

Citizen Trade Policy Commission

Thursday, October 4, 2007

Room 126, State House, Augusta

9:00 AM Commission Business Meeting

Meeting Summary

Members present:, Sen. Margaret Rotundo (co-chair), Rep. John Patrick (co-chair), Sen. Bryant, Rep. Jeffery Gifford, Rep. Treat, Linda Pistner, Carla Dickstein, Jane Aiudi, Leslie Manning, Wade Merritt, Cynthia Phinney and Matt Schlobohm.

Staff present: Curtis Bentley, Legislative Analyst.

- I. Administrative position** – The commission continued discussions from the last meeting regarding contracting with someone to provide administrative support for the commission. The commission voted unanimously to have the chairs work with staff to develop a contract to hire an administrative position for no more than 2 days per week and for not more than \$20,000 annually. The chairs will brief the commission on the hiring process at the next meeting.
- II. Northeast Regional Meeting** - Peter Riggs (Forum on Democracy and Trade) provided the commission with an update on his efforts to set up the northeast regional meeting. Mr. Riggs suggested that the best vehicle for impacting congress on trade issues is likely the Trade Promotion Authority reauthorization. He also stated that focusing our efforts on congress and not USTR would be the most effective at this point in time. The regional meeting is scheduled for the second week in November, probably the 18th and 19th and will be in southern New Hampshire or Boston. Mr. Riggs stated that the Forum would take care of the organization and logistics of the meeting but paying for the meeting still needs to be determined; the Forum would be able to provide matching funds. Rep. Patrick suggested that the Forum narrow its draft agenda for the meeting so participants won't get bogged down in too many topics. The chairs and staff will work to develop a budget for the items on the work plan including attending NE regional meetings.
- III. Vacancies** – Sen. Rotundo updated the commission on filling vacancies. Sen. Rotundo announced that Perry Newman was officially appointed to the commission to represent small businesses. The commission considered a number of possible candidates and Sen. Rotundo said that an invitation had been extended to several candidates and she was waiting for a response.

- IV. Subcommittees** – Sen. Rotundo directed subcommittees to meet and discuss the current subcommittee structure and whether or not the subcommittees should continue to meet.
- V. Public hearing** – Staff briefed the commission on recent efforts to secure a locality for the next public hearing. Availability and cost were an issue for localities in Gorham and Portland that were identified at the last meeting. Commission members provided additional locations that may be suitable for the commission’s public hearing and directed staff to continue working on securing a forum. Staff also updated the commission on efforts to get commitments from Maine’s Congressional delegation to attend the next public hearing and round table discussion in November. As of the meeting date, none of the congressional delegation could confirm or rule out attending a public hearing the last week of November. Commission members directed staff to continue efforts to find a date when all or most of the Congressional Delegation could attend a CTPC public hearing.
- VI. Governor** - The commission directed staff to contact Jack Cashman, the point of contact for the Governor’s office on trade matters, to invite him to the commission’s next regular meeting.
- VII. Outreach efforts** – Leslie Manning briefed the commission on options for effectively getting information from the commission to the public and information about trade related issues from the public. Suggestions included targeted surveys, commission hosted programs on cable access TV, civic engagements at public educational institutions particularly high schools, and working with retirees as they tend to be more politically active. Commission agreed to have chairs and staff work with Leslie Manning to integrate her ideas into a work plan. Sen. Rotundo asked commission members to think about what persons or positions to invite to a regular meeting and bring back names at the next meeting.
- VIII. Annual report** – The commission voted unanimously to accept the draft November 2007 annual report of the commission.
- IX. Draft letter regarding Peru Free Trade Agreement** - The commission voted unanimously to have staff ready a draft letter to Maine’s Congressional Delegation containing the commission’s position on a potential Peru FTA should negotiations on that agreement begin to move forward in Congress.
- X. New Hampshire trade organization meeting** – Matt Schlobohm informed the commission that the N.H. trade commission will be meeting on October 22nd and that they had ask Mr. Schlobohm if someone from the commission would be able to attend the meeting. Cynthia Phinney suggested she may be able to attend and would work with Mr. Schlobohm in setting it up.
- XI. Next meeting** - The next meeting date was set for November 2nd (Friday)

VII. Adjournment. The commission adjourned its meeting at approximately 12:00 noon.