



## **GOP LEADERS TO GRANT OBAMA 'ENORMOUS' NEW POWER**

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Congress providing 'rubber stamp' on foreign policy

He's already boasted of wielding power through a pen and a phone. Now President Obama wants to add a rubber stamp to his desk set – and the rubber stamp would be named “U.S. Congress.” Buried in his State of the Union address, Obama said he will ask Congress to give him “trade promotion authority.”

He didn't say what trade promotion authority would do. But critics charge that it would cede the Republican majority's control of the congressional agenda to Obama and strip Congress of its ability to vet and amend international agreements.

Sen. Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., acknowledges Obama is asking for is “an enormous grant of power, obviously, from a Republican Congress to a Democratic president.”

Yet McConnell and other GOP leaders in the House and Senate apparently are ready to surrender constitutional powers to the White House.

In the GOP response to Obama's speech, Sen. Joni Ernst, R-Iowa, signaled she is on board with the plan.

“Let's tear down trade barriers in places like Europe and the Pacific,” she said.

She apparently was referring to the TransPacific Partnership and the TransAtlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, two global governance agreements the Obama administration has been negotiating without congressional oversight.

Rep. Paul Ryan, R-Wis., chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, announced Tuesday he will hold a hearing next week on trade policy featuring testimony from U.S. Trade

Representative Michael Froman, a Citibank crony who shuttles between jobs on Wall Street and in Washington.

Earlier this month, Ryan said giving Obama trade promotion authority, also known as fast track, is “the first thing we ought to do,” Politico reported.

Fast-track trade-promotion authority would expedite passage of the TransPacific Partnership. The sweeping international agreement would merge the U.S. economy with 11 other nations, including Brunei, Malaysia and Vietnam, nations that practice Islamic law and persecute Christians and other non-Muslims. TPP has been described as the largest-ever economic treaty, representing more than 40 percent of the world’s gross domestic product. It’s the frontrunner to the equally secret Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, or TIPP, between the U.S. and the European Union.

Fast track was first devised by President Richard Nixon to strengthen his hand in negotiating reciprocal tariff reductions in trade agreements. Now, tariffs have already been reduced to the near vanishing point, and the TransPacific Partnership instead addresses a host of non-tariff issues.

In addition to rewriting copyright laws and Internet governance, it “confers special legal privileges on foreign-invested companies” and provides a host of protections to investors that “forces the public to subsidize the risk of [multinational corporations] investment abroad, and effectively encourages outsourcing,” writes Dan Ikenson of the CATO Institute.

Under fast track rules, Congress would have little time to examine or debate the final agreement negotiated by Obama and would not be allowed to amend the text in any way. Only a simple majority, rather than a two-thirds majority, would be required to make it the law of the land.

Richard Manning, president of American for Limited Government, says: “Congress should be particularly wary of granting Obama fast-track trade promotion authority for his yet-to-be-finalized Trans-Pacific Partnership [TPP]. TPP would impact every aspect of American life, from the energy we use to the food we eat – even the Internet. It boggles the mind why the same Congress that was elected to stop Obama’s radical transformation of America would give him the legal basis to accomplish it beyond his wildest dreams during his final two years in office. Obama wouldn’t have to use his pen and phone – Congress would be saying, ‘Use ours.’”

Lou Dobbs blasted Republicans who complain of Obama’s executive overreach on one hand and on the other want to surrender Congress’ constitutional authority under Article 1 Section 8.

“How do you resolve the absolute conflict and contradiction between trade promotion authority which they wish to grant the president, which cedes their constitutional authority, and the leadership is insisting at the same time that they proceed against an unconstitutional executive fiat?” Dobbs asked.

“If [Republicans] defend it, they’re going to lose because it’s a contradiction. Either they resolve and be honest with the American people or we have Obama II sitting in the House and Senate,” said Dobbs. “The American people are not idiots and they’re getting tired of being treated like that.”

WND has reported on a coalition of faith-based, national security and limited government conservative groups opposed to granting Obama fast-track authority.

Frank Gaffney, president and founder of the Center for Security Policy, points to Obama’s disastrous record in the international arena, from giveaways to Iran to trading jailed jihadis for Army Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl.

“It would not only be the height of irresponsibility to essentially give the president a blank check, it would be something that makes the Congress complicit in the next bad deal,” he said.