

RALPH M. HALL, TEXAS
MICHAEL BILIRAKIS, FLORIDA
FRED UPTON, MICHIGAN
CLIFF STEARNS, FLORIDA
PAUL E. GILLMOR, OHIO
JAMES C. GREENWOOD, PENNSYLVANIA
CHRISTOPHER COX, CALIFORNIA
NATHAN DEAL, GEORGIA
RICHARD BARR, NORTH CAROLINA
ED WHITFIELD, KENTUCKY
CHARLIE NORWOOD, GEORGIA
BARBARA CUBIN, WYOMING
JOHN SHIMKUS, ILLINOIS
HEATHER WILSON, NEW MEXICO
JOHN B. SHADEGG, ARIZONA
CHARLES W. "CHIP" PICKERING, MISSISSIPPI
VITO FOSSELLA, NEW YORK
STEVE BUYER, INDIANA
GEORGE RADANOVICH, CALIFORNIA
CHARLES F. BASS, NEW HAMPSHIRE
JOSEPH R. PITTS, PENNSYLVANIA
MARY BONO, CALIFORNIA
GREG WALDEN, OREGON
LEE TERRY, NEBRASKA
MIKE FERGUSON, NEW JERSEY
MIKE ROGERS, MICHIGAN
DARRELL E. ISSA, CALIFORNIA
C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER, IDAHO
JOHN SULLIVAN, OKLAHOMA

ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH CONGRESS

U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Energy and Commerce
Washington, DC 20515-6115

JOE BARTON, TEXAS
CHAIRMAN

March 25, 2004

JOHN D. DINGELL, MICHIGAN
HENRY A. WAXMAN, CALIFORNIA
EDWARD J. MARKEY, MASSACHUSETTS
RICK BOUCHER, VIRGINIA
EDOLPHUS TOWNS, NEW YORK
FRANK PALLONE, JR., NEW JERSEY
SHERROD BROWN, OHIO
BART GORDON, TENNESSEE
PETER DEUTSCH, FLORIDA
BOBBY L. RUSH, ILLINOIS
ANNA G. ESHOO, CALIFORNIA
BART STUPAK, MICHIGAN
ELIOT L. ENGEL, NEW YORK
ALBERT R. WYNN, MARYLAND
GENE GREEN, TEXAS
KAREN MCCARTHY, MISSOURI
TED STRICKLAND, OHIO
DIANA DEGETTE, COLORADO
LOIS CAPPS, CALIFORNIA
MICHAEL F. DOYLE, PENNSYLVANIA
CHRISTOPHER JOHN, LOUISIANA
TOM ALLEN, MAINE
JIM DAVIS, FLORIDA
JAN SCHAKOWSKY, ILLINOIS
HILDA L. SOLIS, CALIFORNIA
CHARLES A. GONZALEZ, TEXAS

BUD ALBRIGHT, STAFF DIRECTOR

**PROTECT AMERICAN MANUFACTURING JOBS
COSPONSOR H.Con.Res. 366**

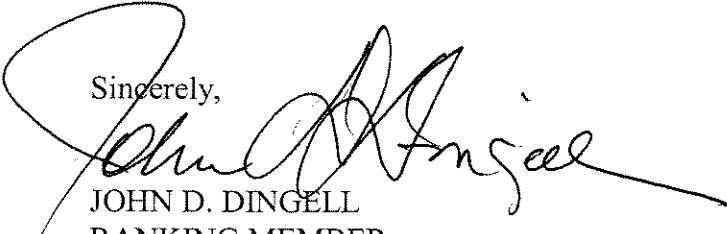
Dear Colleague:

On November 10, 2003, Ron Gettelfinger, President of the United Auto Workers, sent a letter to President Bush regarding the recently announced intention of the United States to negotiate a free trade agreement with Thailand, the second largest producer of pickup trucks in the world. While Thailand already serves as the manufacturing source that supplies pickup trucks to all of Asia, the United States has preserved its domestic production, in part through a 25 percent tariff on imported pickup trucks. In his letter to President Bush, Mr. Gettelfinger expressed serious concerns that any reduction of this tariff could be devastating to the thousands of workers who currently produce pickup trucks in states such as Michigan, Missouri, Minnesota, Indiana, Tennessee, Louisiana, Virginia, New Jersey, and California. Mr. Gettelfinger's letter asked the Administration to publicly pledge that "any U.S.-Thailand free trade agreement will not change the existing 25 percent tariff on imported pickups."

Until yesterday, no one in the Administration had responded to Mr. Gettelfinger's request, nor had anyone in the Administration publicly addressed this issue of grave importance to manufacturing workers who produce pickup trucks in the United States. While the Administration has not officially responded to Mr. Gettelfinger's letter, in a hearing before the Committee on Energy and Commerce, Secretary of Commerce Donald L. Evans answered questions about a potential U.S.-Thailand free trade agreement. His answers were not encouraging.

Attached for your consideration are Mr. Gettelfinger's letter to President Bush and a brief news article from Reuters News Service describing this issue and the Administration's unfortunate position thus far. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, since January 1, 2001, this country has lost over 2.8 million manufacturing jobs. I encourage all Members to join me in calling upon the Administration to publicly commit to preserving the existing 25 percent tariff on imported pickup trucks and to join the 89 Members of Congress who have already cosponsored H.Con.Res. 366.

