

30 October 2013

The Hon. Andrew Robb
Minister for Trade and Investment
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Minister

Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement

I write to raise concerns about the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement involving 12 Pacific nations. Media reports suggest that this agreement is in the final stages of negotiation.

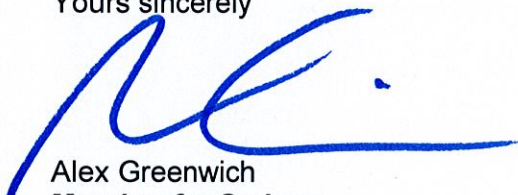
A number of constituents have contacted me to raise concerns that this agreement could have significant impacts on the community, but there is no public information or consultation about it. I share community concern that such a significant agreement should be subject to public discussion and comment before signing.

My constituents have raised concerns about two areas in particular. They are concerned about extended patent periods, with impacts including higher medicine prices, serious budget impacts on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, increased costs for schools and libraries and loss of protections for Australian cultural industries. I share community concern about the need to retain consumer, health and environmental protections that have been developed over many years, such as in food labelling, access to information and work safety standards.

According to those who contacted me, this agreement includes Investor-State Dispute Settlement provisions that would enable corporations and investors to sue Australian national, state or local governments for damages in an international tribunal if government regulation might harm investment or future investment. I am very concerned that this may give control that rightly belongs to the Australian people to foreign companies or transnational corporations, even at the cost of harm to health or the environment.

Could you please release the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement for public discussion and debate, ensure that it does not override our consumer, health and environmental protections and inform me what action you will take?

Yours sincerely



Alex Greenwich
Member for Sydney

