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ALP TPP-11 caucus decision deeply disappointing, say community organisations

“By deciding to endorse the TPP-11 implementing legislation, the majority in the ALP Caucus has made a decision contrary to their own policies, and has deeply disappointed many community organisations,” AFTINET Convener Dr Patricia Ranald said today.

“AFTINET is a network of community organisations that advocates for fair trade based on human rights labour rights and environmental sustainability. Forty-nine diverse community organisations including church, public health, union, environment, aid and development, women’s and human rights organisations [wrote to ALP parliamentarians](#) showing that the TPP-11 has many provisions which are contrary to ALP policy. These include special rights for international corporations to bypass national courts and sue governments in unfair international tribunals if they can argue that a law or policy will harm their investment. This is known as ISDS. The TPP-11 puts restrictions on future governments’ regulation of essential services and allows increased numbers of vulnerable temporary workers without testing if local workers are available.

“We are disappointed that this decision has been made before the report of a Senate Standing Committee Inquiry due on September 18, and before a Senate legislation inquiry due on October 10.

“We expect that the TPP-11 implementing legislation will be introduced into the Senate after October 10, and we will continue to advocate that the majority in the Senate vote against it.

“We welcome Shadow Trade Minister [Jason Clare’s announcement](#) that the ALP will implement more transparent and democratic processes for trade agreements if it wins government, and that it will prohibit ISDS and removal of labour market testing in future trade agreements. However, this would not address these provisions in the TPP-11. Changes to the TPP-11 would require difficult negotiations once the deal is ratified, and it would have been more effective to delay implementation until such changes had been made”, concluded Dr Ranald.

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