

**CITIZEN TRADE POLICY COMMISSION  
PUBLIC HEARING**

May 6, 2010  
Oxford Hills Comprehensive High School  
Meeting Start Time: 1800  
Meeting End Time: 1930

In attendance:

Full Commission  
Staff: Judy Gopaul

Speakers:

**Deborah Kendall.** Peer Support Worker, Wausau Paper Mill. She lost her job when the mill closed in 2009 after more than 25 years. Part of her work as a Peer Support worker is to assist other displaced workers in finding jobs. Most of the mill employees are over 50 years old, with limited computer skills. It is difficult to find employment because of their qualifications. Jobs are needed in Maine; manufacturing jobs need to stay in United States. She advocated for better jobs, better benefits. “Everyone needs to support the Fair Trade Policy and stop this insanity before we lose every manufacturing job in Maine and possibly the United States.”

**Dean Gilbert.** Master Electrician with 29 years’ tenure at the Rumford Paper Mill and Vice-President of the Local 2144 – IBEW (International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers). Over the past two years our mill has idled paper machines, reduced production, and laid off workers. 60% of my crew was laid off, many of whom had more than 15 years’ seniority. Families struggled to get by; they lost their pay checks and in many cases, their dignity. He emphasized that trade laws that favor foreign competition hamper American workers. It is important to keep manufacturing jobs in the United States. He favors tariffs and other sanctions that eliminate unfair advantages for countries that manipulate and undervalue their currency. He also favors a re-evaluation of current trade laws and supports Rep. Michaud’s Trade Act.

**Ron Hemingway.** VP Maine Labor Council. Thanked the commission for their support of fight against illegal dumping and subsidizing of coated paper from Indonesia and China. Supports the Trade Act and seeks support from the Commission, along with Senators Collins and Snowe, for the act. He is not asking for protectionism, but for fair trade, with reasonable environmental standards, and standards for human rights, health and safety enforcement, and economic justice instead of currency manipulation.

**Don Berry.** Master Electrician. President, local AFL-CIO. Employed in Maine since 1976. He started with an outside electrical contracting company working in paper mills in Maine; at the time he started there were over two hundred contracted electricians working throughout Maine; now there are none from his company. He attributes the job losses to unfair trade agreements. He supports the Trade Bill from Rep. Michaud and provided copies of recent Trade Assistance Act layoffs in Maine.

**William Brennan.** Mr. Brennan noted that in Maine, 30,000 manufacturing jobs have been lost in Maine over the past 16 years as corporations have moved jobs overseas where they don't have to worry about regulations that protect the health and safety of their workers or the environment. Urged the commission to push for a reappraisal of NAFTA and the WTO, including an assessment of economic outcomes that factor in health and safety, human rights, and social and environmental indicators. Urges the commission to support the Trade Act. Provided a copy of an article of an accident in Bangladesh that caused twenty-one apparel workers to die in a factory fire after they were locked in.

**Mike Castaneda.** Was employed for Wausau Paper in Jay for 20 years; lost his job when the mill closed. Created very high stress levels for the now unemployed workers. Noted that one coworker has committed suicide and another died of a heart attack; three additional workers have become disabled as a result of the layoffs. All of those working, despite their efforts with the Trade Adjustment Act of 1974 to become retrained, are underemployed. Mr. Castaneda noted that Maine has lost over 30,000 manufacturing jobs since the passage of NAFTA in 1994. He urges support of the Trade Act sponsored by Rep. Mike Michaud.

**Delia Gorham.** Speaking as an individual, a Mainer. She applauded Rep. Michaud's support of the American Clean Energy and Security Act and encourages support of the Trade Act to ensure that environmentally sound jobs that look at alternative energy do not go overseas.

**Tom Whitney.** Discussed his first-hand observations of workers in appalling conditions in countries abroad and the effects of NAFTA on the economies of the US and other countries.

**Peter O'Connell.** Via e-mail to Rep. Rotunda: Former member of the Commission. Noted that his company and others that were manufacturing companies no longer exist because of the unfair trade practices and advantages given to Canadian manufacturers as a result of NAFTA. Emphasized that trade policy needs a complete overhaul. Viable industry must be brought back to local manufacturers.

**Rep. Chellie Pingree** submitted handwritten testimonials in support of the Trade Act from **Peter Theriault, Rick Savoy, Robert Arsenault** and **Paul Ouellette, Jr.**, each of whom noted that the illegal dumping of coated paper must stop.

**Rep. Mike Michaud** was represented at the Commission by \_\_\_\_\_, who presented a letter from Congressman Michaud about the Trade Act he submitted to Congress.