

**Citizen Trade Policy Commission**  
**Friday March 20, 2009**  
**Labor Committee Room, Augusta**

**Meeting Summary**

**Members Present:** Sen. Troy Jackson, Chair; Rep. Margaret Rotundo, Chair; Sen. Roger Sherman; Rep. Sharon Treat; Rep. Jeffrey Gifford; John Patrick; Jane Aiudi; Wade Merritt; Paul Volckhausen; Joseph Woodbury; Linda Pistner; Michael Herz, Cynthia Phinney, Michael Hiltz

**Guests Present:** Peter Riggs, Forum on Democracy & Trade, via conference call; John Delahanty, Pierce Atwood

**Staff Present:** Linda Nickerson, Dept. Labor

The meeting was called to order by Sen. Troy Jackson at 9:05 a.m., welcoming remarks and introductions were made.

**I. Conference Call – Peter Riggs, Forum on Democracy & Trade**

Peter Riggs was on the polycom speaker phone calling in from the West Coast to give members current updates. Peter reported on the confirmation hearings of Ron Kirk, new USTA representative confirmed Wednesday and advised members that he sent an email with two attachments to them last evening. One of the attachments is 129 pages of Mr. Kirk's written response to questions submitted by members of the Senate Finance Committee which is the committee jurisdiction that reviews his confirmation. The other is a document from Congressman Mike Michaud in his role as the head of the House Trade Working Group where he has approximately 50 cosigners on a letter to the Obama administration calling for changes in the way trade policy is conducted.

The confirmation process had some interesting facts about trade agenda and interests of Mr. Kirk. Of particular interest are questions that the Maine Citizen Trade Policy Commission raised by Senator Snowe in her questions to Mr. Kirk. Senator Snowe followed up with very good questions and focused in considerable detail on manufacturing and the loss of manufacturing jobs and noted that manufacturing is entirely absent from the document called US Trade Strategy which is prepared annually by staff at the USTA. This year's report was prepared before Mr. Kirk was confirmed. Senator Snowe also asked about federal and state consultation and mentioned the Maine Citizen Trade Policy Commission. Congratulations to the Commission!

In Mr. Kirk's answers, he does not mention state legislators, trade policy commissions, governors, AG's or local officials and others which were rather interesting. One of the to do items for USTR in 2009, Mr. Kirk quote "wants to demystify the role of USTR." This appears to be an opportunity to work on consultation. Mr. Kirk stated he came to the job with no preconceptions. Kirk footed the idea of there being a new assistant USTR for small business and repeatedly mentions the May 10<sup>th</sup> deal. This was the bi-partisan trade deal which is now between

the Bush Whitehouse and Congress dated May 10, 2007. Mike Michaud and others would like to see changes in the policy go well beyond the bipartisan compromise outlined in the May 10<sup>th</sup> agreement. Kirk sees this as a starting point and made clear his position on the holdover free trade agreements; i.e., the agreements with Panama, Columbia and Korea that were negotiated by the Bush administration but not ratified by Congress prior to the change in administration. Mr. Kirk stated that the Panama agreement is ready and can be taken down off the shelf; so we may see a decision by the Obama administration to move on Panama within a month. Mr. Kirk made clear that he thought the Columbia agreement was not fatally flawed and could be passed if changes were made in labor laws. Mr. Kirk signaled that the Korea agreement is fatally flawed and isn't going to move and is a dead letter.

Mr. Kirk was asked about investment provisions and responded that investment provisions and free trade agreements and their impact on the financial crisis and banking had enough skilled prudential measures in Chapter 11 and other investments chapters and that we shouldn't worry about investment chapters in the context of the current financial crisis. Peter stated that we might want to approach investment questions with a little more caution and potentially work with the USTA on a new model NAFTA Chapter 11 type of disputes.

Rep. Treat asked Peter if there was anything interesting going on around the country that legislators might need to know about since their last meeting.

Peter referenced Sarah Bigney's letter regarding Vermont. In general, a couple of states have come forward with ideas on federal and state consultation. Washington State through a legislative committee passed a memorial that calls for USTR to look at federal state consultation on trade, calls for a reform of IGPAC. New England has been having conversations around regional state principals.

