

# Trade's Progressive Opposition

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## Abstract

While right-wing opposition to globalization has recently come to the fore, we describe the more enduring opposition to trade of US progressive groups and their congressional allies. To do so, we collect original data on thousands of progressive groups' opposition to trade and globalization over the past two decades. We describe patterns in the interests of these groups across a new 17 category schema spanning environmental activism, labor rights, religious organizations, and beyond. We then identify a coherent anti-trade voting bloc in the House of Representatives which represents anti-trade progressivism in the Congress. We show that anti-trade progressive groups are linked to these members of Congress through campaign contributions. Overall, we conclude that progressive groups have been quite active on trade agreements with some important contributions to the dialogue surrounding globalization, although their overall influence on trade policy outcomes remains modest.

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Who opposes globalization in the US? While right-wing populist opposition to globalization has recently risen to prominence, we examine the activities of left-wing or progressive opponents of trade among interest groups and their allies within the Congress. The activities of these groups represent a more organized and enduring opposition to trade in the US, and one that has achieved substantial Congressional representation. In contrast with the Republican Party – an awkward fit for anti-trade populists given its connections with big business and competitive US agriculture – the progressive wing of the Democratic party provides a welcoming venue for anti-trade activism. Scholars of trade should therefore not lose sight of left-wing opposition to trade. The remarkable efflorescence of Republican anti-globalization under Trump may not last, while progressive opposition has shown it has the ability and motivation to endure.

To make this case, we begin by assembling the largest ever data set of anti-trade activity by non-producer interest groups in the US. We find significant coalitional activity around specific issues (like the US-Colombia FTA and Trans-Pacific Partnership) as well as longer-term engagement across all trade issues through the Citizens' Trade Campaign coalition and an array of state and local fair trade groups. Overall, we find over 3200 unique group memberships in these coalitions, with especially heavy representation of unions; progressive groups; environmental groups; religious groups; and ethnocultural groups. We call these groups 'trade's progressive opposition'. In addition to forming public coalitions, these groups have also undertaken lobbying on trade and are active political donors.

We also describe the voting of a coherent progressive anti-trade contingent among Democrats in the House of Representatives. To do so, we use unsupervised learning techniques on House voting on trade bills since 1998 to uncover 7 latent voting clusters on trade, one of which behaves exactly as one might expect trade's progressive opponents might expect. This progressive bloc has the most anti-trade voting record of any of our 7 voting blocs, and is particularly opposed to Free Trade Agreements and trade promotion authority. They are somewhat more open to trade policies facilitating development, like GSP, AGOA, and liberalization with China, than a smaller anti-trade bloc composed of protectionist Republicans. We then demonstrate that trade's progressive opponents in Congress have used testimony on trade agreements to highlight the concerns of workers and small businesses, but also to champion protections for human rights and the environment.

Finally, we show that trade's opponents among groups and in the Congress are connected by examining a panel of political action committee (PAC) contributions to members of the US Congress. In particular, we find that members of the progressive anti-trade voting bloc receive about 26% more campaign contributions from progressive anti-trade groups, whether labor unions or non-unions. This holds conditional on total campaign contributions.

Overall, we describe three patterns in the politics of American trade. First, progressive opponents to international trade have shown significant organizational capacity in assembling large coalitions opposed to major trade proposals or to globalization more generally. Second, these

groups have found allies in the Congress among a subset of progressive Democrats, who regularly vote against trade agreements and support stronger protections for workers, human rights, and the environment in trade agreements. Third, these alliances are consecrated, in part, through campaign contributions from anti-trade groups to anti-trade members of Congress.

One point that is very striking about these patterns is that they do not seem to reoccur among the Republican Party. We locate hardly any significant organized opposition to trade among traditional Republican constituencies. We do see a trade-skeptical and intermittently protectionist bloc of Congresspersons from the Republican party, but their opposition to trade is far less dogmatic than among progressive opponents in the Democratic Party. Instead, we see in the Republican Party (or among disaffected right-wingers) periodic flareups of anti-trade sentiment that are fundamentally originating in presidential campaigns or the presidency – early in the Reagan years, the Buchanan and Perot campaigns, and the Trump presidency. While the Reagan and Trump flareups of populist Republican opposition to trade have certainly been highly impactful, they lack intergroup organizational backing and a solid base of Congressional support to make them a long-run feature of Republican Party politics.

## Left-wing Opposition to Trade

We survey the extant literature on left-wing and progressive groups' political activities around trade and globalization with a special focus on the United States. The largest portion of this literature has focused on labor unions, which have played a prominent role in the study of American trade politics from the beginning (Schattschneider et al., 1935; Bauer, de Sola Pool and Dexter, 1963). By contrast, the literature on non-union left-wing opposition to trade in the US is far smaller. In both cases, there is a need to systematically document the public activities of these groups in opposition to trade and globalization since the battles over NAFTA and creation of the WTO, as well as to document their links to the US Congress.

