



25 March 2013

Senator J. Kalani English, Chair
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Vice Chair
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Senator Will Espero, Chair
Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND MILITARY
AFFAIRS

RE: Testimony in Support of SCR182 / SR138

Dear Chair English and Chair Espero and Members of the Committees

The Australian Consulate-General is in support of these resolutions. For The Australian Government the Trans Pacific Partnerships (TPP) Agreement is a top trade policy priority.

We see the TPP Agreement as a viable pathway for realising the vision of a free trade area of the Asia-Pacific. The Australian Government will pursue a TPP outcome that eliminates or at least substantially reduces barriers to trade and investment. The TPP will be more than a traditional trade agreement; it will also deal with behind-the-border impediments to trade and investment.

We are putting a great deal of effort into the negotiations. The 16th round of TPP Agreement negotiations were held in Singapore from 4 – 13 March 2013. At the close of the Round, Singapore as Chair of the round reported that there was "renewed focus and vigour in the negotiations" as well as "a distinct sense the negotiations were shifting gears", with the goal being to put the negotiations on an accelerated track toward conclusion of a comprehensive agreement in the 2013 timeframe.

The Australian Government was pleased that parties succeeded in finding ways forward for many of the remaining issues in the texts of the agreement, achieving consensus on outstanding issues in customs, telecommunications, regulatory coherence and development. Parties also narrowed differences on a wide range of issues relating to government procurement, investment, services, technical barriers to trade, sanitary and phytosanitary measures and intellectual property. Efforts continued to develop comprehensive packages on market access for goods, services and investment, and government procurement.

The Australian Government supports the goal of concluding the TPP Agreement in the 2013 timeframe. Support from other stakeholders will help to achieve this goal which will be in the interests of Australia, Hawaii and the United States.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Scott Dewar