Peter advised that they are hoping to convene a regional conference call on April 6, 2009 around noon and will send an email confirming it. This would give us a chance on a regional level to talk about ongoing issues and joint strategies. There are a couple of bills pending for commissions to be created in New Jersey, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania and one recently passed in Minnesota. More and more states are creating trade mechanisms.

Cynthia Phinney in regards to Ron Kirks nomination wanted to know about the Columbia trade agreement and whether there was an indication or likelihood of changing labor laws and if they did, would they be enforced.

Peter stated that they did question this but no, there was not a lot of detail in his response. Kirk does not have a background as a trade negotiator and doesn't really get into this much.

Linda Pistner asked if anything was said about the issue of USTR monitoring proposed legislation at the state level and alerting trading partners to issues as experienced last spring.

Peter responded no, that was not addressed in any confirmation discussions. The NCSL Spring Meeting Agenda, National Conference of State Legislators meeting April 23-24, 2009, Washington, DC will include a session on that and will be attended by Jeffrey Weiss from USTR who will continue to talk about the implications.

Paul Volckhausen stated that later on in today's meeting, the commission would be discussing Congressman Michaud's Trade Bill and asked Peter if he heard if there were any possibilities that the bill will move forward.

Peter responded that this is the trade act that was originally introduced last year. Both the House and Senate versions are being rewritten. Michaud's staff has taken the lead on the House side. The chief sponsors are trying to get as many co-sponsors as possible at this stage. He thinks that the Senate version will very likely get a hearing, however, whether the House gets a hearing depends on House and Means Committee. He thinks it's fair to say that the new version will be tighter, shorter, prioritized and will be an attempt to get on the docket for House Ways and Means and Senate Finance.

Sen. Jackson thanked Peter for taking the time today to update the commission. He also asked Peter, if there were other states that he may have talked with regarding the high unemployment rates and if he's heard any discussion on the US DOL alien labor certification program.

Peter stated that it did not come up in the confirmation hearing. He suggested that Senator Snowe's questions were very good and probably the best place to look for clues on how that issue may be addressed. One of the things Kirk was asked is whether he thought trade deficits mattered and he acknowledged that it did and that the trade deficit was a problem.

Sen. Jackson asked that in the future if he hears anything come up about it, he would appreciate it if he would let him know.

Rep. Rotundo advised that the State is looking at transmission lines project that Central Maine Power has proposed and she's been receiving questions on what's happening in other states around transmissions, utility issues, and so forth. Would you be willing to send through to us some references for us that we could pass on to legislators who are concerned about this issue trying to educate themselves on the subject.

Peter responded he would look at the utility and transport committees and see what he could find.

Sen. Sherman advised that he is on the Utilities Committee in Maine and is wondering if there's any other state (other than Canada) where a standard offer comes in from. We are having trouble with Canadian lines and would be curious to know, soon, if there are any other states that we could talk to.

Peter advised that he would find out how the standard offer comes in and get back with him.

Sen. Sherman also stated that at one time there was a Canadian Ombudsman and mentioned Washington state had something and wondered if he'd had a chance to pursue it. We're interested in knowing what other states are doing.

Peter has not been able to pursue it but suggested it be an agenda item for the April 6<sup>th</sup> conference call.

Sen. Jackson asked Peter if he'd heard anything on the liquefied natural gas ports and bringing them into Maine through Canada and other countries and if he had any thoughts on that.

Peter responded that Maine and Oregon have been looking at this very carefully. They have prepared a case study of potential impacts of these facilities and looked at the gambling decisions of WTO which may involve the US making new commitments on pipeline services and bulk

storage of fuels. He will send within the next week or two what's in play in terms of US commitments and how they may impact energy developers.

Rep. Rotundo asked Sen. Sherman if he had something in the Utilities Committee that they were reviewing. Sen. Sherman stated that they had a long list of LR's.

Rep. Rotundo advised Peter that they very much appreciated his taking the time to talk with them today.

Peter stated it was great to talking with them again and will follow up via email regarding the April 6<sup>th</sup> conference call.

Sen. Jackson recognized new member Michael Hiltz. Mr. Hiltz addressed members and advised that he is a registered nurse representing healthcare and was glad to be there today.

