

# Texas Fair Trade Coalition

1106 Lavaca St., Suite 102, Austin, TX 78701  
Tel: (512) 476-0569 • Fax: (866) 695-8776 • [www.TexasFairTrade.org](http://www.TexasFairTrade.org)

## Presidential Candidate Questionnaire for Federal Office

Candidate Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Campaign Office Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Contact phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Campaign Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ FAX: \_\_\_\_\_

The Texas Fair Trade Coalition is comprised of more than 40 organizations, including the Texas AFL-CIO, the Texas Farmers Union, the Texas State Association of Electrical Workers, the USWA Texas P & L Committee, the UNITE-HERE Southwest Regional Board, the Sierra Club Lone Star Chapter, UFCW Region 5, Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers, and the Texas Teachers Federation. We oppose further agreements based on the NAFTA model and expect those who represent us to do the same and urge candidates seeking federal office to commit to renegotiating existing agreements and promoting a new responsible trade model. We are asking questions of candidates to determine who is committed to addressing the damaging failures of our status quo trade and globalization policies.

The following questions will be shared with our TFTC partners in the labor, environmental, family farm, student, and faith communities. We strongly encourage you to supplement answers with additional information, explanations and rationale.

**Please respond by e-mailing [info@texasfairtrade.org](mailto:info@texasfairtrade.org) or faxing 866-695-8776.**

### **Our Position**

We believe the NAFTA model has failed the U.S. and our trading partners, and has not lived up to its promises. During the NAFTA era, we have seen one out of every four U.S. manufacturing jobs destroyed, including tens of thousands of jobs here in Texas. We've seen real wages decline as income inequity has soared. NAFTA and other NAFTA style agreements have resulted in scores of attacks on our domestic environmental, health and safety laws. They limit our ability to promote good-paying jobs here and restrict initiatives to raise working conditions around the globe. NAFTA resulted in the displacement of over one million Mexican peasant farmers, increasing immigration to the United States from Mexico by 60 percent. CAFTA is leading to more of the same.

## **NAFTA Style Trade Agreements**

### **Procurement**

1. Trade agreement procurement rules undermine the ability of federal and state governments to use tax dollars to create and maintain good jobs, to promote economic opportunity and development, and to achieve other important social goals, including safeguarding prevailing wage, renewable energy, and recycled content laws. Will you renegotiate current and existing trade agreements' procurement provisions to remove the bans on *Buy America* and anti-offshoring policies and to remove the provisions that could subject prevailing wage, renewable energy, recycled content, living wage and other important procurement policies to challenge in trade tribunals?

Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

**Comments:**

2. Will you commit that all future trade agreements you may negotiate will not include the procurement terms that ban Buy America policies, local preferences and anti-offshoring policies by requiring us to treat foreign bidders the same as U.S. firms?

Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

**Comments:**

### **Food and Product Safety**

3. Do you commit that future trade agreements you may negotiate will not include the terms now found in or trade agreement that limit our ability to ensure that imported and domestic products actually meet our U.S. safety standards, and limit the rate of border inspection of imported goods?

Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

**Comments:**

4. Do you commit to renegotiating the provisions in WTO, NAFTA and other existing U.S. trade agreements that require us to accept imports of food and products that only meet 'equivalent' standards set by the exporting country INSTEAD of actually meeting our U.S. safety standards and the provisions that limit the rate of border inspection of imported goods?

Yes\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

**Comments:**

### **Agriculture**

The number one priority of each future trade agreement must be to provide farmers and ranchers across the globe an opportunity to receive a fair price for their commodities. Each trade agreement since the early 1990's has led to both lower prices being paid to producers for commodities and floods of imports that lack environmental and quality-control standards. These agreements have undermined the livelihoods of family farmers and ranchers here and in our trading partners, increasing rural poverty while doing nothing to protect the environment or ensure food safety.

5. As President, will you renegotiate existing trade agreements to address these problems, and ensure that they are addressed in all future agreements?

Yes\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

**Comments:**

### **NAFTA Expansion to Panama**

6. The Panama Free Trade Agreement is currently stalled because a prominent Panamanian politician has been indicted for murdering U.S. military personnel. However, at some point this controversy will be over. During the campaign, all Democratic candidates have powerfully critiqued NAFTA's failures and agreed it must be altered. Given the Panama FTA replicates many of NAFTA's worst problems – such as foreign investor provisions that grant foreign investors greater rights than those of Americans – will you commit to either renegotiate or withdraw from this agreement if you are elected President?

Yes\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

**Comments:**

### **Priorities**

7. Will you commit to renegotiating NAFTA and all existing trade agreements to address problems including labor and environmental standards, investor rights, procurement rules, food and product safety, and agricultural provisions BEFORE initiating any new trade agreement negotiations?

Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

**Comments:**

### **Sweatshops**

8. Cities, counties, and states across the country have passed anti-sweatshop ordinances and policies designed to ensure that taxpayer dollars are not used to purchase goods made in violation of basic labor standards. Just last year, the city of Austin passed an anti-sweatshop ordinance. Will you commit to passing and implementing similar legislation at the federal level to ensure that our federal tax dollars are not used to purchase sweatshop-made products?

Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

**Comments:**

### **Fast Track**

Fast Track concentrates power in a small executive branch agency where corporate lobbyists set the agenda away from democratic oversight. This process is how we got into NAFTA, CAFTA and WTO – with past administrations signing trade deals before Congress got to vote on their contents. The agreements put into place under Fast Track have resulted in disproportionate damage to U.S. farmers, ranchers, workers and firms.

9. As President, will you commit to replacing the fast track negotiating process with a new system that includes the following principles that have been adopted as formal policy by the National Farmers Union, the AFL-CIO and the Change to Win labor federation:

- a. Readiness criteria to determine appropriate negotiating partners;
- b. Binding obligations regarding what must and must not be in future trade agreements;
- c. The right of prior informed consent for states before they are bound to investment, service sector and procurement rules in trade agreements; and
- d. The right for congress to vote before agreements are signed.

Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

**Comments:**

**WTO “Doha” Round**

10. The agenda of the WTO Doha Round has proved to be disagreeable to a majority of countries. Negotiations have collapsed repeatedly and the talks are 3 years past their deadline for conclusion. Workers, family farmers, and activists around the globe have made clear that the WTO hinders instead of helps the world develop in a fair, just, equitable and environmentally sound way. Do you think that the time has arrived for a new U.S. president to take the leadership to declare that the current Doha framework is a loser and to call for talks to be restarted on a different agenda that focuses on fixing the problems in the existing WTO rules that have caused the WTO's lack of legitimacy in the first place?

Yes\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

**Comments:**

These answers represent my beliefs and positions, and may be used by Texas Fair Trade Coalition to keep members and the public informed about trade issues.

---

**Signature**

**Date**

*Thank you for your willingness to complete this Questionnaire. We would like to act as a resource of information to you and your campaign on trade issues. We look forward to working with you over the period of your candidacy, and thereafter.*