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Tech industry pushes for TPP

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The U.S. tech industry is making a push for the Trans-Pacific Partnership in a **letter** sent to congressional leaders this morning asking them to “intensify” their focus to work with the Obama administration on a path forward for the deal in 2016.

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“This agreement creates a new standard for trade pacts with its forward-looking approach on technology products and services going far beyond just tariff reductions,” the Internet Association, Semiconductor Industry Association, TechNet and 10 other leading industry groups wrote, highlighting provisions on data flows, intellectual property and trade secrets.

The letter comes as U.S. business and agricultural groups appear to be picking up efforts to lobby for the deal with Congress back in session this week. The United Fresh Produce Association and the National Pork Producers Council are holding fly-ins this week where TPP will be one of the big talking points with lawmakers.

IT’S TUESDAY, SEPT. 13! Welcome to Morning Trade, where we think this **simple graph** on the Earth’s temperature explains a lot about climate change. Got any trade news to share? Let me know: abehsudi@politico.com or [@abehsudi](https://twitter.com/abehsudi).

BANK CEO PLUGS TPP: The TPP love continued this week when JPMorgan Chase CEO Jamie Dimon made a plug for the deal on Monday, in an apparent sign that the administration’s overtures to the financial industry are starting to pay off. Dimon, while in D.C. to participate in an event hosted by the Economic Club of Washington, was asked what advice he would give the next president on how to get the economy growing. The trade deal was among the items on his list.

Recall that financial companies were threatening to sit out the TPP fight altogether after the deal carved them out of provisions protecting businesses from regulations telling them where to store their data. In response, the administration rolled out a “fix” that would change the U.S.

negotiating approach on the topic in future deals, which was met by tentative praise from the industry.

“TPP would be positive for GDP,” Dimon said at the event Monday. “It would be positive for wages. It would be positive for the average American.” He acknowledged the deal would have “negatives,” becoming the latest business representative to cite the need for trade adjustment assistance. “I’m a big believer of getting the trade deal done, but acknowledge that it actually hurts some people, and give income assistance, do development, relocation, retraining, so those hurt by it can be made better.”

BUSINESS GROUPS AIM TO RALLY SUPPORT FOR EX-IM RESCUE: Fifteen leading business groups sent a letter to congressional leadership Monday urging them to consider using the stopgap funding bill to restore the Export-Import Bank to its full working capacity. Their letter, which follows a similar statement of support sent by the heads of the National Association of Manufacturers and Chamber of Commerce last week, asks lawmakers to include language in the continuing resolution that would allow the entire membership of the Ex-Im board to constitute a quorum that could approve transactions over \$10 million.

It’s language that lawmakers adopted in both the House and Senate appropriations bills earlier this year after being proposed by Rep. Charlie Dent and Sen. Lindsey Graham, respectively. The signatories — which include the Business Roundtable, National Foreign Trade Council and Association of Equipment Manufacturers — have been pushing for the bank to regain full strength since it reopened in December without a board quorum, meaning it’s unable to approve high-dollar deals.

“With every passing day, businesses from the United States are missing out on new business opportunities overseas, to the detriment of local economies and American jobs,” the groups wrote. “Congress can and must act swiftly.” You can read the full letter [here](#).

THE REALITY OF TTIP LITE: The U.S. still prefers a “comprehensive” trade agreement with the European Union despite the fact that officials **may be looking** at completing negotiations for only a partial trade deal by the end of the year.

"The United States continues to prefer a fully comprehensive outcome to TTIP as originally envisioned, and indeed spent the summer exploring creative solutions to the most difficult issues in the negotiations," USTR spokesman Matt McAlvanah said in a statement. "We recently have heard conflicting statements from European leaders about their interest and ability to conclude a comprehensive deal. We look forward to continued discussions."

POLITICO reported from its bureau in Brussels that U.S. and Italian officials were weighing the option of a two-step process to complete the negotiations. That would begin with a "Step 1" agreement to lock in elements that can be finalized by December and be followed at some point in the future by a "Step 2" agreement covering more difficult elements such as agriculture and government procurement.

Against that background, U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman and European Union Trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmström will meet Thursday to discuss the state of the negotiations and assess whether it is still possible to achieve their goal of finishing this year.

A GOOD DAY FOR STEEL: The U.S. International Trade Commission signed off on final punitive duties hitting imports of more than \$1.5 billion worth of hot-rolled steel from seven countries. The final injury finding confirms **anti-dumping duties** set by the Commerce Department on imports from Australia, Brazil, Japan, South Korea, the Netherlands, Turkey and the United Kingdom, as well as countervailing duties on Brazil and South Korea.

