

The TPP will affect every Canadian



Every Canadian, every region affected

There has been a lot of focus on how the Trans-Pacific Partnership will affect specific sectors of the Canadian economy, and the regions of this country where those industries are based. It is true – the TPP will have a profound impact on several specific industries, and regions.

But don't think for a moment that won't affect you. The fact is, **the TPP will have a profound impact on every Canadian, their children, and the future of this country.** If you don't think the TPP will affect you, or might even help the sector you work in, think again.

How the TPP will affect you

The TPP could affect everything from the milk you drink, the price of your medications, the economic opportunities for you and your children, how clean your environment will be, the laws your government can pass to serve you better and even the taxes you pay. Here's how:

THE MILK YOU DRINK: The TPP poses a direct threat to supply management, which threatens the livelihoods of dairy farmers and the people who process the milk into the products you buy. Without supply management's limits on imports, we will see more milk coming to Canada from the U.S. – where farmers can give cows growth hormones to boost milk production. That is banned in Canada, but the TPP will open the door to growth hormones in our milk.

Supply management keeps farms in Canada much smaller than in the U.S., where farms with 1-5,000 cows are increasingly common. In Canada, the average dairy farm has just 82 cows. That means the environmental impact of each farm is less, and that's good for all of us. U.S. farmers also get much more in government subsidies, something far fewer Canadian dairy farmers need, thanks to supply management. Those subsidies are your tax dollars.

MEDICATION PRICES: The TPP would extend the length of patents to brand-name pharmaceutical firms for the drugs they produce. This could add \$636 million annually to the price of drugs in Canada, according to one study, adding not only to price of the medications you need, but also adding to the costs for our already cash-strapped health care system. The TPP's Investor State Dispute Settlement system, which would allow corporations to sue government if new laws affect profits, could limit the government's ability to offset higher drug prices by bringing in a national Pharmacare program – something many Canadians want.

What is the TPP?

The TPP is a proposed new “free trade” agreement involving 12 member nations: Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, the United States of America and Vietnam. Canada was late to the game, joining TPP negotiations near their completion, which meant negotiating from a position of weakness with limited ability to shape the main features of the deal.

Unifor is urging federal Members of Parliament not to ratify the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement. Canada's approach to global trade and investment must serve to enhance our collective economic and social development, and must be guided by progressive, fair trade principles.

THE TAXES YOU PAY: Okay, the TPP says nothing about raising the taxes you pay, but it does pose some very real threats to some of the industries in this country that contribute a great deal to all levels of government through the taxes paid by workers in that industry. A study conducted for Unifor about the auto industry, for example, found that workers in that industry contribute up to \$4.7 billion per year to our governments in various forms of taxation. That's money that helps pay for roads, schools, health care and more. Without that revenue, government will have to find that revenue elsewhere - including possibly raising tax rates - or cut the services they provide.

THE TV YOU WATCH: The TV landscape is changing. When you turn on the TV, you want to see your issues, your communities and your needs reflected in the shows you watch. Under TPP, and its limits on government's ability to regulate foreign online media providers (like Netflix) to serve your needs, Canadians will see less of themselves reflected in the media they consume. There are good shows coming from other countries, and we all want to watch them. But we want to see our stories, too. It's how a nation is built.

LABOUR LAWS AND EMPLOYMENT: Proponents of trade deals typically promote them as a way to create more good jobs. The truth is often the opposite, as jobs gravitate to low-wage countries within a free trade zone. Look at Mexico and NAFTA. The TPP is particularly threatening, given all the low-wage countries among its 12 signatory states. But there's more. The TPP says some nice things about good jobs and labour rights, but contains no mechanisms for enforcing such things - in contrast to the very strict mechanisms put in place to protect the rights of corporations and investors. As well, the TPP lifts restrictions on bringing in temporary foreign workers, which does not bode well for job creation in this country.

The single most worrisome thing about the TPP

There is a lot to be concerned about in the TPP, but its Investor State Disputes Settlement (ISDS) system is the most worrisome thing about the deal. It is why many commentators have said **the TPP is not really a trade deal, but a corporate rights deal.**

The ISDS gives corporations the right to sue any government that passes a law hurts their ability to earn a profit - even if that law is in the public interest.

Think it won't happen? It already has. Canada is the most sued country under NAFTA, which also has an ISDS provision. In fact, between 1996 and 2014, there were 73 cases filed against Canada, twice as many as either the U.S. or Mexico. Canada is the most sued nation in the world under ISDS. Just one example: Ethyl Corporation sued Ottawa in 1997 for \$350 million after Canada banned MMT, a dangerous fuel additive. Ottawa overturned the ban rather than face a trade tribunal on the issue.

That's what people mean when they call a trade deal a corporate rights deal.

Given all this, you have to ask yourself, is the TPP really worth the risk?

Demand that your MP vote against ratifying the TPP, and that all our political leaders fight for a fair trade future. For full details and background on the issues raised in this flyer, go to unifor.org/tpp.