



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on September 18, 2015

Executive Change to Immigration Policy Tied to Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP)

While most Americans opposed to the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) — and also the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) — are concerned primarily about the impact such “trade” agreements would have on American jobs and U.S. sovereignty, Senator Jeff Sessions (R-Ala.) and others are also concerned that a TPP would make radical changes to U.S. immigration policy without answering to Congress.



Sessions circulated a “Critical Alert” memo last spring in which he listed his “Five Top Concerns With Trade Promotion Authority (TPA).” He noted that TPP “applies not only to the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) but *all* international trade agreements during the life of the TPA.” (Emphasis in original.) His concerns included: 1. Consolidation of Power in the Executive Branch, 2. Increased Trade Deficits, 3. Ceding Sovereign Authority to International Powers, 4. Currency Manipulation, and 5. Immigration Increases. Under the fifth point, Sessions noted, in part:

There are numerous ways TPA could facilitate immigration increase above current law — and precious few ways anyone in Congress could stop its happening....

Stating that “TPP contains no change to immigration law: is a semantic rather than a factual argument. Language already present in both TPA and TPP provide the basis for admitting more foreign workers, and for longer periods of time, and language could later be added to TPP or any future trade deal to further increase such admissions....

The President has circumvented Congress on immigration with serial regularity. But the TPA would yield new power to the executive to alter admissions while subtracting congressional checks against those actions.

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Sessions was not the only one to charge that the TPP would give the Obama administration the power to change immigration law at will. In a guest editorial published by *The Hill* last April, Curtis Ellis, executive director of the non-profit American Jobs Alliance, stated: “The Trans-Pacific Partnership includes an entire chapter on immigration. It is a Trojan horse for Obama’s immigration agenda.”

However, the White House repeatedly denied that the trade deal contained any immigration language and this denial was also echoed by some leading Republicans in Congress.

On April 30, Paul Ryan (R-Wis.), Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, told *Newsmax* that the inclusion of provisions on immigration in the TPP is “absolutely not true” and dismissed the charges of those who claimed otherwise as “the latest urban legend.”

“There’s no way we [House Republicans] would sign off on immigration reform in the trade agreements,” said Ryan, who added that he and his colleagues “are unified on this.”



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Newsmax reported that Ryan, speaking at a press breakfast in Washington, D.C., hosted by the *Christian Science Monitor*, promised that House Judiciary Committee Chairman Bob Goodlatte (R- Va.) who has a reputation as a strong opponent of the Obama immigration program, issue a letter responding to the growing concerns that the TPP would facilitate the Obama immigration agenda.

“No one has been more vocal than me in their criticism of the Obama Administration’s attempt to unconstitutionally rewrite our immigration laws through the grant of administrative legalization to millions of unlawful aliens,” Goodlatte wrote in his April 30 “Dear colleague” letter, which carried the heading: “The Trans-Pacific Partnership is not an Immigration Give-away.” “There is nothing in the current draft of the TPP that will in any way advance or facilitate this or any other unconstitutional action by the Administration.”

However, after Knowledge Ecology International (KEI) issued a FOIA request to the United States Trade Representative (USTR) in June to obtain the chapter titles of the trade deal, it was revealed that there is a chapter of the TPP relating to immigration titled, “Temporary Entry for Business Persons.” *Breitbart* reported on June 10 that it had reviewed documents from the secret ongoing TiSA (Trade in Services Agreement) negotiations, published by WikiLeaks. The report noted: “Roughly 10 pages of this TiSA agreement document leak are specifically about immigration.”

The report quoted a statement from Rosemary Jenks, the director of government relations at Numbers USA, who told *Breitbart News* following her review of these documents:

The existence of these ten pages on immigration in the Trade and Services Agreement make it absolutely clear in my mind that the administration is negotiating immigration — and for them to say they are not — they have a lot of explaining to do based on the actual text in this agreement.

Breitbart reported on September 14 that the United States Trade Representative fulfilled KEI’s FOIA request on September 10, according to *TechDirt.com*, which has published the chapter titles.

TechDirt.com’s headline about the release of the information took a jab at the long delay: “USTR So Transparent It Takes Three Months To Reveal Names Of TPP Chapters.”

The New American was among the early voices citing immigration as being one of the flaws inherent in the TPP. In an article posted on June 5, “[10 Reasons Why You Should Oppose TPP and TTIP](#),” William F. Jasper stated, as reason number five: “It is an immigration Trojan Horse.” The article also quoted from the article in *The Hill* by Curtis Ellis, cited previously. Ellis had written:

The Trans-Pacific Partnership includes an entire chapter on immigration. It is a Trojan horse for Obama’s immigration agenda. House members who were ready to defund the Department of Homeland Security to stop President Obama’s executive action on immigration must not give him TPA [Fast Track], which he will use to ensure his immigration actions are locked in when he leaves office.

Fortunately, progress in the TPP negotiations has been slowed down. As was noted in [an article posted by The New American](#) on September 6, Malaysian Trade and Industry Minister Mustapa Mohamed said at a September 4 press conference: “There has been progress, but we still have some issues to address. However, when the TPP will be concluded is an open question.”

That delay buys some time for opponents of the TPP in Congress, including Senator Sessions, to marshal their resources and stop this dangerous proposal for good. As more information about the TPP becomes public, maybe House members such as Ryan and Goodlatte will also change their positions.



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