NFTC News

Global Innovation Forum to Host Discussion on Enabling Transatlantic Entrepreneurship

On Thursday at 1776, the National Foreign Trade Council’s Global Innovation Forum, Bloomberg BNA and 1776 will host a breakfast discussion among startup, business and policy communities about the rise of engagement by startups and small businesses in the transatlantic marketplace and the policy frameworks that can enable their global journeys.

WHO:
Keynote conversation with:
The Honorable David O’Sullivan
Ambassador of the European Union to the United States
A discussion with eBay, Google, mobile transport app RideScout, 1776 and the Global Innovation Forum on the opportunities and challenges facing startups in Europe and the United States.

WHEN:
Thursday, December 17, 2015
Breakfast: 8:00-8:30am
Forum: 8:30-10:00am

For more information and to register, visit: http://www.globalinnovationforum.com/events/transatlantic-startups-dc/

Hill Updates

Brady Highlights Pro-Growth Measures in Customs Bill

On Friday, House Ways and Means Chairman Kevin Brady (R-TX) delivered a statement during debate of the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015 (HR 644).

Chairman Brady: “The conference report builds on the good work of my fellow conferees, Representatives Reichert and Tiberi, and dozens of other members. And it delivers on the promises we made to those Members when we considered trade legislation earlier this year. Most importantly, this bill is a vital part of our pro-growth agenda. It will level the playing field for Americans and also make it easier for them to compete in a global marketplace. It significantly improves trade facilitation.”


Hatch, Brady, Wyden Announce Deal on Bipartisan Customs Legislation

On Wednesday, Senate Finance Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch (R-UT), House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Brady and Senate Finance Committee Ranking Member Ron Wyden (D-OR)
Chairman Hatch: “After productive negotiations, we were able to produce a strong, bipartisan bill that will help modernize the nation’s customs system and ensure it is ready to meet the challenges of the 21st century global economy.”

Chairman Brady: “Our bipartisan agreement turns the page on impractical, outdated customs and border policies that have hurt American workers and job creators for decades. By replacing inefficiency with innovation, this bill will make it easier for Americans to compete and win in marketplaces around the world.”

Ranking Member Wyden: “Too often, our laws and enforcement policies have proven too slow or too weak to stop the trade cheats before jobs are lost. The Leveling the Playing Field Act Congress passed earlier this year helped ensure that workers and businesses harmed by unfair trade have faster access to relief. This conference report, which includes the ENFORCE Act, will help ensure that this relief is effective and that trade cheats cannot evade the consequences of violating our trade laws.”

For more information, visit: http://waysandmeans.house.gov/hatch-brady-wyden-announce-deal-on-bipartisan-customs-legislation/

Ranking Member Wyden Praises USTR Enforcement on China

Ranking Member Wyden praised the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) on Tuesday for new trade enforcement action against China, which has used tax policies to discriminate against American aircraft manufacturers.

Ranking Member Wyden: “As Congress works to rewrite the playbook on trade enforcement, I am glad to see USTR take action to address nontransparent and discriminatory Chinese tax policies that keep American manufacturers from competing on a level playing field. Today’s actions underscore the need to swiftly bring into law a customs package with strong, effective enforcement tools to protect American jobs and priorities.”

The statement can be found here: http://www.finance.senate.gov/newsroom/ranking/release/?id=2775df07-0951-44f9-8a8e-702f69dd43ab

News from the Administration

USTR Froman and EU Commissioner Malmström Statement on TTIP

On Friday, U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman and European Commissioner for Trade Cecilia Malmström released a joint statement on progress following a meeting in Brussels on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP).

“The European Union and the United States have made considerable progress towards a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) in the past year, notably since the G7 Elmau summit in June, when we agreed to accelerate work on all elements of the agreement. We are fully committed to expeditiously reaching an ambitious, comprehensive agreement that promotes economic growth and jobs, strengthens our strategic partnership, and reflects our shared values. At our meeting today, we agreed to further intensify our work during 2016 to help negotiations move forward rapidly, including through enhanced intersessional work, frequent formal negotiating rounds, and increased Minister level consultations.”

New Commerce Report Outlines Health Products Sector Benefits from TPP

On Wednesday, U.S. Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade Stefan M. Selig released the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Opportunities for the U.S. Health Products Sector Report, detailing how the elimination of various tariffs and other TPP commitments to level the playing field will benefit American companies competing in TPP markets.


United States Launches Trade Enforcement Challenge to China’s Tax Exemptions for Certain Chinese-Produced Aircraft

Last Tuesday, USTR Michael Froman announced the United States has launched dispute settlement proceedings at the World Trade Organization (WTO), requesting consultations with China regarding its exceptions for certain aircrafts produced in China from value-added tax, while imposing those taxes on imported aircrafts.

Ambassador Froman: “China’s discriminatory, unfair tax policy is harmful to American workers and American businesses of all sizes in the critical aviation industry, from parts suppliers to manufacturers of small and medium-sized aircraft. We’re also especially concerned that China attempted to hide this discriminatory tax policy. Transparency of laws and regulations impacting trade is a core WTO commitment that China must uphold, just as it expects other countries to do. For these reasons, the United States is filing a trade enforcement case to hold China accountable. The Obama Administration is committed to strong trade enforcement to ensure that our trading partners play by the rules so that American workers and businesses get all of the benefits we’ve negotiated under our trade agreements, supporting high-quality U.S. jobs and strengthening the middle class. We are taking this action today because American workers and producers deserve a fair shot to compete – and win.”


