



Leo W. Gerard
International President

August 31, 2009

VIA FAX

United States Senate
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.

Dear Senator/Representative:

This week, the President's staff will forward to him a recommendation on whether to accept, reject or modify a decision of the bipartisan, independent International Trade Commission calling for a response to surging imports of consumer tires from China that have disrupted the U.S. market and resulted in the loss of thousands of jobs. We urge you to contact the President to voice your belief that our trade laws need to be aggressively enforced and that relief should be provided. Your voice, added to the 30,000 letters that have already been sent to the White House in support of relief, will make a big difference.

When the U.S. negotiated with China as to the terms of its accession to the World Trade Organization, China agreed to a new provision in U.S. law that allowed for our country to respond to surging Chinese exports. Clearly, with Chinese consumer tire exports skyrocketing from 14 million to roughly 48 million this year, there can be no dispute as to the nature of the surge. During this same period, several U.S. tire factories have had to close and more than 5,000 tire workers have lost their jobs – with potentially 3,000 more slated to lose their jobs this year. In addition, more than 35,000 retirees' health care depends on the vitality of the industry.

In past weeks, China and the importers of its products have engaged in a well-funded and orchestrated plan to protect their interests and subvert Congressional intent. They have spread rumors and untruths seeking to maintain the export-led economic engine that China's communist leaders depend on and that have decimated our market. Unfortunately, so-called "U.S." tire producers have sat on the sidelines during this fight worried that the Chinese government will retaliate against their operations in China.

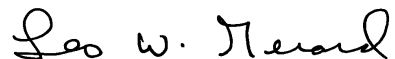
The facts are simple: According to the ITC, China competes in all sectors of the market; not just what they have called the lowest tier. Sufficient capacity exists to reclaim and restore production here at home. Retailers will have no problems meeting the needs of their customers in securing high quality competitively-priced products.

Now is the time to finally draw a line in the sand: The American people work hard and play by the rules and they deserve a government that respects their interests and fights for their jobs. It's no wonder that trade has become such a divisive issue in our nation as the people have simply lost confidence that their elected leaders are going to live up to their word and enforce the laws that they have enacted.

The direct tire production jobs in question may only be in a handful of states, but the repercussions of this decision will be felt all across the country. Either farmers, workers and businesses will know that their nation's trade laws are going to be fairly and effectively enforced and that they can be assured of a more level playing field, or they will continue to see the field tilted in favor of our trade partners who enjoy virtually unfettered access to our market while engaging in predatory, protectionist and unfair trade practices.

The choice is clear. Your help in ushering in a new approach to trade is needed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leo W. Gerard". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Leo W. Gerard
International President

LWG/ctl