However, the ITC found that government subsidies in Turkey were too low to warrant countervailing duties. The case is one of several filed by U.S. steel companies over the past year. The specific petitioners were AK Steel Corporation, ArcelorMittal USA, Nucor Corporation, SSAB Enterprises, Steel Dynamics and United States Steel Corporation.

Commerce served up another victory Monday when it set **preliminary** anti-dumping duty rates ranging from about 64 percent to 77 percent on imports of stainless steel sheet and strip from China, which totaled about \$300 million in 2015. AK Steel Corporation, Allegheny Ludlum, North American Stainless and Outokumpu Stainless USA filed a petition in February asking for import relief. The department will announce its final duty determinations in the case on or around Nov. 23. The U.S. International Trade Commission also has to give its approval for duties to be imposed. That vote is set for early January.

**** A message from The National Pork Producers Council:** Trade is vital not only to the U.S. economy, with hundreds of thousands of jobs supported by it, but to U.S. geopolitical interests around the globe. Walking away from the Asia-Pacific region by abandoning the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement isn't an option the United States can afford to take. <http://nppc.org/issues/issue/trans-pacific-partnership> **

ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP IRKED BY U.S., INDIA ENERGY CASES: In a tit-for-tat move, India filed a new dispute against the United States at the World Trade Organization over domestic content requirements and subsidies to support renewable energy in eight U.S. states, the WTO said Monday. The action, which comes just a few days before the WTO Appellate Body is expected to issue its decision in a case brought by the United States, quickly drew fire from the Sierra Club — which, along with other environmental groups, has long called the U.S.'s case against India's solar program “a threat to local renewable energy development.”

“The attacks on local solar energy programs at the WTO are completely at odds with the global imperative to tackle climate change,” Ilana Solomon, director of the Sierra Club's Responsible Trade Program, said in a statement. “It's high time for both the United States and India to drop their cases, and for WTO countries to all agree to stop fighting solar programs that protect clean air, clean water, and the climate.”

India had charged that the measures are inconsistent with WTO rules because they provide less favorable treatment for imported products than for ones produced domestically and because the subsidies are contingent on the use of domestic over imported goods.

The request for consultation is the first step in the dispute settlement process. India can request a WTO panel to hear its complaint if talks fail to resolve the issue in the next 60 days.

PRITZKER ASKS MANUFACTURERS FOR TPP SUPPORT: Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker called on manufacturers today to “be vocal” in their support for the Trans-Pacific Partnership, using her platform as opening speaker at the International Manufacturing Technology show in Chicago to explain how the trade deal would help grow U.S. manufacturing. “If you believe the Trans-Pacific Partnership will create more customers for your business and more growth for our economy, I ask you to be vocal about your support,” Pritzker said, according to prepared remarks. “Because we cannot call ourselves a pro-growth nation while denying American workers and businesses the opportunity to compete and win throughout our modern, globalized economy.”

Pritzker acknowledged that many who work in manufacturing “are feeling left behind” but attributed changes in the sector to globalization and advances in technology. “But the existence

of these forces does not mean we should turn our back on trade or new trade pacts, especially high-standard agreements like TPP,” she said.

FROMAN TO TALK TRADE AT BUSH INSTITUTE: U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman will take his push to win approval of the Trans-Pacific Partnership to the presidential library of the Republican leader who decided in **2008** that the United States should join negotiations on the agreement. Froman’s trip to the **George W. Bush Institute** next week comes as many Republicans remain wary of voting this year on the agreement. Froman will participate in an event on trade’s role in supporting the U.S. economy and is expected to meet with Bush, who is also attending the event, according to an institute aide.

USTR STAFF WATCH: Mike Harney, the assistant U.S. trade representative for congressional affairs, is leaving the executive branch to serve as chief of staff for Sen. **Mark Warner**, the Virginia Democrat's office announced. Harney managed USTR's outreach to Congress and was the primary point of contact for members and their staffs, according to the **USTR website**, and he’ll join the senator's team this fall. Harney’s departure, which comes as the administration is hoping to work with Congress to pass the beleaguered TPP, follows the earlier exits of communications staffers Trevor Kincaid and Andrew Bates.

INTERNATIONAL OVERNIGHT

— The Cato Institute releases the free traders’ guide to the TPP, **ranking** the pure trade benefits of individual chapters in the agreement.

— Canadian Agriculture Minister Lawrence MacAuley previews his upcoming trip to China, the *Vancouver Sun* **reports**.

— Canada’s economy could generate more than \$4 billion for its gross domestic product if TPP goes into force, the *Canadian Press* **reports**.

— Donald Trump hits on trade issues during a North Carolina rally, the *Asheville Citizen-Times* **reports**.