

## ***TTIP TRADE TALKS***

Negotiators with the United States and European Union will touch on a variety of topics during the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) talks that are scheduled to resume next month in Brussels. There is one issue, however, that should remain off the table. That issue is maritime.

While certain approaches to global trade have been effective in boosting economies and creating jobs, other approaches have had the opposite effect. Global trade gone wrong can decimate industries, destroy jobs and threaten national security.

Unfortunately, European interests are attempting to take the wrong approach on U.S. maritime issues during the TTIP talks. They are hoping to have U.S. maritime law on the table during negotiations as part of an attempt to open America's maritime market to foreign interests. This would be a mistake. Putting U.S. maritime issues in play would put the country's economic and national security at risk.

Current U.S. maritime laws are in place for a reason. Laws like the Jones Act were enacted to protect the country and ensure it has a proper fleet and a pool of skilled merchant mariners. It also results in more than 500,000 jobs and more than \$100 billion in annual economic benefits. If U.S. maritime laws were negotiable, then the jobs of hardworking American mariners and the billions of dollars in economic output from our industry would be negotiable as well.

The same could be said of the nation's national security. Allowing the possibility of negotiation on U.S. maritime policy is allowing the possibility of unsafely opening the country's ports to foreign interests. It's fair to say that vessels flying under another flag and their foreign crews have no loyalty to America. In this age of global terrorism, opening America's domestic commerce and inland waterways to foreign interests is simply not an option.

Again, if U.S. maritime laws were negotiable, then the entire U.S. Merchant Marine would be put at risk. The fact remains that every one of our military and humanitarian missions undertaken around the world has relied on the

work of U.S. Merchant Mariners. Opening the U.S. maritime market to unfair and possibly dangerous foreign interests would cripple the domestic industry and severely reduce the good the U.S. can do around the world.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO, its affiliates and Port Maritime Councils continue to support U.S. maritime laws and publicize their effectiveness in protecting the nation's economic and national security and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the MTD, its affiliates and Port Maritime Councils urge United States negotiators participating in the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership Talks with the European Union – as well as those U.S. negotiators participating in other trade talks – to keep maritime issues off the bargaining table.