

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 2, 2015

The Honorable Richard C. Shelby
Chairman
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science,
and Related Agencies
Russell 304
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science,
and Related Agencies
Hart 503
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Shelby and Ranking Member Mikulski:

President Obama established a new trade enforcement unit – the Interagency Trade Enforcement Center (ITEC) – in 2012. The ITEC significantly enhances the Administration’s capabilities to aggressively challenge unfair trade practices around the world, including in China. Just last year, the World Trade Organization found that China unjustifiably imposed duties which affected about \$5 billion in automobile exports. The ITEC serves as a key forum within the federal government for executive departments and agencies to coordinate enforcement of international trade rules, and is funded through the Department of Commerce’s International Trade Administration (ITA) and the United States Trade Representative (USTR).

We appreciate the difficulty you face in appropriating adequate resources for the programs under your jurisdiction, and we thank you for your work to include resources for these programs for Fiscal Year 2015. As you work on the appropriations bills for Fiscal Year 2016, we respectfully request that you provide the Administration’s requested level of funding for the ITEC through ITA - \$15 million. We also ask you to provide strong funding to the USTR so they are able to carry out critical trade enforcement activities.

Too often, the U.S. opens its markets to foreign competition without the resources necessary to ensure reciprocal access is achieved. While we play by the rules, other countries use technical barriers or unfair duties and tariffs to game international trade laws. A robust and fully-funded ITEC, in addition to the USTR, will help fight unfair trade practices abroad and protect and grow American jobs here at home. American workers are the best in the world and we must use every tool at our disposal to allow them to compete on a level playing field. We look forward to working with you on this critical issue.

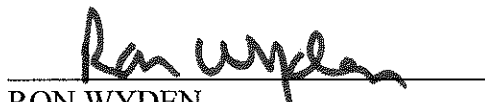
Sincerely,



GARY C. PETERS
United States Senator



DEBBIE STABENOW
United States Senator



RON WYDEN
United States Senator



BENJAMIN L. CARDIN
United States Senator

Sherrod Brown

SHERROD BROWN
United States Senator