Other News

WTO DG Azevedo Report on Potential Outcomes of Nairobi Ministerial Conference

In a speech before the General Council on Monday, WTO Director-General Roberto Azevedo reported out on a range of issues and discussed potential outcomes for the ministerial meeting next week in Nairobi.

Director-General Azevedo: “In Nairobi, a lot will depend on what we leave Geneva with. We have three days to finalise our work here, and on that basis we will have to see what is ready for ministerial engagement. We should aim to present ministers with documents for a yes/no decision — or if necessary with only a couple of outstanding issues to resolve. So, as I have said, all of this depends on the progress we make over the next three days. A successful Ministerial Conference is essential to support growth and development for all members, and for the strength and credibility of the multilateral trading system. Therefore I suggest that we close this meeting as soon as possible and get back to work.”

For his full speech, visit: https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/spra_e/spra99_e.htm

Programs & Events of Interest

Alternative Energy Opportunities and Tenders in Kuwait
Tuesday, December 15, 2015
9:00 AM EST
In Case You Missed It

“Deal To End Oil Export Ban In Sight”
The Hill
December 10, 2015
An end to the ban on U.S. crude oil exports appears increasingly likely to be included in the sweeping fiscal deal being negotiated this week in Congress. Lifting the decades-old export ban has been a top energy priority for Republicans for more than a year, and the GOP is eyeing the must-pass government funding and tax policy bills as prime places to address the issue.

“Compromise Bill Would Give President More Muscle Against Unfair Trade Practices”
New York Times
December 10, 2015
The House is expected to approve bipartisan trade and customs legislation on Friday that would empower the administration to more forcefully counter unfair trading practices, though the measure’s provisions against suspected currency manipulation by other countries fell short of demands from critics in both parties. The legislation, reached by House and Senate negotiators on Wednesday with support from the Obama administration, would then go to the Senate early next week. While passage is expected there as well, opposition has emerged over language tucked into the bill to permanently bar state and local governments from taxing Internet access.

“McConnell Warns That Trade Deal Can’t Pass Congress Before 2016 Elections”
Washington Post
December 10, 2015
Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) dealt a significant blow to President Obama’s global trade agenda Thursday, declaring that a sweeping pact with 11 Pacific Rim nations should not be sent to Congress for approval until after the 2016 elections — and maybe not until after Obama leaves office. McConnell, who previously supported efforts to enhance Obama’s trade negotiating powers, signaled that he was undecided on how he would vote on the deal, but he was clear that the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) would be defeated if it were sent to Capitol Hill next spring or summer, as the administration was planning to do.

“Julia Roig: How Businesses Can Help Deliver On The Sustainable Development Goals”
GE Reports
December 8, 2015
Through an incredibly participatory process, the United Nations brought the world together to launch the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). All 193 Member States agreed in September to an ambitious agenda of 17 new global development goals that aim to end poverty, promote well-being and protect the planet. Yet I find myself wondering whether we will go back to business as usual, or will the SDGs really spur us to collaborate between sectors to achieve real change by 2030?

“Ex-Im Bank Is Reopened, But Big Loans Are Stalled”
New York Times
December 7, 2015
The announcement on the Export-Import Bank’s website proclaimed in big blue letters “Ex-Im Bank Reauthorized” — but the fight is not over yet for the government’s embattled export credit agency. The 81-year-old agency that helps finance many American exports reopened for new business on Monday, ending a five-month hiatus forced by conservative Republicans who have condemned the bank as a prime example of corporate welfare and so-called crony capitalism. President Obama late Friday signed legislation tucked into a highway bill that extended the agency’s life four years, through September 2019.
Calendar of Events

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February 18, 2016</td>
<td>International Benefits Committee Meeting - New York City (By Invitation)</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 16-17, 2016</td>
<td>Annual International Human Resources Conference - Houston, TX</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 10-12, 2016</td>
<td>Expatriate Management Committee Seattle, WA (By Invitation)</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 9, 2016</td>
<td>International Benefits Committee Meeting - New York City (By Invitation)</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 13-15, 2016</td>
<td>Expatriate Management Committee New York City (By Invitation)</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 26, 2016</td>
<td>International Benefits Committee Meeting - New York City (By Invitation)</td>
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*Note: The WTO Committee Meetings, Trade Committee Meetings, Expatriate Management, Global compensation, International Assignment Management, and International Benefits Committees are by invitation only. For information about them please contact NFTC at (202) 887-0278 or e-mail nftcinformation@nftc.org

Links

- National Foreign Trade Council [www.nftc.org](http://www.nftc.org)
- Global Innovation Forum @ NFTC [www.globalinnovationforum.com/](http://www.globalinnovationforum.com/)
- U.S.-Libya Business Association [www.us-lba.org](http://www.us-lba.org)
- U.S.-Kazakhstan Business Association [www.uskzba.org](http://www.uskzba.org)
- Office of the U.S. Trade Representative [www.ustr.gov/](http://www.ustr.gov/)
- U.S. Census [www.census.gov/](http://www.census.gov/)
- U.S. Department of State [www.usinfo.state.gov/](http://www.usinfo.state.gov/)
- California Chamber of Commerce [www.calchamber.com/](http://www.calchamber.com/)
- Public Policy Institute of California [www.ppic.org/](http://www.ppic.org/)
- CalTrade Report [www.caltradereport.com](http://www.caltradereport.com)
- National District Export Council [www.districtexportcouncil.org](http://www.districtexportcouncil.org)
- Commercial News USA [www.thinkglobal.us](http://www.thinkglobal.us)

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Thank you
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