

NPR Celebrates Fast-Track Victory With an All-Corporate Lobbyist Segment

By [Jim Naureckas](#)

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NPR didn't talk to anyone who agreed with people like this about fast track. (Photo: Public Citizen)

After the Senate joined the House of Representatives in granting President Barack Obama fast-track authority to negotiate trade agreements, National Public Radio aired one report (Morning Edition, [6/25/15](#)) on the legislative action that paves the way for the [Trans-Pacific Partnership \(TPP\)](#), the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) and other corporate-friendly international deals. The report, by correspondent Yuki Noguchi, had three sources:

- Business Roundtable president John Engler, "president of the Business Roundtable, which represents more than 200 member companies who took to Capitol Hill armed with data."
- National Retail Federation vice president Jonathan Gold, who "says 7 million retail jobs are directly or indirectly tied to trade."
- National Association of Manufacturers vice president Linda Dempsey, who says the 1993 US/Mexico/Canada trade agreement "NAFTA has actually made US manufacturing overall much stronger and much more competitive."

That's it—according to a search of the Nexis news database, those three corporate lobbyists are all the voices National Public Radio chose to air on the victory of fast-track (or "fast-track," as the NPR News headline writer had it). What of the literally [thousands](#) of labor, environmental and other public interest groups that strenuously opposed giving Obama fast-track authority? They were relegated to a one-line summary from Noguchi:

Labor and environmental groups criticized the fast-track deal, calling it worse than the North American Free Trade Agreement passed two decades ago.

To which manufacturing lobbyist Dempsey was allowed to retort: "The critics are just wrong." So much for the opponents' perspective.

To her credit, Noguchi does correct Dempsey's claim about NAFTA, saying, "After an initial bump following NAFTA, manufacturing employment declined." But that raises the question: If business lobbyists are presenting a distorted picture of the impact of trade deals, why are they the only ones you're allowing to talk to your listeners about trade deals?

ACTION: Please ask NPR ombud Elizabeth Jensen to investigate why NPR News talked only with corporate lobbyists to cover the victory of fast track.

CONTACT: You can contact Ms. Jensen via NPR's [contact form](#) or viaTwitter: [@ejensenNYC](#).

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