## **II. Minutes of February 27, 2009 Meeting**

Senator Jackson asked members to take a few minutes to review the minutes.

### **Motion:**

Rep. Gifford made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Seconded by Rep. Rotundo. Vote, unanimous.

Cynthia Phinney also seconded the motion. Rep. Rotundo noted that the minutes were complete, thorough, and was good to have a write up for members that are unable to attend.

## **III. Subcommittee Update on Rep. Treat's bill**

Rep. Treat first addressed the members regarding an email she sent March 14<sup>th</sup> about Trade Advisory Councils.

She asked everyone to review and see who is on the list and would find it interesting. Every person on the list was from industries such as pharmaceuticals and chemicals. What it does not include is health care industry. IGPAC decided to provide an opportunity for participation but does not have the staffing and access to documents and often the turn around time is not enough time to respond. An issue is trying to get someone appointed to IGPAC. Some have made attempts but have been unsuccessful. There are fact sheets posted on the Forum Democracy & Trade homepage. Rep. Michaud is working on a proposal to his trade bill. Discussion followed.

Rep. Treat advised that she submitted legislation and circulated copies of the subcommittee report. The subcommittee consisting of Rep. Treat, Paul Volckhausen, Sarah Bigney, Wade Merritt, Linda Pistner (along with Peter Riggs comments) met, reviewed and drafted the legislation. Using enacted laws and pending legislation from states such as MN, RI, CA, MD, and HI, they incorporated items and comments from Peter Riggs and drafted legislation. (*Attachment 1*). The subcommittee unanimously agreed to move forward with what was outlined.

Commission members reviewed the subcommittee report and discussed each line item. Different scenarios were discussed such as an agreement getting passed without anyone even knowing that

is has taken place. This legislation will alert the CTPC, who can review by setting up procedures to determine how it may affect Maine.

Joseph Woodbury advised that they should proceed very carefully, that this could become very cumbersome and put more constraints on folks and felt that he could not support this type of legislation, overrule the agreement and possibly come up with something else.

Paul Volckhausen stated that they are not really overruling, they are saying that if the State of Maine is signing off, we have to approve it in a positive way. A trade representative in the past could sign off without us having any knowledge.

Rep. Treat stated that they did not make it clear that they are talking about only instances where they are being asked what the State wants to do. This gives them the opportunity to know what is going on. At the last meeting, discussion transpired on SPOC and what information they are receiving. Concern was that information was not received and they want to know what is going on. As a business, believes you would want to know what is going on and what agreements are being entered that are helping our businesses.

Sen. Sherman discussed the separation between federal and state and if the Governor's office agreed to something, how would we know about it, and asked if there is any other way.

Wade Merritt discussed procurement services and investment. He appreciates Rep. Treat's drafting legislation and could not say whether he could support it due to the relationship with the Governor's office. Understand he has to have feedback from his people and the Governor's office.

Rep. Rotundo wanted to clarify that this would kick in only when states were asked and is trying to figure a system of whether to opt in or not and to get more public understanding.

Sen. Jackson agreed with the checks and balances and that it was good to get a chance to understand and thanked Rep. Treat for opening the bill to the CTPC.

Sen. Sherman discussed free trade and appreciates what's being done, as well as Wade's comments. There are five other states on this and someone has to decide whether it's okay, move forward and have a discussion.

Michael Hiltz asked to have the CTPC clarify the bill as a newcomer to the commission. Rep. Treat gave some examples of past experiences, SPOC, USTR, etc.

John Patrick thanked Rep. Treat for bringing the bill forward, public hearings and work session will be held which has a lot of value. He stated it is timely, worthwhile and will support it.

Rep. Treat asked if they needed to vote on this. They will have an opportunity to comment on the bill at hearings.

Wade Merritt stated that his concerns are the part where we are being affected on procurement and discusses investments. Member discussion followed.

**Motion:**

Sen. Sherman moved to go forward with the draft and that they will have time to comment on it.

Rep. Treat advised that they have three days to revise the draft and she has to have something for **this afternoon**. They do not have enough time to weigh in on it. Another draft is received and you have no opportunity to weigh in on it until the public hearing.

