

Wednesday, May 20, 2009

The Honorable Max Baucus
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Finance
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Finance
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Baucus and Ranking Member Grassley:

We are writing on behalf of the many U.S. manufacturers and their employees who rely on the miscellaneous tariff bill (MTB) to ensure the enactment of duty suspension provisions vital to the U.S. economy. Without relief from tariffs on key raw materials and components, U.S.-based companies are disadvantaged in the global marketplace. At a time of economic turmoil, American manufacturers cannot afford higher costs resulting from an outdated tariff code. Therefore, it is essential that the Senate Finance Committee move promptly to commence the process of consideration of the next MTB.

The tariff savings from individual duty suspension provisions allow companies to maintain employment at U.S. manufacturing plants. The duty suspension request process is highly transparent, with extensive reviews by the U.S. International Trade Commission, Commerce Department, and U.S. Customs and Border Protection to verify that there are no competing domestic interests and that revenue limits are maintained.

As you know, the House Ways and Means Committee is currently drafting a bill with a markup anticipated in the near future. We urge you to initiate the Senate MTB effort as soon as possible, by announcing plans for Senate Finance Committee action. Doing so will signal to your Senate colleagues that work on a new MTB has begun in earnest and will ensure that the Senate has sufficient time to act on the legislation.

Your leadership during consideration of the MTB in previous Congresses was indispensable. We, again, look for your leadership in this process in an effort to ensure the vitality and competitiveness of American manufacturing.

Thank you for your support and, as always, we look forward to working with you to strengthen our domestic economy and enhance the competitiveness of U.S. manufacturing.

Sincerely,

The American Chemistry Council
The Association of Equipment Manufacturers
The Business Roundtable
The Emergency Committee For American Trade
The Manufacturing Tariff Bill Coalition
The National Association of Manufacturers
The National Foreign Trade Council
The U.S. Chamber of Commerce

CC: Senator Harry Reid, Senate Majority Leader
Senator Mitch McConnell, Senate Republican Leader