

**Res. 04-1-**

**RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT HEALTHY INTERNATIONAL TRADE POLICY**

**WHEREAS**, the GATS (General Agreement on Trade Services), the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and similar trade agreements have placed economic and financial interests above health and have preempted a wide range of US laws, rules, policies and programs that protect or enhance the public's health and safety; including those related to tobacco control, the environment, food safety, and occupational safety and health; the affordability of vital human services, and the integrity of the ecosystem<sup>1</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, the process for negotiations for these agreements (including the current Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) and others under negotiation) does not clearly prioritize the public's health and fails to include input from the public health and environmental community; and

**WHEREAS**, the World Trade Organization, based on these trade agreements, has overturned government decisions that protect the environment and public health but conflict with a nation's trade interests;<sup>2</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, such actions resulting from these trade agreements can have a direct impact on public health services and the ability to protect and improve the public's health at the local level;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) advocate for policies, programs, and communication strategies that ensure that the public's health is not compromised in the pursuit of economic interests; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NACCHO supports an assessment of the impact of GATS, the FTAA and similar agreements on the public's health, and, based on such assessments, supports modifications ensuring that these agreements do not have an adverse impact on the public's health; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NACCHO supports the exclusion of vital health and human services, such as personal health and public health services, and the exclusion of critical natural public resources such as safe food and water, clean air, and reliable energy, from trade negotiations and challenge under these agreements; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NACCHO supports beneficial trade controls on toxic chemicals and substances, and other trade policies designed to minimize environmental risk; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NACCHO supports the inclusion of public health representatives in the negotiating process as well as transparency and accountability at all levels of trade negotiations. Specifically, NACCHO supports appropriate representation on appointed trade tribunals and in all trade negotiations to ensure that regulatory protections and the enforcement of standards regarding health, vital human services, and the environment enacted by Congress, state, regional, or local health authority, are not compromised.

*Proposed by Environmental Health and Prevention Advisory Committee  
Adopted by NACCHO Board of Directors  
November 7, 2004*

1. American Public Health Association, "International Trade Agreements: Priorities for Health," (WPHFA Position Paper) Washington, DC: APHA, 2001; see also, American Medical Association House of Delegates, Resolution 219, "Elevating Health Concerns in International Trade Agreements," (Draft, 2003); Ellen Shaffer and Joe Brenner, "Trade and Health: Corporatizing Vital Human Services," in Mary Anne Mercer, Meredith Fort, and Oscar Gish (eds.) *Sickness and Wealth* (Boston: South End Press, 2004); Ronald Labonte, "Globalization, Trade and Health: Unpacking the Links and Defining Public Policy Options," in Richard Hofrichter (ed.) *Health and Social Justice: Politics, Ideology, and Inequity in the Distribution of Disease* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003): 469-500.

2. L. Wallach and M. Sforza, *The WTO: Five Years of Reasons to Resist Corporate Globalization* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 1999).