Sincerely,


JOHN D. DINGELL
RANKING MEMBER



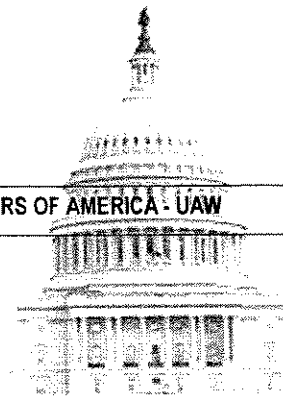
INTERNATIONAL UNION, UNITED AUTOMOBILE, AEROSPACE & AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENT WORKERS OF AMERICA - UAW

RON GETTELFINGER, President

ELIZABETH BUNN, Secretary-Treasurer

VICE PRESIDENTS

GERALD D. BANTOM - NATE GOODEN - BOB KING - CAL RAPSON - RICHARD SHOEMAKER



IN REPLY REFER TO

1757 N STREET, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20036
TELEPHONE: (202) 828-8500
FAX (202) 293-3457

November 10, 2003

Honorable George W. Bush
The President
The White House
Washington, D. C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Your administration recently announced its intention to negotiate a free trade agreement with Thailand. The UAW is deeply concerned about the threat this could pose to thousands of good paying automotive jobs in the United States.

Thailand is now a leader in the production of pickup trucks. Current producers of pickup trucks in Thailand include Auto Alliance Thailand (Ford and Mazda), Isuzu, General Motors and Toyota. The total pickup truck production capacity in Thailand will soon approach one million annually, and could grow even larger.

The United States currently imposes a 25 percent tariff on imported pickup trucks. The UAW is very concerned that the elimination or reduction of this tariff in any free trade agreement with Thailand would lead to a surge in pickup truck imports from Thailand. After NAFTA eliminated the 25 percent tariff on imports of pickups from Mexico, production of pickups in Mexico soared, as it became a major source of pickups for the U.S. market. We believe the same result would occur with Thailand if the 25 percent tariff were reduced or eliminated on pickup truck imports from that country.

Auto manufacturers already use Thailand as the source to supply pickup truck production for all of Asia. Indeed, Toyota is now moving production of pickups from Japan to Thailand. If the 25 percent tariff on pickup truck imports from Thailand were reduced or eliminated, the auto companies could easily expand production in Thailand and use it as a platform for exports to the U.S. market.

The impact on automotive jobs in the United States would be devastating. The auto companies currently assemble pickup trucks at plants located in Michigan, Missouri, Minnesota, Indiana, New Jersey, California, Tennessee, Louisiana and Virginia. The jobs of tens of thousands of UAW members and other workers at these facilities would be directly threatened by any increase in pickup truck imports from Thailand. In addition, thousands of other workers in associated parts plants across the United States would be adversely affected. Furthermore, because the auto companies can shift production of other car and truck models and parts from plant to plant, workers in other automotive facilities throughout

the United States could easily be threatened by any surge in pickup truck imports from Thailand.

As you know, Mr. President, the manufacturing sector in the United States is already in a state of crisis, having lost more than 2.5 million jobs since you took office. This has devastated workers and communities in every region of the country. In light of this serious ongoing problem, the UAW believes it makes absolutely no sense to jeopardize the jobs of thousands of additional manufacturing workers and their communities by permitting a surge of pickup truck imports from Thailand.

For all of these reasons, the UAW urges you not to negotiate any reduction or elimination of our 25 percent tariff on pickup truck imports. To reassure the workers and communities who could be adversely impacted by any surge in pickup truck imports, we also urge you to make a public commitment that any U.S.-Thailand free trade agreement will not change the existing 25 percent tariff on imported pickups.

The UAW looks forward to a prompt, favorable response to this fundamental issue of jobs for American workers.

Sincerely,

Ron Gettelfinger
President, UAW

RG:ar:car

opeiu494

C7448

cc Secretary Elaine Chao
Secretary Donald Evans
Secretary Colin Powell
Secretary John Snow
Ambassador Zoellick
Hon. William Frist
Hon. Tom Daschle
Hon. Dennis Hastert
Hon. Nancy Pelosi
Hon. Charles Grassley
Hon. Max Baucus
Hon. Bill Thomas
Hon. Charles Rangel
Hon. Philip Crane
Hon. Sander Levin

Reuters News
(c) 2004 Reuters Limited

Thursday, March 25, 2004

U.S. truck tariffs on table in Thai trade talks.
By Doug Palmer

WASHINGTON, March 24 (Reuters) - The Bush administration could agree to phase out a 25 percent tariff on truck imports from Thailand, despite strong opposition from the U.S. autoworkers union, Commerce Secretary Don Evans said on Wednesday. "I would say one of the principles - I know it's certainly one of the president's principles - with respect to free trade is lowering tariffs to zero," Evans told the House of Representatives Energy and Commerce Committee.

The Bush administration notified Congress in January it intends to negotiate a free trade pact with Thailand, who has been a strong supporter in the U.S. war on terrorism.

Fearing a loss of U.S. jobs, the autoworkers union has urged U.S. President George W. Bush not to phase out the 25 percent tariff on trucks under the pact.

Thailand is the world's second-largest producer of pickup trucks, with production approaching 1 million units annually, according to the UAW.

"If that 25 percent tariff were removed, Thailand would become the platform from which U.S. manufacturers supply trucks to the entire world," Rep. John Dingell, a Democrat from the auto-producing state of Michigan, told Evans.

Thai Commerce Minister Wattana Muangsook and other Thai trade officials are in Washington to discuss when to formally begin the free trade talks.

At an event Tuesday evening, Wattana urged the Bush administration to resist domestic pressure to leave certain products out of the pact. He argued the overall benefits of free trade between the two countries would outweigh the negative impact on any individual sectors.

"The Thai government will not be protecting minority interests at the cost of majority welfare and development and we hope that the U.S. government will do the same," he said.

The White House excluded sugar from a recent free trade agreement with Australia and provide only minimal new market access in another pact with Central American countries in response to pressure from U.S. sugar groups.

That precedent is particularly worrisome for Thailand, which is the world's third-largest sugar exporter.