

STATE OF MAINE
122nd LEGISLATURE
FIRST REGULAR SESSION

First Annual Report of the
Citizen Trade Policy Commission

November 2005

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Citizen Trade Policy Commission ("Commission") was established during the Second Special Session of the 121st Legislature by Public Law 2003, chapter 699, to provide an ongoing state-level mechanism to assess the impact of international trade policies and agreements on Maine's state and local laws, business environment and working conditions. Public Law 2003, chapter 699 requires the Commission to submit an annual report on its activities and conduct an annual assessment of the impacts of international trade agreements on Maine's state and local laws and business environment. This document is the Commission's 2005 annual report.

Public Law 2003, chapter 699 requires the Commission to hold at least two annual meetings and two annual public hearings to solicit public testimony and recommendations from Maine citizens and qualified experts. The Commission initially convened on October 6, 2004 and held seven additional meetings and two public hearings before June of 2005. As a result of those meetings, the Commission took the following actions:

- Issued a statement urging Maine's Congressional Delegation to work against the passage of DR-CAFTA
- Recommended in writing that United States Trade Representative carve out government actions at the state and local level from the new GATS offer until the Commission had an opportunity to adequately review and analyze the language of the proposed commitment.
- Issued a number of press releases regarding its activities and held press conferences regarding its position on CAFTA.

In recognition of the immense scope of trade policy issues facing Maine, the Commission created three subcommittees to focus on the broad policy areas of natural resources/environment, healthcare and labor/economic development for analysis. The subcommittees' analyses of these policy areas are attached to this report. Additionally, the Commission established a legislative subcommittee to work with the other subcommittees to determine whether or not legislation may be necessary to reap the full benefits or mitigate unfavorable impacts of trade agreements.

Over the next reporting period, the Commission will work towards building a better working relationship and improve communications with federal and state governments and entities to increase Maine's role in the negotiation of trade agreement and to maximize the benefits of trade agreement to Maine. It will continue to conduct its analysis of the three major policy areas identified previously and seek to help mitigate the adverse impacts some sectors in Maine are experiencing through discussion, education and potential legislation.