

The Hon Andrew Robb AO, MP  
Minister for Trade and Investment  
PO Box 6022  
House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Minister,

As organisations representing healthcare workers across Australia, we congratulate you for withstanding the pressures of the US Government and the US pharmaceutical industry in the latest round of negotiations of the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) during July-August 2015.

Specifically, we understand that you defended Australia's ongoing access to affordable medicines (by rejecting US proposals to extend the data exclusivity period on biologic medicines) and have not, at this stage, agreed to have Investor State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) processes apply to Australia. However, we are also aware that there is significant pressure being brought to bear by the US and other countries.

We remind you of your assurances to the Australian people that the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS), and our health system more broadly, would not be adversely affected by the TPP. This should be a "red line" issue and the Australian Government should be prepared to abandon the negotiations if this condition is not met. The government should also oppose any increased rights for pharmaceutical companies to have a greater voice in decisions of the PBS.

Any extension to the data exclusivity period for biologic medicines would delay the availability of cheaper alternatives and would see an overall increase in the cost of medicines to the PBS; creating pressure for prices to rise for individuals at the chemist and for hospitals. This would be counterproductive at a time when the Australian Government is attempting to rein in healthcare costs.

We see it as essential that the Australian Government continues to insist that ISDS clauses will not apply to Australia. We should not allow any possibility for foreign investors to sue our governments over public health measures, as they have sought to do over tobacco issues. No amount of sugar or beef exports is worth increasing the cost of our healthcare system or limiting our ability to regulate to protect health.

We are also concerned about the possible restrictions on primary healthcare initiatives such as food and beverage labelling under the TPP. Further, the definition of *public enterprises* should not restrict the public services offered by those with a public purpose, such as public health facilities, nor force the privatisation of those public services.

We remind you of your assurances given to the Australian public and urge you to maintain a position that does not extend a monopoly on medicines and does not expose future Australian governments to ISDS processes.

Respectfully,

Name	Organisation
Judith Kiejda Assistant General Secretary	NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association
Adj Assoc Professor Elizabeth Dabars AM CEO/Secretary	Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (SA Branch)

James Lawler President	The Australian Medical Students' Association
Michael Moore CEO	Public Health Association of Australia
Suzanne Gleeson National Secretary	Australian Health Promotion Association
Dr Con Costa President	Doctors Reform Society
Caroline Homer RM PhD President	Australian College of Midwives
Lee Thomas Federal Secretary	Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation – National Office
Beth Mohle Secretary	Queensland Nurses Union
Karen Batt Federal Secretary	Community and Public Sector Union – State Public Services Federation (CPSU_SPSF) Federal Office
Lisa Fitzpatrick Secretary	Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation Victorian Branch
Jan McMahon Branch Secretary	Community and Public Sector Union – State Public Services Federation South Australia Branch
Michael Whaites Sub-Regional Secretary	Public Services International – Oceania
Neroli Ellis Branch Secretary	Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation Tasmanian Branch
Yvonne Falckh Branch Secretary	Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation NT Branch
Jenny Miragaya Branch Secretary	Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation ACT Branch