**Stopping Trade Attacks on Climate Policies — Sign On Letter**

Dear U.S. Trade Representative Tai:

As state and local organizations working to protect our climate and environment, we call on you and the Biden administration to please take decisive action to prevent climate policies in our states from being attacked and undermined via outdated trade agreements.

Meeting the commitment made by the United States and 195 other nations to limit global warming to 1.5°C compared to pre-industrial levels will require every level of government to take ambitious action to rapidly cut greenhouse gas emissions and transition to clean energy economies.  In spite of this imperative, trade and investment rules — written long before governments had committed to tackle climate change — are increasingly being used by governments to directly challenge and indirectly discourage climate and renewable energy policies.

Recently, we’ve watched the European Union (EU) and other nations threaten trade cases against the clean vehicle credits and other provisions of the U.S. Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). These threats are a warning sign of what could happen as our states adopt the stronger and bolder climate policies that are needed.

The threat to state policies is not hypothetical. After the U.S. successfully challenged India’s national program to boost local solar production, in 2019 India successfully challenged renewable energy programs that included “buy-local” rules in eight U.S. states. These programs serve to boost clean energy jobs in our states and are a critical step towards building a clean energy economy and combating climate change. Cases like these not only directly threaten climate policies, but could dissuade state legislatures from passing and governors from signing future climate policies.

While we greatly appreciate your recent announcement that India and the U.S. will be dropping trade attacks on each other’s renewable energy programs within the World Trade Organization (WTO), we still need a broader and longer-term solution to the ongoing conflict between outdated trade rules and the imperative for ambitious climate action.

Therefore, we urge you to take additional action to help bring trade attacks on climate action and a liveable future to an immediate end.  Specifically, we join with state legislators from all 50 states in asking that you and the administration please work with other countries to secure a “Climate Peace Clause:” a commitment to refrain from using dispute settlement mechanisms in international trade agreements to challenge climate mitigation and/or clean energy transition measures.

A moratorium on the use of international trade agreements to challenge climate mitigation and/or clean energy transition measures would:

* Help local, state and national governments safeguard existing climate mitigation and transition measures by protecting them from trade challenges;
* Create the space for governments to adopt the bolder climate policies that justice and science demand without fear or threat of trade challenges; and
* Incentivize and offer countries time to work together and resolve the tensions between current trade law and the imperative for climate action.

We call on your office to pursue a Climate Peace Clause within the texts of pending bilateral and regional trade agreements such as the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework, the U.S.-EU Trade & Technology Council and the Americas Partnership for Economic Prosperity, as well as within other venues, including international fora such as the G7.

Thank you for your attention to this issue. We look forward to working with you to build a model of trade that supports climate action.

Sincerely,

Approved by 32nd LD Democrats, August 2, 2023

Submitted by: Maralyn Chase, former State Senator