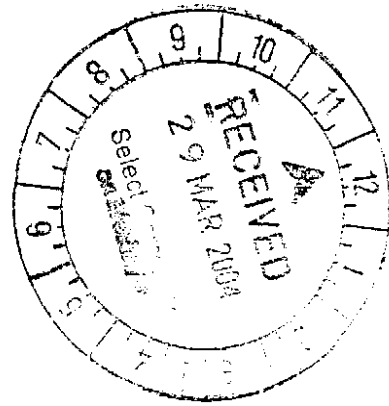


The Secretary,  
Senate Select Committee on the  
FTA between Australia and the USA,  
Suite S1.30.1, The Senate,  
Parliament House,  
CANBERRA ACT 2600.



Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to express my concern about the FTA between Australia and the USA, as reported in the media. The \$4 billion benefit for Australia, as claimed by the government, seems to be grossly exaggerated.

Some of the provisions of the FTA that concern me are:

1. Australia would seem to be surrendering its sovereign power to review and limit foreign investment by lifting significantly the threshold for the FIRB's investigation of whether foreign investments are in the national interest, or not.
2. The PBS needs to remain a cost-effective scheme for Australians. I can see no justification for any concessions to US drug companies.
3. Any concessions with respect to our quarantine standards could be disastrous for Australian primary industries. Australia, being an island-continent with an excellent record on disease control, is in a unique position to maintain high standards. Nothing should be done to risk what we already have. Certainly we should not cave in to trade pressures.
4. Secondary industry in Australia has already suffered too much. Any further reductions in tariffs, especially in the textile, clothing, footwear and motor vehicle industries, would affect negatively the employment of Australians. This would be the case particularly in regional areas.

2.

5. The FTA was originally promoted as a means of Australian agriculture gaining access to the US market. This is unlikely to happen, according to the terms of the FTA. Sugar has been excluded and the "benefits" for beef and dairy are very long-term, and may not eventuate at all!

I doubt that we need a FTA with the USA at all. The one negotiated by the current government seems not to favour Australia, but rather the USA. It seems that we have caved in again to US pressure.

The FTA, as negotiated, is endangering our ability to manage foreign investment. It is also endangering our PBS, our quarantine regulations and our secondary industry. The "benefits" for our primary industry will be either non-existent or minimal.

In examining the terms of the FTA please ensure that the only criterion for your review is what is in Australia's national interest.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Finucane', with a stylized flourish at the end.

(Mr) R. Finucane BA, Dip Ed, MACE