

Say bye to buy local



ONTARIO TRADE TOUR OCTOBER 13 - NOVEMBER 19.

Dear MP _____

I understand that on May 6, 2009, at a Canada-EU Summit in Prague, Czech Republic, Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced the official launch of negotiations toward a new generation trade agreement with the European Union. I'm writing to ask why Canadians have not been kept better informed about these important negotiations.

I'm deeply concerned that a Canada-EU trade agreement will, like NAFTA has already done, damage existing protections in Canadian law on environmental, labour and health and safety standards and regulations. I also want explicit assurances that any international trade deal that is signed will protect the public delivery of services in Canada. Free trade, deregulation and privatization as it was championed in the 1990s have partially led to the current economic crisis. I do not believe our country can afford to keep making the same mistakes.

In particular, it seems evident that following the Canadian Government's attempts to open up provincial and municipal procurement and service delivery to American corporations, any new trade agreement with Europe will also put pressure on provincial and local governments to increase privatization and deregulation. This cannot be allowed to happen, and certainly not without the informed consent of Canadians.

Any conditions provinces or municipalities can now put on public spending, such as local content rules, environmental or ethical sourcing, or requirements to hire locally may be discouraged or potentially illegal under the new deal with Europe. But conditions such as these – and the power to decide on them – are historically and constitutionally vested in provincial and local governments where citizens are able to wield more direct influence than they can federally. As one of your constituents, I call on you to state your position on this proposed trade agreement. In addition, I'm looking for an assurance that you will not support any

agreement that does not protect the right of provincial and local governments (and government agencies with purchasing powers of their own such as school boards, hospitals and universities) to make decisions that are in the best interests of the local communities they serve.

Sincerely,

Name: _____

Address: _____

For more information on the effect unfair trade agreements have on people, the environment and good public policies contact the Council of Canadians or CUPE Ontario today. Together, we can find ways to make trade fair for everyone.