One branch of the literature on unions has focused on the essentially economic preferences of labor as a factor of production, and its conflict and cooperation with other factors, particularly land and capital. The early debate over workers' trade preferences settled on factor mobility as the core theoretical driver for whether workers would be united over trade policy in opposition to owners of capital (Rogowski, 1989); or, if workers would be divided amongst themselves but allied with capitalists in their own industry according to its comparative (dis)advantage (Frieden, 1991; Hiscox, 2002; Dean, 2015). Subsequently, the literature on workers in contemporary trade politics has focused on several additional features of modern trade. First, the literature investigated disputes between skilled workers, with which the United States is relatively abundantly endowed, and unskilled workers (Scheve and Slaughter, 2001; Mayda and Rodrik, 2005). Second, scholars

focused on the threats to workers confronting offshoring-induced job losses, as well as programs or institutions to compensate trade's losers (Margalit, 2011; Walter, 2017; Rommel and Walter, 2018; Owen and Johnston, 2017). Third, the literature has recently examined firm-level drivers of workers preferences (Dancygier and Walter, 2015).

Most of this work focuses on the distributive consequences of trade liberalization as a driver of policy preferences. Labor unions play a secondary role in the analysis in the sense that their specific activities, organization, and particular attitudes (which may differ from workers') are not the focus of investigation. Instead, union activities are used to generate data on workers' preferences or to understand workers' political actions. In a similar way, the recent focus on non-material drivers of workers' and voters' preferences over trade as expressed in surveys has naturally focused on workers as individuals and on individual- and community-level drivers of trade policy preferences. Ahlquist, Clayton and Levi (2014), Ahlquist and Levi (2013) and Kim and Margalit (2017) represent important exceptions that focus on the important role that labor unions play in shaping the positions and voting of their memberships on trade-related issues. In this way, they cover both the drivers of workers' preferences and an important political activity that labor unions undertake to influence trade policy outcomes.

A separate branch of the literature, particularly prominent in the 1980s and 1990s, dealt more explicitly with labor unions as interest groups, especially their activity around the North American Free Trade Agreement (Shoch, 2000). This work focused on political action committees (PACs) formed by labor unions (and business owners) and how the funding provided by PACs influenced the Congressional voting on NAFTA (Steagall and Jennings, 1996; Engel and Jackson, 1998; Rudolph, 1999). These studies demonstrated that labor PACs influenced politicians, especially Democrats, to vote against NAFTA. Since then, relatively little work has dealt with labor unions and their preferences over international economic policies in the US, with a few significant exceptions. The power of labor unions in FDI regulation is discussed in Owen (2015, 2013), which finds that industries with higher levels of unionization are more likely to have higher restrictions on inward FDI.<sup>1</sup>

Labor unions have received more attention – both direct and indirect – in the study of labor rights provisions of free trade agreements at the global level (Kim, 2012). For example, Raess, Dür and Sari (2018) shows that unions are highly successful in changing the labor provisions in trade agreements when at least one member country of PTA has a powerful union within the country. Hafner-Burton (2011) emphasizes the role that unions, among other groups, play in demanding protections for labor and human rights in trade agreements.

Surveying the literature on labor unions and trade in the US, the evident gap in the literature is the need for wide-ranging description of the labor unions that have engaged in organized activities

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<sup>1</sup> See also Pond (2018).

around trade politics. Moreover, the relationships between unions and anti-trade members of Congress uncovered in an earlier generation of scholarship have not been directly examined since. These same gaps are even more obvious in the study of non-labor left-wing and progressive groups' activities on trade and globalization in the US. While many studies have examined small subsets of these groups, the full scope of their identities and activities have simply not been described in the recent trade literature.

This is an important gap to fill for several reasons. First, scholars have uncovered rich trade politics around non-union left groups in the European Union. Dür and De Bièvre (2007) finds that NGOs have gained access to policy-makers but failed to secure commensurate policy victories, though a recent successful campaign against the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement focused on outside lobbying strategies and citizen engagement may suggest a path to political efficacy (Dür and Mateo, 2014; Dür, Bernhagen and Marshall, 2015). An earlier generation of scholarship also investigated non-union trade groups prominent role in the fight against the WTO (Weir, 2007; Seoane and Taddei, 2002). After the 'Battle in Seattle', the role of non-union progressive groups in fighting trade has not been systematically examined in the US. Describing the activities of these groups in as comprehensive a manner as possible after the year 2000 is a crucial first step towards understanding their impact.

Second, and as with labor provisions of trade agreements, recent scholarship show that specific FTA provisions – on human rights or the environment respond to the demands of domestic interest groups, including left-wing NGOs (Lechner, 2016; Ehrlich, 2010; Margalit, 2012; Osgood and Feng, 2018). Much of this work has focused on evaluating the effects of these provisions (Hafner-Burton, 2005; Kabeer, 2004; Shadlen, 2004) or on normative evaluations of their content (Weiss, 2002; Petersmann, 2000; Bagwell and Staiger, 2001; Maskus, 2002). We focus instead on the domestic politics of left-wing opposition to trade, while also highlighting where left-wing groups have contributed to the debate on FTA provisions within the United States.

