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USW CONFIDENT OBAMA WILL ORDER CHINA IMPORT RELIEF
Final Step in Tire Trade Case Confirmed Today by U.S. Trade Representative

WASHINGTON (September 2, 2009) – Leo W. Gerard, International President of the United Steelworkers (USW) expressed confidence President Obama will grant the U.S. tire industry meaningful relief from Chinese tire imports that have injured domestic production workers.

Gerard said, “We don’t know what the USTR has recommended, but we do know the U.S. International Trade Commission (ITC) concluded that a large China tire import surge had injured domestic workers and relief should be granted.”

Following an inter-agency review, the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) was required to transmit today its report and recommendations to the White House on the level of relief for the domestic tire industry and its workers in the Section 421 case brought by the USW in April.

“President Obama will have the opportunity to let American workers know he will stand with them when trade distorting practices from China threaten American jobs and our industries,” said Gerard. “This is the time and this is the case for the President to open the trade enforcement toolbox.”

Gerard adds, “We are confident the President shares our values of promoting a rising standard of living for the American worker. This trade case gives him the chance to put into practice his pledge to level the playing field and give all Americans a chance to share in the benefits of balanced trade. Strong enforcement is the cornerstone of any new progressive trade policy that might be developed by this Administration.”

Interest in the case has resulted in more than 30 members of Congress calling on President Obama to implement the tariff remedy recommended by the ITC, and more than 50,000 USW members have transmitted individual letters to the White House, urging the President to support the trade commission’s findings.

Expressing anger at the influence peddlers representing the Chinese in Washington, Gerard declared: “The basic facts in this case cannot be denied or erased.” He charged that, “Propaganda masquerading as studies and various speculative arguments released by the Chinese government, the Chinese tire companies and their importers should not impact this decision.”

The trade commission recommended in July that tariffs be applied over a three-year period to help the industry get back into production, restoring jobs and recovering from the deep damage

of the flood of tire imports.

Under the Section 421 provision of the amended U.S. Trade Act of 1974, President Obama has until September 17 to decide how to respond to today's USTR recommendations for passenger and light truck tires.

According to records in the USW trade case, a massive 215 percent surge in passenger and light truck tire imports by volume, and an even greater 295 percent surge in value occurred during 2004-08. The result has been a loss of more than 8,100 domestic tire jobs by the end of 2009 from closed plants.

Thousands of additional jobs supported by the tire industry in communities across the country are at risk, and the health care protection for 35,000 retired tire workers and their families depends on the outcome of the President's actions.

Should the president decide to apply import relief, it would go into effect by October 2.

Background, testimony and statements on the USW trade case are at: www.usw.org/tires/.

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