

Multnomah Grange #71
RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF RENEGOTIATING THE NORTH AMERICAN FREE TRADE
AGREEMENT (NAFTA)

WHEREAS U.S. trade deals for the past 25 years have amounted to preferential treatment for large corporations, instituting rules that skew benefits to economic elites while requiring working families to bear the brunt of such policies; and

WHEREAS in the NAFTA era, of 1994 to [today](#), more than 910,000 United States workers have been certified by the United States government through the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program as having lost their jobs directly due to trade; and

WHEREAS the offshoring of manufacturing and service jobs deprives local and state governments of sorely needed revenues, costing communities in myriad ways including jeopardizing the livelihoods of millions of public servants as well as construction workers whose jobs depend upon infrastructure building, repair and maintenance; and

WHEREAS the nearly 65 percent of American workers that do not have college degrees have been hardest hit by NAFTA job losses and wage cuts, negatively impacting entire communities; and

WHEREAS NAFTA has benefited large agribusiness corporations over family farmers in all three nations, failing to address the problems of price volatility for producers and consumers alike, while damaging livelihoods in rural communities at home and abroad; and

WHEREAS with regards to immigration, NAFTA's failed development model for Mexico has resulted in serious economic stagnation in Mexico, and has decimated rural livelihoods in Mexico, leading to the displacement of more than a million Mexican peasant farmers, resulting in increased immigration from Mexico to the United States of workers in search of real opportunity; and

WHEREAS promoting economic growth with equity in our lands requires an approach that reforms the entire trade negotiation process to ensure that voices of workers, farmers, small businesses, families, and communities are heard and their interests addressed; and

WHEREAS NAFTA was the first United States trade agreement to include special privileges for investors and the Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) process that make it less risky for employers to relocate jobs offshore, while simultaneously threatening democratic policymaking at home and abroad; and

WHEREAS corporations have used NAFTA's ISDS process to challenge bans on toxic chemicals, the decisions of environmental review panels, court rulings that support access to affordable medicines, and protections for the climate, and corporations have extracted more than \$370,000,000 from governments in NAFTA ISDS cases, while pending NAFTA claims total more than \$50,000,000,000; and

WHEREAS NAFTA's labor and environmental terms were included in unenforceable side agreements, but even more recent agreements' labor and environmental terms included in core texts have also failed to change actual practice because they have not been meaningfully enforced; and

WHEREAS the reality of a renegotiation for NAFTA is an opportunity to fix the fundamental flaws with this model of trade, in the form of strengthening our economy, reducing income inequality, and promoting sustainable growth, not locking in for the long haul more harm of the sorts that our communities have seen and here noted;

THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Multnomah Grange #71, that it calls upon U.S. national government leaders—our representatives in Congress and our trade negotiators and other Executive branch officials—to accept a new NAFTA only if it does the following:

- Exclude Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) and other provisions that give foreign companies special litigation rights to the detriment of public interest and democratic will;
- Institute strong labor and environmental standards with swift and certain enforcement;
- Promote high standards of protection for workplaces, products, and natural resources rather than promoting a race to the bottom;
- Protect consumers and the environment as well as ensure a level playing field for U.S. businesses, farmers, and workers by ending the NAFTA rules that threaten food safety and food labeling;
- Overhaul the NAFTA rules which hurt family farmers, such as the NAFTA preemptions against governments establishing specific farm and food policies, including inventory management, strategic food reserves, import surge protections, and other anti-dumping measures;
- Address what is for poor and middle-class Mexicans a longtime lack of decent-paying work and lack of economic opportunity, particularly in rural areas;
- Put the interests of communities and the planet over the interests of private profit.

Bill Dodds, Master

Date

Sara Eck, Secretary

Date