## **Trade's Progressive Opponents among Interest Groups**

### **Data on progressive anti-trade coalitions**

Our investigation of progressive opposition to trade in the United States begins with collection of a new data set on membership in coalitions that are opposed to trade. Public coalitions are ubiquitous feature of American trade politics among pro-trade producers: virtually every major US trade issue of the past 30 years has seen the creation or activation of one or more coalitions of firms, industry associations, and broader business associations to support the pro-trade side of the debate. Pro-trade firms and associations have also benefitted from several long-running pro-trade coalitions or advocacy groups (like the National Foreign Trade Council or Emergency Committee

for Trade), which is not to mention the enormous political weight of pro-trade associations like the US Chamber of Commerce or American Farm Bureau. In contrast, anti-trade firms and associations have been exceptionally disorganized, forming or activating ad hoc coalitions in only a few issues and suffering from a persistent gap in organization of permanent coalitions and broader associations.

The state of play among non-producers groups is, by contrast, not well understood. To resolve this issue, we set out to collect information on any public coalition that we could find with significant membership of non-producer groups – labor unions, issue organizations, political groups, charities, religious groups, and membership groups – and has publicly opposed trade liberalization or globalization over the years 2000-present. We began by looking at free trade agreements, which have been a locus of US trade politics activity in the 21st century. At least one coalition of progressive groups formed to oppose the following free trade agreements: the Peru-US trade promotion agreement; the (proposed) Free Trade Agreement of the Americas; CAFTA-DR; the Colombia, Panama, and South Korea FTAs; and the Trans-Pacific Partnership. We found no organized opposition to the remaining trade agreements, including AUSFTA. Looking beyond trade agreements, we also found no organized progressive opposition to major trade initiatives including PNTR for China and AGOA.

The progressive campaign against the Trans-Pacific Partnership illustrates the data that we uncovered. The largest organization opposed to the agreement was a coalition formed by the Citizens Trade Campaign. This coalition included over 1500 unions, NGOs, charities, religious organizations, and political groups. The coalition sent letters to members of Congress decrying the likely impacts of TPP on US jobs; the environment and environmental regulation; food safety; access to medicines; human and political rights; and the power of investors. In addition to this main coalition, we also found several other much smaller coalitions (e.g. of environmental groups, agriculture and food groups, and public health groups). The Citizens Trade Campaign website also acted as a clearinghouse for announcements by individual groups on their positions, which we incorporated into our data.<sup>2</sup>

Indeed, a central locus of progressive opposition to trade in the United States is the Citizens' Trade Campaign (CTC) so it is worth reflecting on the importance of this group. The CTC is a long-running coalition of US groups opposed to trade and globalization, which also advocates for fair trade policies. The CTC has a Political Action Committee, though it does not formally lobby. Instead, its political activities seem to be focused on coalition-building and public advocacy campaigns. Indeed, several of the coalitions opposed to particular trade agreements or policies were formed by the CTC. We incorporate the complete membership of the CTC from 2005 to 2019 as a

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<sup>2</sup> The major coalition organized by the CTC provides the bulk of our data; the smaller coalitions provide a significant number of additional groups that opposed the TPP but a minority of our codings; and the individual statements from the CTC provided very few codings (most of which were repeated in other documents).

separate item in our data set. We also used the CTC website as a first stop to examine evidence on anti-trade activity by progressive groups.

In addition to data from the CTC website, we use several other sources to track down public coalitions of groups opposed to trade. First, we looked at the membership of our known coalitions to see if there were other coalitions listed. Second, we searched using key words for coalitions opposed to major trade issues. Third, we uncovered a large number of state-based fair trade coalitions and we incorporated their branches into our data as separate items.

Our resulting data set is structured as a cross section of groups, where each row represents an individual group, for example, Iron Workers Local 397 or the Sierra Club. We then have 25 columns which record: if the group opposed one of the seven FTAs where we identified organized opposition; if the group was a member of the CTC at any point from 2005-2019 and if the group was a member of CTC's state coalition; and, if, the group was a member of one of 16 state or local fair trade coalitions that publicly report their membership. Naturally, membership is not likely or sensible for a California-based NGO in the Pennsylvania Fair Trade Coalition.

We also supplement this data with three additional pieces of information. First, we assign one or several of 19 group type labels to our groups depending on the main focus of their interests and political activities. These labels – ‘environmental’ for groups focused on the environment; ‘union’ for labor unions – allow us to summarize the types of groups that have joined these coalitions. Second, we match groups wherever possible to lobbying data cleaned and made available by the Center for Responsive Politics. Third, we match groups to data on campaign contributions also from the CRP.

