

## **TIPS FOR DOING DELEGATIONS/OCCUPATIONS**

Written by Laurie King and David King of Portland, Oregon Jobs with Justice

Get a committee together to do outreach to activists. Use the Citizen's Trade website to get educated about the Peru Free Trade Agreement (PFTA).

Go to the Member of Congress' (MOC) web site and their office and try to engage them in a discussion. Go to public forums where they are speaking and ask questions.

In our case, our "Representative" was unwilling to discuss the PFTA or any trade issues with us or anyone else that we know of. Had he been willing, we'd have given him or his staff educational materials: videos like "Life & Debt" (available in video rental stores) or "Maquilopolis," articles and/or resolutions from the Citizen's Trade website. The Change to Win union federation's six-page resolution, for example, is full of facts and represents hundreds of thousands of workers. We'd have brought leaders who represent people like union presidents, religious leaders to meet with him.

But if the MOC is hostile or stays inaccessible you may want to get a bunch of people to visit their local office and be a little disruptive. Pick a time and start calling interested people. We had two dozen people there early in the day.

We had several people who were willing to be arrested if the Congressman wouldn't talk to us so we decided to be as disruptive as reasonably possible so that the staff would call the cops pretty early. No one wanted to spend the night in jail. So people were designated chant leaders and we chanted and banged on boxes and wastebaskets.

We designated people to be spokes people. We had called the media, corporate and alternative and had folks designated to speak to them who were articulate and prepared. We had folks whose job was blocking the door and talking to the citizens who had business in the office. There was an alternate door where we directed people like the blind veteran who came looking for the MOC's staff's help with the VA. (You should plan ways to get access to the office for folks like her.)

The MOC's staff was polite at first and we explained that we felt bad disrupting their work, but this issue was life and death for millions and we felt we had to disrupt. By the middle of the day the cops came and after some talk they realized that some of us were not leaving voluntarily.

Because good media work was done in the days leading up to the event and after, and they were called on the morning of the action, we got good media.

\* \* \* \* \*

The point is to get a “no” vote. If your MOC is open to a conversation and sincerely listening to your point of view that is great. Our guy is not, but we have been able to get a “no” vote on Fast Track and CAFTA by applying relentless pressure and making him uncomfortable. After all 2/3 of Democratic and Republican voters are clear that these FTA’s are a bad deal.