

To: The Committee Secretariat

Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee Department of the Senate,

Like the sensible governments of France, Germany, Brazil, Argentina and eight other Latin American countries, members of the US Congress have realised the implications of the **Investor State Dispute Settlement clause** in the very secretive Trans Pacific Pact. They are determined to see it done away with. Australia too, will look to be very poorly governed, should they agree to a process that will deprive governments at all levels of their right to say no to international corporations, as well as overriding our judiciary.

This clause puts the TPP tribunal above the law of our land and opens the door to environmental destruction; the wrecking of our very beneficial Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme; interference with our media laws and, in essence, the destruction of our sovereignty. We will be severely disadvantaged as a nation if we don't have this clause deleted. No corporation or other investment body should be allowed to damage our environment, or our excellent public health services, in the interest of foreign investors and corporate profits.

The current US-Australia trade deal sees the US gain a \$40 billion/year advantage over us, as they do technology well, and are happy to export it to us. However, they do not do agriculture well, while we do, so they subsidise their farmers, rather than import agricultural produce from us. America also has protectionism over its textiles and apparel industries.

This deal is skewed to disadvantage us, and to impose authority above all three levels of government here. If we are to do any trade deals with America we must redress our trade imbalance and ensure that our sovereignty is protected. To do less would be to betray all Australians as well as this beautiful country.

Litigation in these cases, and there *will be* litigation, will cost millions to defend and can result in our government paying out billions if they make a sensible decision that is in the nations interest, but if that decision interferes with a corporation's ability to make a profit. Ecuador and Canada have already suffered because of such clauses.

It is unbelievable that any trade agreement would be so rude as to ride roughshod over foreign governments and their people. Like the other considered nations mentioned here, as well as Indonesia, Australia needs to put its people and our beautiful country first in trade negotiations, and to reject any clause that could put our sovereignty at risk.

To do less is to betray Australia and Australians. Please do not sign up to anything containing an ISDS clause.

Yours Sincerely,  
Joy Ringrose,