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The proposed Central America Free Trade Agreement appears to be focused entirely on providing access to all markets to big multi-national corporations despite being couched in the language of giving countries mutual access to markets.

I believe that the State and local governments are entirely justified in making laws and passing ordinances that protect our citizens and promote our basic core values of decency, a level economic playing field, and the prevention of human rights abuses such as sweatshops and child labor around the world. These are not barriers to trade but regulation of trade.

By making civil government take second place to a system of corporate power and trade tribunals, we are in effect potentially overthrowing hundreds of years of legal precedent.

As a citizen of Orono, of Penobscot County, the State of Maine, the United States, and indeed as a citizen of the World, I believe that the system of protections of our health, our environment, and economic security will be eroded by CAFTA and other similar trade agreements.

I am extremely concerned that basic democracy and local sovereignty and control will be a thing of the past. Corporations are much less accountable to the people than governments and yet we the people have created the social structures to let these corporations thrive. Corporations are legalized fictional people whose only value is the bottom line. We must remember that the rights and values of real people are always more important than fictional ones.

Question

Can the commission investigate whether we the people will have the power to elect and discharge the members of the trade tribunals where trade disputes will be heard? Which body of law will govern these tribunals?