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# Republican Gains Could Boost Chances for More Failed Trade Pacts

by [Dustin Ensinger](#) on October 29, 2010 - 9:49am

**Editor's Note: Free trade has been purported to be a means through which we export more goods. In reality, free trade has been a means through which multinational corporation export Americans jobs. Despite the fact that the White House and Republicans may agree on trade issues, it is still the wrong path to take. America needs less trade, more tariffs. Less outsourcing and more manufacturing.**

With Republicans poised to win enough races to takeover the majority in the House and reduce Democrat's majority in the Senate, the White House may be more inclined to push a slew of stalled free trade legislation that had no chance of passing in a Democratic controlled Congress, according to Reuters.

The White House and Congressional Republicans have not seen eye-to-eye on many issues in the nearly two years that President Obama has been in office, but one area where they may find common ground is on trade.

"Trade has been at the back of the bus for last two years and I think there's a real opportunity for trade to be in the front seat next year," Christopher Wenk, senior director for international policy at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, told Reuters.

Historically, Republicans have been more apt to support free trade than their Democratic counterparts. In fact, it was a group of Republicans and conservative Democrats that former President Bill Clinton cobbled together to win passage of both Permanent Normal Trade Relations with China and the North American Free Trade Agreement. In both cases, more Republicans supported the measure than Democrats.

Not only that, but House Democrats have been more adamant in their opposition to free trade agreements. Senate Democrats tend to be more moderate in their position.

So if the election goes as many are predicting, the Obama administration could see an opening to secure passage of bilateral trade pacts with South Korea, Panama and Columbia. Deals could also be secured to finalize the Trans-Pacific Partnership and the Doha Round of global trade negotiations.



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But one thing could throw a wrench in the Republicans plans. The same Tea Party candidates that help propel Republicans to the majority could also help to derail any trade initiatives in the next two years.

A June poll, conducted by the Alliance for American Manufacturing, found that among self identified Tea Party members, 57 percent say the federal government should be involved in offering incentives and structuring trade policy to revitalize and protect American manufacturing. Another 27 percent say the government should do whatever it takes to restore the nation's manufacturing base. Just 12 percent of Tea Party members say the government should do nothing to aid the manufacturing base.

The poll also found that 52 percent of Tea Party supporters believe that as long as the U.S. government can stop unfair trade practices, illegal subsidies and enforce environmental and labor standards, the U.S. can successfully compete with anyone in the global marketplace.

"Some of these Tea Party advocates may not be automatic votes for trade agreements. I think some of the Tea Party members are prone to the more populist rhetoric about foreign influence and jobs going overseas," Dan Griswold, director of trade studies at the Cato Institute, told Reuters.

Another potential roadblock to more free trade agreements is the fury that the president's own party would direct at him, potentially damaging his reelection chances in 2012. Labor unions, one of the president and Democrats strongest allies, have been among the most ardent opponents of trade agreements, believing that trade results in the export of jobs, not good. Environmental groups have been strongly opposed as well. And rank-and-file Democrats, in Congress and in everyday life, have long had an aversion to job-killing trade pacts.

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Submitted by [BIGuru](#) on October 29, 2010 - 9:37pm. <#>

Only a revolution can save us - not the Tea Party kind.

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