sectors," Iowa Policy Project, September 2007.

² "The State of Working Iowa 2007: A Look at Growing and Declining Sectors," Iowa Policy Project, September 2007.

³ Citizens Trade Campaign statistic, accessible at <http://citizenstrade.org/images/fast-track-trade-balance.jpg>.

⁴ Bureau of Labor Statistics, February 2007.

⁵ "The Ten Year Track Record of NAFTA: U.S., Mexican and Canadian Farmers and Agriculture," Public Citizen fact sheet, accessible at http://www.citizen.org/documents/NAFTA_10_ag.pdf.

⁶ "Failed Trade Policy and Immigration: Cause and Effect," Public Citizen's Global Trade Watch fact sheet, accessible at http://www.citizen.org/documents/ImmigrationFactSheet_FINAL.pdf.

⁷ Lori Wallach and Patrick Woodall, *Whose Trade Organization?* (New York: The New Press, 2004), Chapter 2.

⁸ "Toxic Trade: Globalization and the American Consumer," Campaign for America's Future, October 2007, accessible at <http://home.ourfuture.org/assets/toxic-trade.pdf>.

⁹ "Import Alert: Government Fails Consumers, Falls Short on Seafood Inspections," Food & Water Watch report, July 2007.

¹⁰ "Table of NAFTA Chapter 11 Investor State Cases and Claims", February 2005, accessible at http://www.citizen.org/documents/Ch11cases_chart.pdf.