Sen. Jackson advised they will meet before the public hearing or work session.

The vote is to go forward on Rep. Treat's bill and review it at the next meeting and she could take revisions back in.

**Amended Motion:**

Paul Volckhausen moved to amend the motion to support the subcommittee report and does the commission agree to what we say in the report.

Rep. Treat stated that it does not commit the commission to support the bill and that the commission can take their position at the public hearing.

Sen. Jackson stated that even if they did support it, the public hearing can make changes before the final draft, either way, it's part of the process.

Sen. Sherman stated that what they are really saying is go ahead, we know how drafting takes place.

**Motion Withdrawn.**

Sen. Sherman withdrew his motion.

Rep. Treat advised that they are not at a point where a motion is needed.

Sen. Jackson thanked Rep. Treat and the subcommittee and asked that when the bill is printed, to see that they get copies.

**IV. Update on Ron Kirk Appointment**

Rep. Rotundo referred to the letter of congratulations that was drafted as a result of the last meeting stating that the CTPC is looking forward to working with him and building a collaborative approach to trade and inviting him to meet with the CTPC. This letter did go out.

Rep. Rotundo also referenced a letter as a result of the last meeting that was written to Sen. Snowe respectfully asking specific questions be addressed during the confirmation hearing. Sen. Snowe did pose these questions at the hearing.

**V. Update of Water Extraction bills**

Rep. Rotundo recognized John Delahanty, Poland Spring.

Rep. Rotundo understands only one bill has been enacted so far which came out of the Utilities Committee that deals with citizen involvement in the process for providing permission for extraction to take place and the bill was passed in amended form.

With the exception of the bill on taxation of water extraction which has been referred to the Taxation Committee, all the other bills have been referred to the Natural Resources Committee so that all of the bills could be heard at the same. The CTPC will have the opportunity to weigh in on them at the hearings.

John Delahanty reported that there were two bills heard yesterday, Rep. Schatz's bill and Rep. Sarty's bill. On March 12<sup>th</sup>, LD 238, "An Act Regarding Consumer-owned Water Utilities and Contracts for Water Extraction and for the Sale of Water" sponsored by Rep. Legg was voted Ought to Pass as amended.

Rep. Rotundo thanked Mr. Delahanty for his update.

## **VI. Vermont letter regarding Technical Barriers to Trade**

Rep. Rotundo advised that Sarah Bigney was not able to attend today's meeting and that the commission might want to table this until the next meeting. This is a letter written by our counterparts in Vermont and the Vermont Trade Commission dealing with consultation. Sarah has been very involved with this and the commission may want to wait until Sarah's return before taking action on this.

Rep. Treat asked if this was the subject of the conference call in April. If so, they may want to be briefed on it prior to the April 6<sup>th</sup> conference call.

Rep. Rotundo asked members to take a few minutes to look at the Vermont letter to see if they should take some type of action on it.

It was noted that the year should be corrected to 2009 on page one and page two.

Rep. Treat stated that the Commission already weighed in on this. As background information, the Commission acted on this in the past and may want to say something about it again. This was an issue of how information got from the USTR to the Country of China telling them about Sen. Lyon's bill concerning the recycling of electronic waste, as well as similar communications concerning toxic ingredients in children's toys concerning legislation pending in Maryland. We, in fact, had a representative from the USTR on the telephone talking to our commissioner about this, sometime last spring, and said it was all a mistake and should not have happened and would not happen again. However, it was very unclear what the corrective process would be. Subsequent to that there was a conference call which Rep. Treat participated in where Jeff Weiss referenced in this letter, was on the telephone with state legislators stating that this would not happen again, that they were changing their procedures, and repeated this at an NCSL (National Conference of State Legislators) meeting which she attended in November. Mr. Weiss stated that he was going to personally review every single communication that went out that concerns state action [or any action] to make sure it did not inadvertently include information such as in the past concerning state legislators bills. He also said something about being interested in having a state advisory process or some additional way to have states more involved to actually give the USTR what their concerns were. She does not believe that there has been any follow up to this. Perhaps, the Vermont letter is to say that this is all very interesting and we would like to know specifically what it is you have in mind. It was a very positive statement on Weiss's part and appeared to be sincere and interested in understanding how states are affected and states concerns and point of view.