### **Interest groups that have publicly opposed trade**

To provide the reader a sense of the types of groups that have joined coalitions to oppose trade, Table 1 provides a list of the 52 most active groups of our data. We rank these groups by how many of the national anti-trade campaigns they participated in with a potential maximum of 8 arising from 7 free trade agreements along with the possibility of membership in the Citizens Trade Campaign. This set of ‘top participants’ nicely illustrate the types of groups that appear in our data, and provide some proper names to make our investigation more concrete. As an example, Global Exchange is a San Francisco-based “human rights organization dedicated to promoting social, economic and environmental justice around the world.” It describes its remit as falling “from limiting corporate power and greed to oil addiction and global climate change, from the exploitation of the current global economy to the creation of the local green economy.” For these reasons, we give it a ‘human rights’ related group type tag and a more general ‘progressive’ tag.

Table 2 summarizes our data in its entirety. We identified a total 3258 unique non-producer groups that joined coalitions opposing US trade agreements and globalization, or in support of

Table 1: **Progressive**

Group	Num.	Type(s)
Global Exchange	8	progressive;humanrights
Sierra Club		environment
United Methodist Church General Board of Church and Society		religious
International Brotherhood of Teamsters	7	union
United Steelworkers		union
Witness for Peace		forpolicy
AFL-CIO	6	union
International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW)		union
Oxfam America		fordevelopment
Public Citizen		consumer
Americans for Democratic Action (ADA)	5	progressive
BlueGreen Alliance		laborrights;environment
Chicago Religious Leadership Network on Latin America		religious
Citizens Trade Campaign		antiglob;fairtrade
Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES)		ethnocultural
Communications Workers of America (CWA)		union
Community Alliance for Global Justice		antiglob;humanrights
Family Farm Defenders (WI)		farming
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers		union
Jobs With Justice		union
National Farmers Union		farming
NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby		religious
Progressive Democrats of America		progressive
Rainforest Action Network		environment
Texas Fair Trade Coalition		fairtrade
UNITE HERE		union
Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA)		humanrights
8th Day Center for Justice	4	religious
Amazon Watch		environment
American Friends Service Committee		religious
American Lands Alliance		environment
Carolina Interfaith Task Force on Central America		religious
Communications Workers of America District 1		union
Dakota Resource Council		environment
Environmental Health Coalition (CA)		environment;pubhealth
Fellowship of Reconciliation		religious
Friends of the Earth		environment;humanrights
Greenpeace USA		environment
International Brotherhood of Boilermakers		union
Maine Fair Trade Campaign		fairtrade
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns		religious
Michigan Farmers Union		farming;union
Milwaukee Clean Clothes Campaign		religious
Movement for Peace in Colombia		ethnocultural
National Family Farm Coalition		farming
Toledo Area Jobs with Justice & Interfaith Worker Justice Coalition		laborrights;religious
TransAfrica Forum		humanrights;forpolicy
United Steelworkers Local 1188		union
United Students Against Sweatshops		laborrights
US Labor Education in the Americas Project (USLEAP)		laborrights;forpolicy
Western Organization of Resource Councils (WORC)		environment
Wisconsin Fair Trade Coalition		fairtrade

Notes: .



Table 2: Progressive opponents of trade in the US

Group category	Total number	Num. lobbying	Num. contributing	... incl via parent
Anti-globalization	12	0	0	0
Community development	48	6	1	1
Consumer	27	3	5	5
Environmental	298	18	11	36
Ethnocultural	293	6	4	4
Fair trade	45	4	1	1
Farming	138	2	2	3
Food systems	19	1	0	0
Foreign development	20	11	0	0
Foreign policy	87	5	0	0
Human rights	109	6	2	2
Labor rights	118	1	0	6
Other	28	6	3	4
Progressive	320	9	19	43
Public health	61	4	1	1
Religious	206	2	0	1
Union	1147	45	45	903
Women's rights	49	2	1	2
Total	3258	138	94	1010

*Notes:* .

fair trade policies. This shows the breadth of the left-wing groups that have opposed trade in the US. We also see significant breadth across issues, for example, 1972 groups opposed the TPP; 509, 366, 379, and 361 opposed the Colombia, Korea, CAFTA-DR and Panama agreements respectively. Coalition activity on the Peru agreement (33 groups) and FTAA (61 groups) was more shallow.

The most interesting feature of Table 2 is the variation in observed numbers of the different group types. Unions are the most common group that has opposed trade, though we highlight that some of this size represents a large number of local chapters for large, politically active national unions. 457 chapters of the United Steel Workers opposed trade at some point, for example.

Second most present are groups with a wide-ranging progressive agenda. This category includes chapters of Occupy Wall Street; Americans for Democratic Action; Democratic Socialists of America; the Green Party; and so on. Third largest are groups from the environmental movement, while ethno-cultural organizations representing the interests of particular nationalities, ethnicities or cultures are fourth most common. Interestingly, we see a lot of activity from left or progressive-oriented religious groups, for example, many Methodist, Presbyterian and Unitarian Universalist congregations. Rounding out the groups participating, we see significant action in human and labor rights; farming and food issues; fair trade, anti-globalization, and foreign policy; and public health and community development.

In addition to looking at participation in public coalitions, we also examine lobbying and campaign contributions. On lobbying, for which we can determine a specific interest in trade, we present the sum total of all left-wing or progressive groups that lobbied on trade from 1998-2016. These are only 138, a number of whom do not appear in our positiontaking data. We conclude that

lobbying by progressive groups is relatively modest in scale compared to the formation of public coalitions and certainly compared to lobbying by producer groups.

