

**Remarks for Citizen Trade Policy Commission hearing  
Rep. Mark Bryant  
April 19, 2005**

I appreciate the opportunity to speak briefly here tonight. My name is Mark Bryant, and I am in the unique position of being both a state representative, and a comrade-in-arms to many here today. I grew up in Canton, Maine, a mill town only a twenty minutes drive from the Rumford or Jay Paper mills. My father and my wife's father both worked at Rumford Paper mill. It was a natural choice for me to go to work for a paper mill when I was looking at careers, and my brother Bruce, a State Senator from Oxford County, still works in the mill in Rumford

Before becoming a legislator, I worked at Sappi/ S D Warren paper mill in Westbrook for 20 years. I was, and still am, a **Proud Member** of the **paper workers' union**. When I was laid off, I took the position of Peer Support Worker, to help ease the transition for the laid of workers at the Sappi plant. **Transition** always seemed a funny description to me.

**How** exactly does one make the **transition** between having a living wage job that you've worked at most of your life, **to suddenly** receiving unemployment ??? and looking at how you're supposed to start over? It was one of the major reasons that I decided to run for the Legislature, **so that** I could be a part of building our economy to insure that we have more living wage job opportunities for today as well as tomorrow.

The numbers of jobs lost to free trade agreements like NAFTA and CAFTA and others look a lot different when you're one of the people who has been laid off. Thankfully, the Citizen Trade Policy Commission is able to realize, that **Every** agreement at the international and federal levels **has a Human Cost.**

Corporations **should not** have the power to supercede the laws we make here in Maine, **nor** should they control our state's economic well-being. Senator **Rotundo** and Representative **Patrick** have done a great job making legislators aware of free **and** fair trade issues, and I **value** the work that this commission has done. **Thank you again** for considering these important **Concerns of Maine people.**