Perhaps, this may be what this April 6<sup>th</sup> conference call is about how we might weigh in on what we would like to see.

Rep. Rotundo stated that she believes that Peter Riggs said something about NCSL meeting in April and talking about technical barriers to trade agreements.

Rep. Treat was thanked for her update and asked if members wanted to hold discussion today so in April at the NCSL meeting, someone will be there knowing where we stand and speak on behalf of the CTPC.

Rep. Treat advised that she will not be able to attend the NCSL meeting in April. She advised that she has been fortunate to have been able to attend the meetings in the past and stressed that it would be a good idea for someone to attend. The Commission does have a budget that allows a member to attend. To be clear, the NCSL meetings are open to nonprofit, businesses, and legislators; however, the voting is open ONLY for legislators. It is a legislative organization which requires legislator's votes. Ideally, if we could have at least one legislator attend, would be very helpful and encouraged attending.

CTPC participation is hugely important and as a legislator participating in this, enables you to talk to other legislators about the roles of the Commission, its importance, and believes that this may be one of the reasons why other states have adopted the CTPC model.

Sen. Jackson asked when the NCSL meeting is scheduled. Rep. Treat responded during April school vacation week in Washington, DC. Rep. Treat stated she would get the NCSL information and stated if anyone was interested in attending, she could provide them with lots of information.

Sen. Sherman stated he had questions regarding the VT letter and the TBA reviews. He suggested that in regards to technical barriers to trade, people need to be brought up to speed on this, especially someone who may be attending the NCSL meeting. In the second paragraph of the letter, where Weiss indicates that state legislation would be "screened out" from TBT reviews, could be problematical, how then could a state pass legislation that is screened out but in the end, China could show up with some real problems. Does not see how the screening out process would be. We've heard of a couple of cases, i.e. Mexico, already and he would like to know more about how this operates.

Sen. Jackson asked if the commission wants to send a letter to the Trade Representative to find out about the screening process.

Rep. Treat stated that the conference call might give us an opportunity to hear more about it and then make a decision as to how we want to proceed. We already sent a letter to the former USTR representative. She thinks that this VT letter is that USTR has heard our message and Mr. Weiss has offered to create a new process to ensure that things that we are objecting too and inappropriate, do not continue, but it is unclear as to what that process is. This is where the Vermont commission is weighing in to say "wait, let's hear more". The conference call will also be an opportunity for new members to learn more about it as well.

John Patrick agreed with Rep. Treat. Saying that he's [Weiss] going to do one thing and what we need to do is find out what he's going to do and where he ended up. Some of the processes we've had in the past with the USTR is poor communications.

Now that we are communicating at the start, follow through is very important on this and our relationship with national trade. We need to recognize that there is a problem and be kept in the loop as to what happens in the future.

Rep. Rotundo reminded that there are members that don't have the benefit of following the history and wants to make sure that members are feeling comfortable with actions they take and asking for clarification.

Rep. Rotundo asked if members wanted a letter written now or wait until the conference call in April and provide information at the next meeting. New members need to be comfortable with taking action.

Sen. Jackson referenced Sen. Sherman's questions regarding what they meant on screening out and agreed with Sen. Sherman.

Mike Hiltz referenced the Vermont letter and asked if it were possible to telephone Michael O'Grady who is listed in the last sentence of the letter asking for clarification.

Rep. Rotundo sensed that the commission will not take action on the Vermont letter and will wait to see if they get a response back from Vermont. She also referenced the conference call on April 6<sup>th</sup> and advised that they are always informative. Generally they receive an email from Robin Lunge giving them the specific details, date, time, telephone number and access code and an agenda of what will be discussed.

Rep. Rotundo advised members that if the conference call involves a fee to your personal telephone, please submit the bill to the Commission and they will be reimbursed.

## **VII. Discussion of 2008 Trade Act**

Rep. Rotundo advised members that Congressman Michaud's bill will be discussed at the next meeting. Between now and the next meeting, members were asked to read the bill and be prepared for discussion. The web address is [http://thomas.loc.gov/home/gpoxmlc110/h6180\\_ih.xml](http://thomas.loc.gov/home/gpoxmlc110/h6180_ih.xml)

Joseph Woodbury wanted to know what the discussion would entail.

