

KEY VOTE ALERT!

September 19, 2011

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES SENATE:

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the world's largest business federation representing the interests of more than three million businesses and organizations of every size, sector, and region, strongly urges you to vote in favor of the motion to proceed to H.R. 2832, which would renew the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP). The Chamber also strongly supports the bipartisan compromise legislation to renew Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), which is expected to be offered as an amendment to H.R. 2832. GSP and TAA are important programs that the Chamber has supported over the course of many years, and approval of H.R. 2832 and the TAA amendment would also create a path forward for approval of the pending trade agreements with South Korea, Colombia, and Panama, which are among the Chamber's top legislative priorities this year.

For three and a half decades, GSP has promoted economic growth in developing countries by providing duty-free access to the U.S. market for 4,800 selected products from 129 developing countries. The program has also boosted the competitiveness of American manufacturers and lowered the cost of consumer goods for American families. In 2010, U.S. imports under GSP surpassed \$23 billion. GSP expired on December 31, 2010.

GSP helps keep U.S. manufacturers and their suppliers competitive. Approximately three-quarters of U.S. imports using GSP are raw materials, parts and components, or machinery and equipment used by U.S. companies to manufacture goods in the United States for domestic consumption or for export. The products coming in under GSP generally do not compete with U.S.-made goods in any significant way. A Chamber study found that GSP supports tens of thousands of U.S. jobs.

Earlier this year, Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus and House Ways and Means Chairman Dave Camp reached agreement on the substance of the TAA legislation that is expected to be attached to the GSP bill as an amendment. The Chamber believes the resulting bill reflects a thoughtful compromise that preserves the more effective elements of the five-decades old TAA program, eliminates aspects that have proven less effective, and significantly reduces its cost. The legislation is respectful of the difficult fiscal circumstances facing the United States, and we believe it deserves support.

The Chamber strongly supports H.R. 2832 and the expected amendment on TAA. Because of the importance of these issues, and the importance of the trade agreements with South Korea, Colombia, and Panama, the Chamber will consider including votes on, or in relation to, this legislation in our annual *How They Voted* scorecard.

Sincerely,



R. Bruce Josten



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