



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on July 9, 2019

USMCA Trade Deal Moving Closer to Submission to Congress

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Americans who favor the continuation of the country's national sovereignty should understand that the hour is getting late, as President Donald Trump could now submit the bill for the USMCA (United States, Mexico, and Canada Agreement) to Congress for ratification.

While it is unlikely that the Trump administration will actually do so within the next few weeks, the managed trade deal with Mexico and Canada is moving steadily along the timetable for implementation. Rick Dearborn, executive director of the Pass USMCA Coalition, and a former deputy chief of staff in the White House, admits that passage before the August recess "is a little bit of a stretch," but that ratification in September or October "is doable."

It is both fortunate and unfortunate that House Democrats tend to oppose the deal as presently constituted. This is fortunate as without the votes from a significant number of Democrats, the deal cannot be passed, but it is unfortunate because the changes sought by the Democrats are generally not good.

In other words, if the Trump administration agrees to changes sought by the Democrats, USMCA would be even worse than it is now — and it is bad enough as it is.

The New Democrat Coalition told U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer on Monday not to submit USMCA to Congress unless the administration first addresses concerns of the Democrats. The New Democrat Coalition of 103 members told Lighthizer, "We were troubled that you sent up the draft Statement of Administrative Action on May 30 without sufficient consultation, and strongly urge you to not make the same mistake twice."

The Constitution gives the authority to make trade deals to Congress, subject to constitutional limitations — Congress cannot make a trade deal that violates the Constitution. Unfortunately, over the years, Congress has delegated many of its powers, including trade deals, to the president or bureaucrats in the executive branch. For example, in recent years, Congress has given presidents "fast track authority" (Trade Promotion Authority, or TPA) on trade deals, which means that presidents have a free hand to negotiate trade deals and then submit the deal to Congress for a simple "up or down" vote with little time for debate and no amendments. In practice, this has largely meant that Congress simply "rubber stamps" presidential trade deals, as members who vote no are then castigated as "against trade."

Following the rules of this process of dubious constitutionality, Lighthizer met with key congressional committees — the House Ways and Means and Senate Finance Committee, plus advisory groups from each chamber — then a formal letter stating that Trump was opening negotiations with Canada and Mexico to replace NAFTA with the USMCA was sent to Congress on May 18, 2017.

Illustrative of how American national sovereignty is being diminished with USMCA, the Trump



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administration sent a list of changes to U.S. law on January 29 of this year. The document took six pages to list all of the required changes.

Ordinarily, before a bill can be voted on by the full House or the full Senate, proposed legislation must clear a committee — in this case the Ways and Means Committee in the House and the Finance Committee in the Senate. Under TPA if either committee does not report USMCA to the floor for consideration by the entire body, it is automatically discharged to the floor!

Because the Constitution requires all bills raising revenue to first be passed by the House of Representatives, and USMCA involves tariff rates (taxes on imported goods), the House will need to take action first.

Only 20 hours will be allowed for debate in each house of Congress. Because of this “fast track,” Americans concerned about retaining our national sovereignty need to contact their members of Congress sooner, rather than later, and demand that they vote no.

Powerful forces will be pressuring your member of Congress to vote for USMCA. According to *Politico*, about three dozen business associations have linked in a lobbying effort to pressure Congress to ratify USMCA as quickly as possible.

While it is typical for “free trade” advocates to tout this or that economic “benefit,” they seem to have little concern for the effect such deals as NAFTA, USMCA, TPP, and others have in diminishing the national sovereignty of the United States. Unfortunately, many otherwise conservative-leaning Americans laud “free trade” deals because they mistakenly believe they have something to do with free enterprise — but this is not true.

Deals such as USMCA are government-managed trade deals, rather than examples of laissez-faire. Worse than that, they necessarily create new governmental structures above that of national governments, including the U.S. government and the governments of the 50 states.

A question that those who are sincerely conservative should ask themselves is, if these “trade deals” were really examples of free enterprise at work, then why do some of the world’s most left-wing and socialistic politicians support them? Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.), who otherwise uses every opportunity to oppose Trump, has actually said that Trump “deserved praise” for the USMCA.

Perhaps if one reads the details of USMCA, one can see why Senator Schumer is happy. Among the features of USMCA not found in the original NAFTA are provisions on labor and the environment. Chapter 23 on “Labor” places the three signatory nations under the control of the International Labor Organization (ILO) by specifically committing them to the ILO’s *Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work* and the *Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization*.

With Britain struggling to leave the increasingly authoritarian European Union (EU), and other countries in the EU pushing back against the EU’s continued efforts to reduce the independence of its members, Americans should note that many want a similar super-state for North America, which would be called the North American Union (NAU).

Yet, for some, the surrender of our national sovereignty is worth it if it means a better bottom line for some multinational corporations and a fatter salary for its executives. As Englishman John Harrington once said, “Treason doth never prosper: what’s the reason? Why, if it prosper, none dare call it treason.” In the end, the average American will not prosper from multilateral trade deals.



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This is all within the game plan of international socialists. In 1848, Karl Marx spoke approvingly of “free trade,” arguing that it “breaks up old nationalities,” and “hastens the social revolution.”

Members of Congress need to know this before they vote to give away our national sovereignty with the USMCA.



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