Rep. Rotundo responded that discussion may be whether or not this is something the CTPC encourages congressional delegation to support.

Michael Herz stated that as a new member, wanted to know in the history of the CTPC, has there ever been an opportunity to look at any set of implications of trade agreements and prioritize such and is there such a document that exists.

Rep. Rotundo advised that the first three years they had subcommittees that looked into areas to develop a deeper understanding and to look in the impacts that trade agreements might have. One was healthcare, another was environment and another was labor and manufacturing. There are reports from the subcommittees on the CTPC website and by law assessments have to be done very two years on the impact of trade agreements on the states and the assessments are posted on the website. The last two were done by the Forum on Democracy and Trade where they looked at the impact on the states and other areas. Our experience was that some subcommittees were more successful than others in terms of getting work done outside the

meetings, so they disbanded them. We also weigh in with our congressional delegation on numerous areas.

Michael Herz advised that it would be useful to get briefed by a predecessor so that there would be some continuity and would be helpful.

Rep. Rotundo stated that it was a great idea and will call Elsie Flemings and ask that she contact him for briefing and getting him up to speed.

Rep. Treat stated that there may be five new members and having some type of orientation like in the past would be helpful. Possibly holding a forty-five minute segment into each meeting on history subjects such as environment, health, etc. over the course of the next year. The Vermont legislative staff has a powerpoint program and other training materials that is available for anyone and would be helpful.

Paul Volckhausen echoed what Rep. Treat said. Stated that in the past at every meeting, time was devoted for some type of presentation to educate themselves about these issues. Some members thought they knew what they were getting into and very quickly learned that they didn't. They had presentations on how trade affects different segments of the economy as well as other issues and areas. He believes they should make it part of their continuing education, specifically with the new USTR.

Rep. Rotundo thanked members for their comments and that it is appreciated. We do need the education and we will build an educational component into future meetings.

## **VIII. Discussion of Work Plan**

Rep. Rotundo reminded members that they were going to discuss the development of a work plan at the last meeting, but the agenda always seems to be full and they run out of time. She asked if members had any thoughts or suggestions for a work plan other than developing an educational component to it.

Rep. Treat reminded members that they had discussed holding an all day retreat but unfortunately, schedules and legislative meetings got in the way and new members needed to be appointed. It's a great idea to have a work plan; the problem right now is that they [CTPC] are lucky just to get everyone together to hold the CTPC meetings. It makes sense to list ideas that are priority and find the time to devote to it.

Michael Herz asked whether in the past three to four years, were there work plans.

Rep. Rotundo advised that they did have work plans but other issues would come up and they ended up focusing on those instead of what was on the work plan. Legislative issues, schedules, and trade issues that came up made it hard to stay on course and continue to do so.

The Commission is very fortunate to have Linda Nickerson from the Department of Labor assist and Curtis Bentley, who is a legislative analyst for two committees, assist us, but we do not have a permanent position to staff the commission.

John Patrick advised that part of the work plan was by law they have to hold two public hearings per year. Over the past four years, the education process was educating us, our legislators, and the public as well and to make sure that things did get done.

Sen. Sherman advised that he was new to the commission as well. He has some issues on free trade and is a member of the energy committee. He suggested that if members do have issues on free trade, to bring them forward.

Rep. Rotundo stated that it is an excellent point and asked members to bring ideas and issues forward. The first meeting had a full agenda and did not have enough time to actually talk to members on areas of interest and education.

She asked members to let the Chairs know what their areas of interests are and they will build the agenda to cover those interests.

Rep. Treat suggested devoting part of each meeting to education and that they should be able to do so. We are already in a work plan but we have not articulated it. It needs to be understood too that when USTR does something or there's some agreement pending, that changes our work plan.

Rep. Rotundo suggested that the Chairs bring to the next meeting a tentative work plan and welcome any ideas between now and the next meeting. They also welcome suggestions for speakers. They used to invite speakers to come in and address the group. If there's anyone in particular you would like to hear from, kindly let them know.

Rep. Gifford agreed that it was a good idea and he would like to have someone talk to them about natural gas and its affects.