We also examine the contributions of the groups that have publicly opposed trade. We find that about 94 of groups have directly given contributions, while 1010 fall under the umbrella of an ultimate organization that has given campaign contributions.

Comparing the organization and political activities of these progressive trade opponents with trade's corporate supporters and opponents helps to contextualize what we have described. From NAFTA to the TPP, trade's supporters among firms and trade associations organized at least one ad hoc coalition for every major trade agreement or Fast Track/PTA fight but the Jordan FTA. Producer opponents of trade organized coalitions for only two FTAs. Trade's progressive opposition lie right in the middle, organizing coalitions for 7 US FTAs. Trade's public supporters among producers play an absolutely outsized role in lobbying on trade, while trade's opponents among producers account for a vanishingly small amount of lobbying expenditures. Trade's progressive opponents also account for a very small portion of total lobbying on trade.

We advance the following conclusions. Opposition to trade from interest groups has primarily come from unions and groups with a leftward bias in their interests or that are traditional Democratic or progressive constituencies. These groups have shown some considerable organizational skill in opposing international trade. A significant subset of these groups also engage in lobbying and campaign contributions, though the total scale of these activities is small when compared with trade's proponents in corporate America.

## Trade's Progressive Opponents in the Congress

### Data on House voting and blocs

We begin our investigation of progressive opposition to trade in the US Congress by collecting data on trade-related votes in the US House of Representatives. [**NB:** we plan to collect data on Senate votes for the next draft]. Following the timing of our data on public positions by left-wing groups, we consider all votes on bills that are primarily about trade issues from the 103rd Congress (which first met in 1993) to the 115th Congress (which first met in 2017). We find 56 trade bills which we group into 10 different categories of topics: votes on the GATT/WTO; FTAs with developed countries; FTAs with developing countries; Fast Track/Trade Promotion Authority; Permanent Normal Trade Relations; development-related trade issues like AGOA and GSP; votes on US-China trade relations; miscellaneous tariff bills; the Export-Import bank; and trade remedies.

We then employ a 3-dimensional item response theory (IRT) model in order to summarize the vote data with a 3-dimensional vector of 'ideal points' for each member of Congress. Using only these summary scores, we are able to correctly predict 92.7% of votes on trade issues by members of

Table 3: Clustering of House members by trade votes

Cluster number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<u>Proportion of pro-trade votes by issue category:</u>							
GATT/WTO	0.78	0.82	0.43	1.00	0.97	0.58	0.96
FTAs developed	0.74	0.56	0.54	0.99	1.00	0.07	0.72
FTAs developing	0.73	0.63	0.68	0.90	0.91	0.21	0.65
Fast Track/TPA	0.61	0.35	0.25	0.99	0.99	0.00	0.25
China	0.53	0.72	0.48	0.97	0.78	0.64	0.97
Other MFN/PNTR	0.17	0.63	0.30	0.88	0.82	0.23	0.69
Development-related	0.69	0.76	0.32	0.97	0.64	0.68	0.92
Misc. Tariff Bills	0.99	0.99	0.90	0.93	0.82	0.99	1.00
Trade remedies	0.10	0.08	0.15	0.06	0.16	0.18	0.27
<u>Proportion of party/caucus memberships:</u>							
Democratic Party	0.28	0.61	0.12	0.25	0.04	0.95	0.96
Progressive caucus	0.03	0.09	0.03	0.01	0.00	0.42	0.12
<u>Totals:</u>							
Number of represenatatives	112	204	96	274	165	212	112
Share of represenatatives	0.10	0.17	0.08	0.23	0.14	0.18	0.10

Notes: .

the House, reflecting that the model performs well in summarizing information about House voting on trade.

At this point, we want to group members of the house together into like-minded voting blocs to investigate, in particular, whether there is a coherent progressive voting bloc or blocs on trade issues. To do so, we employ a simple unsupervised learning method – k-means clustering – to let the data guide us towards relevant voting blocs that best summarize the data. In particular, we apply our clustering algorithm to the 3-dimensional summaries of Congressional voting. This method requires that we select a number of clusters *a priori*. An “elbow plot” of the within-group sum of squares suggests that the gains in terms of additional variance explained begin to significantly attenuate after 7 groups, so we opted to set  $k = 7$  as the number of modeled blocs. After employing the k-means clustering, we find that the cluster means can still correctly predict 85.2% of votes in the House (as compared with 92.7% before clustering). This reflects that the cluster labels are relatively good at preserving information on voting, and that cluster members are voting in similar ways.

