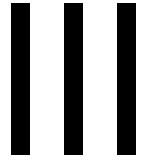




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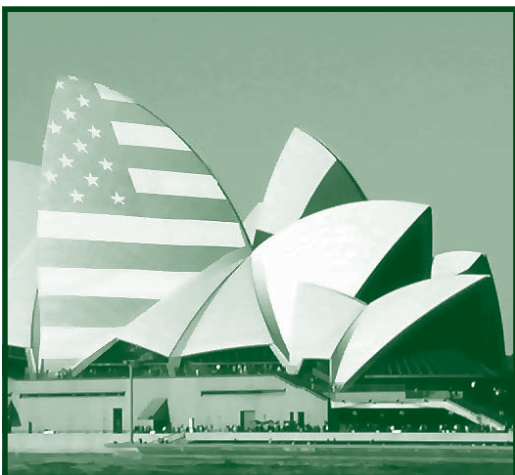
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Aden Ridgeway  
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## THE SENATE IS WATCHING

The free trade agreement between the United States and Australia will have an impact on our economic, environmental, social and cultural future. The Australian Democrats are thoroughly examining the terms of the deal, to determine whether or not it is in Australia's national interest.



# TRADING AWAY OUR FUTURE?

## US FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

### WILL THE DEAL MATCH THE HYPE?

The Federal Government has signed a Free Trade Agreement with the USA (USFTA). This wide-ranging deal could affect Australia's ability to determine our own future.

The Democrats have been involved in all aspects of the debate surrounding this agreement. We have been critical of the process with negotiations conducted in secret and with no formal Parliamentary scrutiny of the proposed terms before the deal was concluded.

### WHAT IS AT STAKE?

The Democrats say the Government must prove the USFTA does not have a negative impact on Australia's economic, environmental and social interests.

We are particularly concerned that the FTA appears to undermine areas such as:

- Price control mechanisms under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS)
- Australian content rules and quotas in new media
- Provision of public services such as health, education and water
- Intellectual property laws and the IT sector
- Quarantine standards and labelling of Genetically Modified products
- Foreign investment limits

### THE SENATE IS WATCHING

The Australian Parliament is unable to vote on the FTA in its entirety (unlike the US Congress).

However, the Government will need to introduce some legislation to implement key aspects of the deal. The Democrats will carefully evaluate this legislation on its merits to ensure that Australia's national interest is not compromised.

A Senate Select Committee will investigate the terms of the FTA. Democrats' Trade spokesperson, Senator Aden Ridgway, is a member of that committee.

The Australian Democrats believe Parliament should have a critical role to play in the trade agreement-making process – that is, to scrutinise, debate and vote on any such agreements that can so significantly affect our future.

### MORE INFORMATION ON THE USFTA

The Australian Democrats

[www.democrats.org.au/campaigns](http://www.democrats.org.au/campaigns)

Senate Select Committee Inquiry into the Australia-US Free Trade Agreement

[www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/freetrade\\_ctte/index.htm](http://www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/freetrade_ctte/index.htm)



Senator Aden Ridgway

Photo: AUSPIC



### HAVE YOUR SAY

Should the Australian Parliament be able to vote on new trade agreements entered into by the Federal Government?

Yes  No  Unsure

Do you think that the process for listing drugs for the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme should be open to challenge by drug companies?

Yes  No  Unsure

Should quarantine decisions be made on the basis of good science and protection of biodiversity, rather than trade considerations?

Yes  No  Unsure

Would you like to receive updates on the Democrats' parliamentary work?

Yes  No

Surname \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Given Name \_\_\_\_\_

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For further information please call the office of Senator Aden Ridgway 1300 301 825 or visit the Democrats' website:

[WWW.DEMOCRATS.ORG.AU](http://WWW.DEMOCRATS.ORG.AU)