Sen. Sherman asked Linda Pistner of the AG's office if they would be in violation of the FOI by communicating via email to the chairs.

Linda Pistner advised that it was not inappropriate and that emails are public records.

Wade Merritt stated he would like to see the commission tackle what is the adequate international trade expert development. Maine companies appear to be strong having a 9 ½% increase in exports last year. He would like to see the commission pursue to the federal delegation adequate funding for export promotion. At the federal level this is a real issue for a state like Maine which is small. A large state like Pennsylvania has a network and twenty overseas offices. Maine has none and relies heavily on companies going overseas to business meetings. This is a big issue and he would like to see the commission tackle that one.

New Hampshire and Vermont are finding themselves in the same position. Our federal counterparts in Congress are about to lose 7% of their overseas budget. Discussion followed.

Rep. Rotundo suggested that maybe she and Sen. Jackson could talk more about it later after today's meeting.

Michael Herz asked if the author of the trade bill has addressed the CTPC to make an attempt to brief them on his perspective.

Sen. Jackson responded yes. It was agreed at the last CTPC meeting to invite the new Labor Secretary to speak to us and to ask Congressman Michaud that weekend if he thought she would be willing to come. Sen. Jackson talked with Congressman Michaud who thought she [Labor

Secretary] would and extended our invitation. Both she and Congressman Michaud will be addressing the commission after she is more familiar with her position.

Rep. Rotundo also stated that Congressman Michaud has been very generous with his time to the Commission, as well as his staff, and thanked members for their suggestions. If you have interests and suggestions for speakers, let Rep. Rotundo and Sen. Jackson know.

Rep. Rotundo stated that she and Sen. Jackson will prepare a tentative draft work plan for discussion at the next meeting which will include member's interests, educational components and pieces required by law, as well as state and legislative issues.

Rep. Gifford asked about speakers and areas of expertise. Rep. Rotundo advised to let her know of areas that they want information on, they will find speakers. In the past they've had national speakers address them by being able to incorporate presentations into their schedules, especially if they happen to be in Maine.

Sen. Jackson advised members to feel free to call him at home or on his cell phone. Rep. Rotundo stated the same.

## **IX. Next Meeting**

Rep. Rotundo stated that along with scheduling the next meeting date, they will try to set aside an educational component. Meetings were originally scheduled to be held the last Friday of each month. Due to scheduling conflicts, they have had to change meeting dates time to time. They would like to schedule the meeting dates for the remainder of the year so that members can add them to their schedules and plan accordingly.

The last week in April was not a good date for member's attendance. After lengthy discussion it was determined to schedule the **next meeting for April 17<sup>th</sup>, Labor Committee Room, 9:00 a.m.**

*The following dates were established for the remainder of the year: May 22, June 26, July 31, August 28, September 25, October 30, November 20 and no meeting scheduled for December. These dates may change but members were asked to write them in on their calendar.*

## **X. Other Business**

Rep. Rotundo advised new members of the reimbursement policy for meals and mileage and to complete, sign and date their expense accounts and pass them on to she or Sen. Jackson and they will have them processed.

The NCSL meeting is being held in April 23-25, Washington, DC. If there is a legislator that wishes to attend, the commission does have some funding to pay for expenses, kindly let them know. Rep. Treat advised that there are several committees that will be looking for legislators to be appointed to. She advised that it was very important and beneficial for a legislator to get appointed to one of these committees. If anyone has questions, contact her and she will explain further.

It was asked if attendance to the NCSL needed to be voted on and Linda Pistner advised that it can be approved now or later.

In regards to Rep. Treat's legislative bill, Rep. Rotundo would like the Chairs to hold a conversation with the Governor's office so that they will know what is being discussed.

Wade Merritt advised that he notified the Governor's office of the bill and that Lance Boucher is aware of it.

John Patrick wanted to go on record that being on the commission for four years he is 100% in favor of free trade provided that its fair trade and encompasses labor environment and human rights standards and that all free trade agreements cover those.

## **XI. Adjournment**

Motion made by Sen. Sherman to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Rep. Gifford, vote unanimous. The meeting adjourned at 11:37 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda B. Nickerson

Attachment