

CSUSTL Urges President Obama to Support United Steelworkers Union Trade Petition

SOURCE Committee to Support U.S. Trade Laws
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WASHINGTON, Sept. 1 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- In a letter to President Obama, David A. Hartquist, Executive Director of the Committee to Support U.S. Trade Laws (CSUSTL), encouraged the President to support a petition brought by the United Steelworkers union. This month, the President will determine what import relief to provide in response to the petition, brought under Section 421, on imports of passenger and light truck tires from China. The independent and bipartisan International Trade Commission found that imports of such tires have increased rapidly, thus causing injury to the domestic industry. The Commission recommended specific tariff relief for three years to remedy that injury.

"We write to underscore both the importance of Section 421 as a legitimate trade remedy, and to respectfully urge its application in appropriate cases," Hartquist said. "Campaign promises," he continued, "should be fulfilled and effective enforcement action taken to provide full relief where merited. This case is being watched closely to see whether Section 421 is an effective law or a dead issue."

Section 421 was enacted as a condition for China's entry into the World Trade Organization because WTO Members, including the United States, were concerned that the severe economic distortions in China's economy - distortions that would take years to address - could readily result in damaging import surges once China acceded to the WTO. Consequently, the United States insisted on the ability to obtain relief through a China-specific safeguard mechanism so that U.S. industries and workers would not have to bear the brunt of China's transition to a market-based economy. By design, then, Section 421 was meant to be used precisely to mitigate the harm occurring when imports surges from China cause market disruption here in the United States.

Mr. Hartquist also noted, "other countries have invoked China-specific safeguards to provide relief from Chinese import surges, the previous Administration refused to do so, despite numerous recommendations from the International Trade Commission that relief was merited. We urge President Obama to take a different path."

The Committee to Support U.S. Trade Laws is an organization of companies, trade associations, labor unions, workers, and individuals committed to preserving and enhancing U.S. trade laws. CSUSTL's members span all sectors, including manufacturing, technology, agriculture, mining and energy, and services. CSUSTL is dedicated to ensuring that the unfair trade laws are not weakened through legislation or policy decisions in Washington, D.C., in international negotiations, or through dispute settlements at the World Trade Organization and elsewhere.

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