We provide summary data on the identified clusters in Table 3. The top portion of the table describes the proportion of votes by members of a given cluster that went in a ‘pro-trade’ direction across the different issues areas. For example, the members of cluster 5 voted uniformly in favor of every single PTA with a developed country that the US has signed and in favor of PTAs with developing countries 91% of the time. In contrast, members of cluster 3 are much more skeptical of FTAs, though not as much as members of cluster 6 which almost always vote against FTAs. There is also very significant variation across clusters in voting on GATT/WTO related matters and Fast Track, with clusters 3 and 6 standing out as being opposed to these. In particular, representatives

in cluster 5 never once voted for Fast Track/Trade Promotion Authority revealing a deep skepticism towards trade and globalization. Finally, we note that there is significant variation across clusters in voting for development-related trade policies like AGOA and Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) bills. In particular, clusters 3 and 6 – which both opposed FTAs – differ in that cluster 3 was noticeably more opposed to these measures than cluster 6.

Looking at party memberships provides further information about who these clusters might be. In particular, Cluster 6 – which is strongly opposed to most trade issues, but with a partial exception for unilateral reductions in tariffs by the US for developmental purposes – is almost entirely Democrats (95%). Moreover, 42% of the members of this cluster joined the House Progressive Caucus at some point, which is by far the highest in the data. In contrast, the other anti-trade clusters have distinct identities. Cluster 2 consists of trade-skeptical Democrats and Republicans who nonetheless often vote in favor of trade-liberalizing measures. Clearly, members of Cluster 2 are not doctrinally opposed to trade and globalization in the manner that Cluster 6 is. Cluster 7 consists entirely of Democrats, but they are even more pro-trade than Cluster 2, though not as pro-trade as the heavily pro-trade Republican clusters 4 and 5. Cluster 3 is relatively trade-skeptical, but consists almost entirely of Republicans, and represents the small minority of the Republican Caucus that votes against trade.

We conclude that Cluster 6 represents a coherent voting bloc of anti-trade Democrats – many of whom are self-identified progressives – who are the most anti-trade members of Congress. They make some exceptions from this stance for unilateral reductions in US tariffs for developing countries, and they are also more likely to support FTAs with developing countries than developed countries, though they are generally quite opposed to both. We refer to the members of this cluster as trade’s progressive opposition in the House of Representatives.

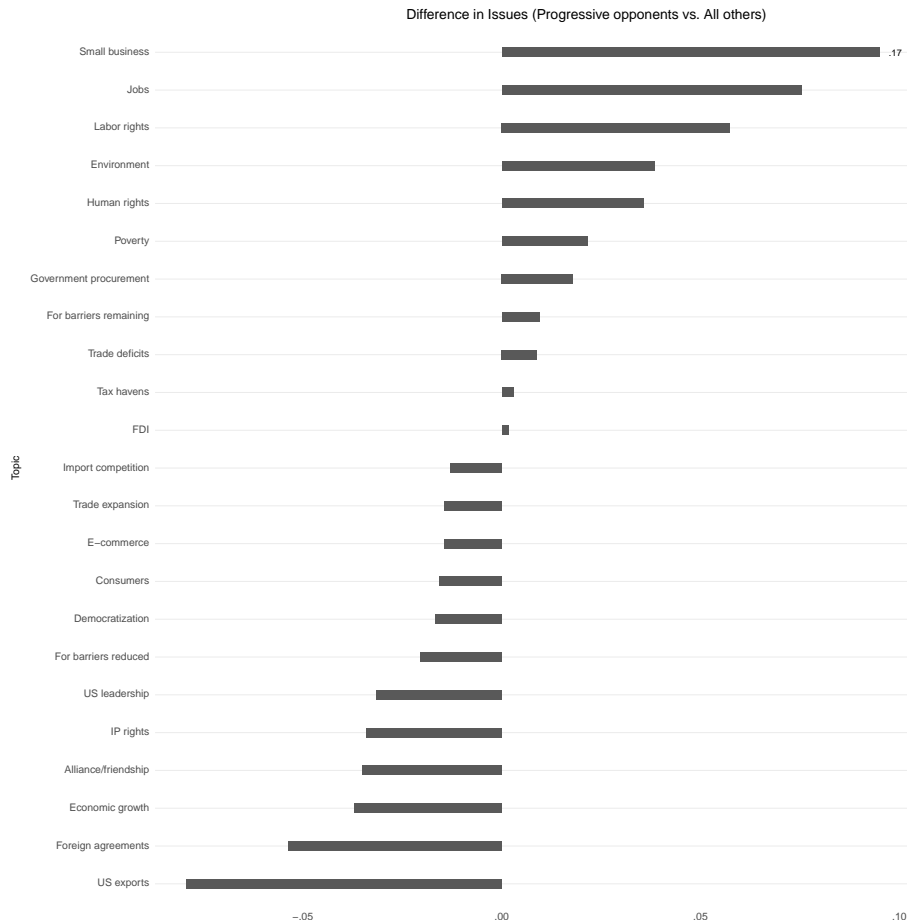
## Interests of trade’s progressive opposition in Congress

Figure 1 provides descriptive illustration of the interests of trade’s progressive opponents in the House. To do so, we examine the topical content of Congressional testimony on US free trade agreements from 1995-present. These data were assembled for Lee and Osgood (2019), and provide topical tags from 63 total topics coded by the authors. Paragraphs may receive multiple tags and so tags are weighted according to the number assigned to a particular paragraph. 55 of these topics are substantive issues, and Figure 1 provides average differences in the share of tags that cover a given topic between members of trade’s progressive Congressional opposition in the House and all other members of the house that appeared in hearings.<sup>3</sup> For example, the “Foreign agreements” tag refers to arguments about ‘competitive liberalization’ – a foreign country’s trade agreements

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<sup>3</sup> We emphasize that only 15 of the 93 members of the House that testified in hearings on trade agreements were members of trade’s progressive opposition in the House, as we have defined it above.

