

Resolution Calling Upon Congress to Reject the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Agreement

WHEREAS, the Trans-Pacific Partnership is a new trade agreement that has been negotiated among the United States and 12 Pacific Rim countries by the U.S. Trade Representative (an office in the Executive branch) in secret, without consultation with our elected officials but in consultation with many transnational corporations that will benefit from its rules, and

WHEREAS, fast-track legislation has passed Congress and now the TPP Agreement cannot be amended by Congress but only, after a ninety-day period, can be voted up or down, and

WHEREAS, since the text of the TPP has now been made public, citizen concerns have grown about this and similar trade policies, and

WHEREAS, U.S. trade deals for the past 25 years have incorporated rules that skew benefits to economic elites; resulting in working families suffering economic hardships and local economic security being undermined, and

WHEREAS, the offshoring of manufacturing increases global air and sea transport thereby adding to the carbon footprint of imported goods and increasing greenhouse gas emissions, leading to further global warming resulting in more extreme weather events which require more municipal services thus increasing taxpayer burden, and

WHEREAS, the 1994 North Atlantic Free Trade Agreement and most subsequent U.S. trade deals include special legal rights for foreign investors, known as “investor-to-state dispute settlement” or ISDS, that allow foreign firms to bypass state and federal courts to challenge state and local laws, regulations, and administrative, and judicial decisions in secret international tribunals, and

WHEREAS, on December 18, 2015, Congress passed an omnibus spending bill that included repeal of the “COOL” (country-of-origin labeling) law that required meat to be so labeled-a law that had been in place since the 2008 Farm Bill, that had previously been challenged many times by Mexico and Canada under NAFTA and for which the World Trade Organization tribunals threatened to impose billions of dollars in sanctions on the United States, which prompted Congress to delete the law, and

WHEREAS, on January 6, 2016, TransCanada announced that it is challenging President Obama’s decision to deny the Keystone XL oil pipeline its border-crossing permit by filing a petition under NAFTA for violating four NAFTA clauses and asking that the United States be required to pay approximate \$3 billion TransCanada says it has already invested in the pipeline and also an additional \$15 billion of lost future earnings, and

WHEREAS, New York State’s fracking ban, Tompkins County’s microbead-free waters law, and Dryden’s local fracking ban could be similarly challenged, and

WHEREAS, given the enactment of fast track trade negotiating authority, states, localities, and their citizens have no opportunity to correct shortcomings of the now-public TPP text and Congress cannot follow normal Congressional procedure that permits full hearings and amendments but can only vote the agreement as presented up or down, and

WHEREAS, the TPP would restrict governments’ prerogative to negotiate or mandate lower pharmaceutical prices resulting in higher taxpayer costs for Medicare, Medicaid, and veterans/military health programs, and

WHEREAS, the TPP would have direct, potentially undesirable consequences for our town, its residents, its local businesses, and its ecological systems on which all life depends, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Dryden Town Board calls upon our federal elected officials - Senator Charles E. Schumer, Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, and Congressman Tom Reed - to oppose the TPP Agreement.