

Senator Barbara Mikulski, Chairman
Senator Richard Shelby, Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science, and Related Agencies
Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington D.C. 20510

June 2, 2009

Dear Chairman Mikulski and Ranking Member Shelby:

Representing the business leaders of the U.S. export community, we have an urgent issue to bring to your attention – the funding for the U.S. Commercial Service (USCS) in the Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee. Immediate relief must be found for the current USCS budget shortfall which threatens to seriously curtail operations.

Although the President's FY2010 budget reflects an increase over FY2009, this is not sufficient to prevent layoffs and possible Commercial Service post closings in 2010. American business and American workers need a stronger and larger export promotion program.

We respectfully request that you allocate an additional \$20 million to the current amount allocated for the USCS in the FY10 Budget.

Congress has recently allocated substantial new resources for "smart diplomacy" by adding over 1100 Foreign Service officers at the State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID). Yet the Commercial Service, which is the agency that helps U.S. small businesses find export markets through its domestic operations and represents U.S. business interests abroad, remains underfunded.

It is critical that, at this time, the agency charged with sustaining our international economic participation not be overlooked. The USCS has a proven record of job creating results. In 2008, the USCS assisted U.S. firms successfully conclude \$70 billion in documented export sales to more than 200 markets. These exports supported or created many U.S. jobs that pay, on average, 15 percent higher wages than non-export jobs.

Growth in U.S. exports is essential to promote economic recovery at home and, without USCS assistance, many U.S. small companies will simply be unable to participate in global markets. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

National Association of Manufacturers (NAM)
U.S. Chamber of Commerce (USCC)
National Foreign Trade Council (NFTC)
Business Council for International Understanding (BCIU)

U.S. Emergency Committee for American Trade (ECAT)
U.S. Council for International Business (USCIB)
Small Business Exporters' Association (SBEA)

cc: Senator Daniel Inouye
Senator Patrick Leahy
Senator Herb Kohl
Senator Byron Dorgan
Senator Dianne Feinstein
Senator Jack Reed
Senator Frank Lautenberg
Senator Ben Nelson
Senator Mark Pryor
Senator Judd Gregg
Senator Mitch McConnell
Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison
Senator Sam Brownback
Senator Lamar Alexander
Senator George Voinovich
Senator Lisa Murkowski

Congressman Allan Mollohan, Chairman
Congressman Frank R. Wolf, Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science, and Related Agencies
H-309 Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

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Dear Chairman Mollohan and Ranking Member Wolf:

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cc: Cong. Patrick J. Kennedy
Cong. Chaka Fattah
Cong. Adam Schiff
Cong. Michael Honda
Cong. C.A "Dutch" Ruppertsberger
Cong. Peter J. Visclosky
Cong. José E. Serrano
Cong. David R. Obey
Cong. John Abney Culberson
Cong. Robert Aderholt
Cong. Jo Bonner
Cong. Jerry Lewis