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## Made in America Panel Notes That Without Transparency Trade Agreements Won't Be Approved

Host Neal Asbury opened his nationally syndicated "Neal Asbury's Made in America" show on Radio America (now on 72 stations) by taking President Obama to task for his failing healthcare program, plagued by higher costs and low renewals. This is on top of Obama's failed trade agreement initiatives.

The first guest on Made in America was Louisiana Congressman, John Fleming, a frequent "visitor to the show," who described the failure to pass Trade Adjustment Authority as "bizarre," since it is a gift to Democrats and unions that voted against it.

"You have to understand that while the Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) barely passed, which lets this president and other presidents cut trade deals, it had to be passed in conjunction with Trade Adjustment Authority (TAA), which compensates unions for lost jobs due to trade agreements. But when TAA failed, so did TPA. I'm all for free trade, but I don't trust this president to be given trade authority because he has proven to be irresponsible on other trade deals," proposed Congressman Fleming.

Co-host Dr. Rich Roffman agreed that it is a trust factor. "He doesn't have the juice anymore to get things done and really is a true lame duck. Nobody trusts a free trade agreement that nobody can even read."

Congressman Fleming is fearful that ceding so much power to Obama could harm our economy while helping foreign economies. And the ultimate fear is that this free trade agreement will grant amnesty to some 11 million illegal immigrants.

"Let's face it, the president has a huge hurdle to overcome on TAA, but it doesn't preclude him from bringing it up for a vote again. But until congress can examine the Trans Pacific Partnership, both Democrats and Republicans won't give Obama the power he seeks. But this free trade agreement fight is like standing on the track while a train barrels down at 100 miles an hour," concluded Congressman Fleming, who added that under any other president, the TPA and TAA would have passed, but not

under Obama, due to the trust factor.

The discussion turned to Obamacare, which prompted Congressman Fleming to express disappointment that so many people think that Republicans don't have a plan if Obamacare is overturned by the Supreme Court.

"Our American Healthcare Reform Act is an excellent alternative to Obamacare, but we're stuck in the middle due to the subsidies issue. If subsidies go away and insurance rates rise or disappear, we will be blamed for it. But if we keep the subsidies, conservatives will blame us. But let's face it, no matter what we do, we'll be blamed for something," maintained Congressman Fleming.

The next guest on Made in America was Brandon Arnold, a Vice President from the National Taxpayers Union, who revisited the trade agreement mess on Capitol Hill.

"We need trade agreements to get the economy back on track. I don't see any benefit in voting down TPA, since it gives the president negotiating authority for the next six years, which would empower the next president. But the problem comes down to the lack of transparency. Nobody can study the TPP for more than 40 minutes since it is still being negotiated. But how can anyone approve it if they don't know what's in it? It would be great if the senate could pass a stand along measure for TPA without the TAA addition," suggested Arnold, who added that without Pelosi's push, Obama won't get the votes he needs if TAA and TPA are reintroduced.

The final guest on Made in America was Lawrence McQuillan from the Independent Institute and the author of California Dreaming, which chronicles a politically created crisis of epic proportions in California and elsewhere across the United States due to an explosion in unfunded pension plans.

"For decades, public pension officials and politicians of both parties have promised their employees increasingly generous retirement benefits—while low-balling the

contributions from government agencies and employees that are needed to cover these promises—presenting our greatest financial challenge since the Great Depression. Pushing the pension liability from today and onto our children and grandchildren leaves them with a depleted future and a potentially bankrupt California," according to McQuillan.

McQuillan estimated that across the country there's a \$4.7 trillion shortfall in pensions for public employees. Less than 40% of all pensions are funded. The unfunded pension rate has hit \$750 billion in California, causing some bankruptcies in major California cities, and eroding services in many cities as a result of politicians stealing money from the city's operating funds.

"This has created perverse incentives for public employees. Politicians give out benefits knowing that they won't be in office when the bill comes due," noted McQuillan.

Neal noted that one-party rule is the reason that public pension plans have gotten out-of-hand, coupled with ever growing cronyism.

Next up was Dr. Roffman's ongoing series on robots, reporting that when world leaders gathered to talk about the economy, their first agenda item was artificial intelligence and the disquieting news that robots in the U.S. will continue to replace human workers. The downside is lost jobs, but the upside is that productivity will increase and it could revitalize American manufacturing.

On the cronyism front, the U.S. Department of Agriculture is investing some \$100 million to increase the number of gas pumps dispensing E85 grade ethanol fuel, which has been linked to engine failures. Three companies have been granted money to supply the pumps, one of which is in Harry Reid's state of Nevada. No surprise there!

"Why would anyone think that this doesn't seem right? Just follow the money and you'll come up with more cronyism," concluded Dr. Roffman.

Each week Neal Asbury' Made in



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provides Neal's insights into the week's top news stories and their impact on the worlds of entrepreneurship, small business ownership and the overall economy. Neal's analysis, together with co-host Dr. Richard Roffman, a veteran 30-year publisher with extensive domestic and international experience, takes a non-biased approach based on real life experience in business as an American manufacturer and exporter.

Made in America airs nationally each Saturday from 7-8:00 PM on Radio America. Link to Made in America at <http://www.neal-asburysmadeinamerica.com>.



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