Figure 1: Topical content of Congressional testimony: progressive opponents versus all other Congresspersons



making it harder for US exports to compete in some foreign market. This idea is a common trope among trade proponents in the Congress, and accounts for a full 5% more of trade discussion among non-progressive opponents of trade than among progressive opponents of trade.

By contrast, trade’s progressive opponents highlight a series of issues which are core interests for left-wing globalization skeptics, including labor rights and human rights issues; the environment and environmental provisions of trade agreements; and poverty and developmental issues. We also see trade’s progressive opponents in Congress emphasizing the importance of small businesses and highlighting some other key negative facets of the participation of large multinationals in contemporary globalization, including the exploitation of tax havens and offshoring. A third theme which emerges in the topical differences is that trade’s progressive opponents emphasize negative

features of trade agreements (foreign barriers that were not reduced; trade deficits) while other members of the house mention positive consequences (foreign barriers that were reduced; benefits to consumers; the US's role as a global leader; strengthening global alliances; and increasing US exports and growth).

Our analysis of the topical content of trade bills reinforces our interpretation of the voting data. Bloc 6 represents progressive Democratic opponents to trade with a clear progressive agenda on trade: to avoid harms to not only American workers and small businesses, but also to the human and labor rights of workers in the developing world as well as the global environment.

## Links between progressive groups and House members

We have investigated the existence and collective organization of trade's progressive opposition in the US among groups, including NGOs, issue organizations, religious institutions, and labor unions. We have also shown that there is a coherent set of House members who vote together on trade issues in a way that is consistent with progressive opposition to trade. A subset of these have publicized issues of importance to progressives such as human and labor rights, the environment, and the costs of globalization to American workers. We now wish to show that these two sets of actors are linked in that the progressive anti-trade groups provide political support to the progressive anti-trade members of Congress.

To do so, we begin by assembling data on the political action committee (PAC) contributions of groups to sitting members of the House of Representatives. The unit of analysis for this data is the House member-cycle, where we use  $i$  to notate an individual member of Congress and  $t$  to notate an election cycle. We consider Congressional campaign cycles from 1993-1994 to 2017-2018. An ordinary term of the House of Representatives sees more than 435 members of Congress due to mid-term retirements and illnesses. Consequently the total size of our panel ( $N=5768$ ) is somewhat larger than one might expect for a  $T = 13$  cycles of  $I = 435$  representatives ( $TI = 5655$ ).

For each representative in the house for each cycle, we sum up all of their PAC contributions from groups that have joined the anti-trade coalitions we describe above at any point. We refer to this variable as  $\ln\text{PAC contibs from prog. trade opponents}_{it}$ . Note that we exclude the small number of producers that have joined these coalitions and focus only on non-producer groups. We create two further versions of this variable which include only the contributions from labor unions and only contributions from non-unions, to investigate whether the patterns might be different across the two classes of groups (or if one of the groups is driving the results). This set of three variables are our main outcome variables in the analysis.

For each member of Congress, we also measure the total number of PAC contributions not emanating from progressive trade opponents. Suppose we were to find that trade's progressive

opponents in Congress earn more (or less) contributions from progressive anti-trade groups. This might simply be a result of the fact that progressive opponents in Congress get more (or less) PAC contributions from all groups. We therefore wish to condition the association on total PAC contributions to rule out this potential explanation for the correlation among the variables. We refer to the total of all PAC contributions from groups outside trade’s progressive opposition as  $\ln$  All other PAC conts. $_{it}$ .

Our primary explanatory variable is Progressive opponent $_i$  which is a dummy variable that is equal to 1 if a member of Congress is a part of the progressive anti-trade bloc of House members described above. Note that this does not vary over time.

We use this basic set of variables to examine in a regression framework the conditional association between being in the progressive anti-trade group we have uncovered and receiving campaign contributions from progressive anti-trade groups. If we uncover a positive conditional association, then we can say that progressive opponents to trade in the Congress receive more campaign contributions from anti-trade progressive groups than other members of Congress. Thus, there is a relationship between progressive opponents to trade in society and in the Congress.

