

U.S. Investment Treaties and the Public Interest

U.S.-China Negotiations, the Administration's Review of the Bilateral Investment Treaty Program, and the Implications for Labor, Environment, Democracy and Development

Thursday, December 10, 2:30 – 4 pm
Russell Senate Office Building, Room 385, 1st and C Streets, NE

Sponsored by Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH)

The Obama Administration has [announced](#) expedited negotiations on a bilateral investment treaty (BIT) with China and is in similar talks with several other countries. At the same time, the Administration is conducting an inter-agency review of the U.S. model BIT, the template that serves as a starting point for substantive negotiations. These treaties, as well as the nearly identical investment chapters of trade agreements, have become increasingly controversial.

In a recent advisory committee [report](#) to the State Department, several labor, environmental, and other public interest organizations raised concerns that current rules facilitate and accelerate the off-shoring of U.S. jobs, allow private investors to undermine environmental protections by suing for damages in international tribunals, and prohibit certain policies designed to prevent or mitigate financial crisis. Moreover, rising foreign investment in the United States increases the likelihood that U.S. laws will be the target of investor lawsuits, particularly if the U.S. government ratifies deals with China and other major capital exporters. This briefing will feature perspectives from individuals who served on the advisory committee.

Speakers:

Labor standards: **Owen Herrstadt**, International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers

Environmental protections and conflicts with U.S. law: **Matthew C. Porterfield**, Harrison Institute for Public Law – Georgetown Law

China and state-owned enterprises: **Linda Andros**, United Steelworkers

Financial stability: **Kevin Gallagher**, Boston University

Moderator: **Sarah Anderson**, Institute for Policy Studies

Organized by:

AFL-CIO; Center for International Environmental Law; Earthjustice; Global Development and Environment Institute, Tufts University; Institute for Policy Studies; International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers; Sierra Club; and United Steelworkers of America