For the moment, we remain entirely agnostic about the causal nature of the relationship though we highlight three possibilities. First, it could be that progressive opponents of trade in Congress receive more contributions from these groups because those groups approve of their ideological commitments, whether in the areas of trade and globalization or outside of it. In this sense, contributions are affirmations for pre-existing beliefs or political commitments. Second, it could be that contributions from these groups cause these representatives to vote in particular ways on trade issues. Third, it could be that other forces are driving the correlation between these variables. We consider and control for three classes of these, beyond the  $\ln$  All other PAC conts. $_{it}$  described above. We include dummy variables for whether the representative is a Republican or Independent and use Democrats as the excluded category. A correlation between Progressive opposition to trade and contributions from progressive groups would most obviously be explained by long-running patterns in partisanship. We also separately examine the robustness of our results to the inclusion of nominate scores (dimension 1) in place of party labels. Finally, it might be possible that the numbers of progressive opponents to trade in Congress and/or anti-trade groups’ contributions have temporal patterns which might lead to a positive correlation. We remove this issue with cycle fixed effects ( $\mu_t$ ).

Overall, then, we estimate variation of the following linear model:

$$\ln \text{PAC contibs from prog. trade opponents}_{it} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \cdot \text{Progressive opponent}_i + \beta_2 \cdot \text{Independent}_{it} + \beta_3 \cdot \text{Republican}_{it} + \ln \text{All other PAC conts}_{it} + \mu_t + \epsilon_{it}.$$

We consider these models first among all members of the House using our three separate outcome

Table 4: Regression analysis of opposition to Section 301 case  
 ln PAC contibs from prog. trade opponents:

	All 1	Unions only 2	Non-unions 3
<u>All members of the House:</u>			
Progressive opponent	0.27*** (0.05)	0.26*** (0.05)	0.26*** (0.05)
Independent	-1.51** (0.45)	-1.50** (0.45)	-1.86*** (0.41)
Republican	-2.23*** (0.04)	-2.27*** (0.04)	-2.15*** (0.04)
ln All other PAC conts.	0.54*** (0.01)	0.53*** (0.01)	0.38*** (0.01)
Intercept	1.27*** (0.08)	1.29*** (0.08)	1.03*** (0.07)
N	5649	5639	5639
Cycle FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
<u>Among House Democrats only:</u>			
Progressive opponent	0.13*** (0.02)	0.13*** (0.02)	0.11** (0.03)
ln All other PAC conts.	-0.73*** (0.05)	-0.74*** (0.05)	-0.97*** (0.09)
Intercept	-0.06 (0.03)	-0.07 <sup>+</sup> (0.03)	-0.20*** (0.06)
N	2753	2745	2745
Cycle FE	Yes	Yes	Yes

*Notes:* All models are weighted least squares (WLS).

variables: ln PAC contibs from prog. trade opponents<sub>it</sub> from all such groups; and PAC contributions for unions only and nonunions only. We then investigate the same set of models among Democrats only.

## Results

The results from these models are reported in Table 4. Overall, we find that trade's progressive opponents in Congress receive about 27% more PAC contributions from progressive trade opponents than other members of Congress conditional on party, other PAC contributions, and cycle fixed effects. In unreported regression results where we replace party labels with the two dimensions of the DW-nominate scores (dimension 1 tracks very closely with party label  $\rho = .87$ ) we find a somewhat smaller difference: progressive opponents receive about 15% more PAC contributions. Models which include state fixed effects show a gap of about 13%.

We also examine the additional contributions given to trade opponents by just unions and by just non-union progressive groups that have opposed trade. We find virtually identical patterns across both sets of groups, suggesting no significant heterogeneity across the types of groups in patterns of giving.

In the lower half of Table 4 we examine the patterns of contributions within the Democratic



party. We find again that trade’s progressive opponents in Congress garner significantly more contributions from progressive groups that have joined coalitions publicly opposed to trade. This is equally true for unions and non-unions.

Overall, our regression setting and results do not help us to make any strong statement about what is causing what. Rather, the strong conditional association between trade’s progressive opponents among issues organizations and in the Congress show that these two groups are linked. The groups that have gotten organized to oppose trade liberalization have also gotten organized to give PAC contributions to like-minded (or like-voting) members of the House.

## Next steps

[NB: This is a preliminary first draft of the paper prepared for the conference. We have a few smaller steps to complete in data collection. First, we have some additional coalitions around Fast Track/TPA which we need to add into our data. We are also planning to remove the ‘public statements’ that occur outside of coalitions so that we can focus on the coalitional activity, which is one coherent form of political activity. Second, we could like to collect some information on the topical interests of progressive interest groups, perhaps by collecting a small corpus of documents from their campaigns. Third, we would like to extend our analysis of Congressional voting to the US Senate. Finally, we are currently examining the most current literature on campaign contributions and Congressional voting, to identify if it is possible to make stronger claims about the relationship between anti-trade groups and politicians.

More broadly, we identify two specific points in the paper with which we could use your help. First, our paper is largely descriptive right now and we do not test a particular theory. We think there is some value in that although we are interested in feedback on whether our readers agree! Second, we have not shown the impact or non-impact of trade’s progressive opposition which might make an interesting coda. As an example, these groups, and their Democratic agents, have made labor and environmental chapters a key part of the Congressional politics of trade agreements. While the impact of these chapters is debatable, that is a significant political achievement.]

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