

UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION
Washington, DC 20436

MEMORANDUM TO THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE OF THE UNITED STATES
SENATE ON PROPOSED TARIFF LEGISLATION ¹

[**Date approved:** August 17, 2000]²

Bill No.: S. 2495; 106th Congress

Introduced by: Mr. BREAUX

Similar and/or related³ bills: S. 2496.

Summary of the bill:⁴

The bill would suspend the general rate of duty⁵ on--

Stainless steel rail car body shells for gallery type, bi-level trailer coaches (104-passenger capacity) (provided for in the subheading 8607.99.1000).

Effective: The 15th day after the date of enactment.

Through: December 31, 2003.

Retroactive effect: None.

[The remainder of this memorandum is organized in five parts: (1) information about the bill's proponent(s) and the product which is the subject of this bill; (2) information about the bill's revenue effect; (3) contacts by Commission staff during preparation of this memorandum; (4) information about the domestic industry (if any); and (5) technical comments.]

¹ International trade analyst: Kathleen Lahey (202-205-3409); attorney: Jan Summers (202-205-2605).

² Access to an electronic copy of this memorandum is available at <http://www.usitc.gov/billrpts.htm>. Access to a paper copy is available at the Commission's Law Library (202-205-3287) or at the Commission's Main Library (202-205-2630).

³ "Similar bills" are bills in the other House, in the current Congress, which address, at least in part, the substance of this bill. "Related bills" are bills in the **same** House, in the current Congress, but which are either earlier (or later) in time than the bill which is the subject of this memorandum.

⁴ The product nomenclature is as set forth in the bill. See technical comments for suggested changes (if any).

⁵ See appendix A for definitions of tariff and trade agreement terms.

– THE PROPONENT AND THE IMPORTED PRODUCT –

The proponent firm/organization(s)			
Name of firm	Location contacted (city/state)	Date contacted	Response (Y/N) ⁶
Sumitomo Corporation of America	New York, NY	May 17, 2000	Y

Does the proponent plan **any** further processing or handling⁷ of the subject product after importation to its facilities in the United States (Y/N): Y

If “Yes,” provide location of this facility if different from above (city/state): n/a

If “No,” provide location of proponent’s headquarters or other principal facility if different from above (city/state): n/a

The imported product	
Description and uses	Country(s) of origin
The subject goods are stainless steel rail car body shells for bi-level trailer coaches with a 104-passenger capacity. The cars are made to customer specifications subject to winning a bidding competition; the subject imported hollow shells are joined to other components, outfitted, and completed in the United States.	Japan

⁶ Non-confidential written responses received prior to approval of this report by the Commission, if any, will be included in appendix C.

⁷ The phrase “further processing or handling” can include repackaging, storage or warehousing for resale, etc.

– EFFECT ON CUSTOMS REVENUE –

[Note: This section is divided in two parts. The first table addresses the effect on customs revenue based on the duty rate for the HTS number set out in the bill. The second table addresses the effect on customs revenue based on the duty rate for the HTS number recommended by the Commission (if a different number has been recommended). Five-year estimates are given based on Congressional Budget Office “scoring” guidelines. If the indicated duty rate is subject to “staging” during the duty suspension period, the rate for each period is stated separately.]

HTS number used in the bill: 8607.99.10⁸					
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
General rate of duty ⁹ (AVE) ¹⁰	2.8%	2.8%	2.8%	2.8%	2.8%
Estimated value <i>dutiable</i> imports	\$2.5-3 million ¹¹	\$13-16 million	\$16-20 million	n/a	n/a
Customs revenue loss	\$70,000-98,000 ¹²	\$364,000-448,000	\$448,000-560,000	n/a	n/a

HTS number recommended by the Commission: n/a¹³					
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
General rate of duty (AVE)					
Estimated value <i>dutiable</i> imports					
Customs revenue loss					

⁸ The HTS number is as set forth in the bill. See technical comments for suggested changes (if any).

⁹ See appendix B for column 1-special and column 2 duty rates.

¹⁰ AVE is ad valorem equivalent expressed as percent. Staged rates may be found at: <http://dataweb.usitc.gov>

¹¹ Total imports for this HTS subheading are estimated to be \$89 million in 2001, \$101 million in 2002, and \$116 million in 2003. However, this category is much broader in product scope than the proposed duty suspension and, accordingly, the official data would considerably overstate estimated imports of the subject goods. Imports are not estimated for 2004 and 2005 because complete details of likely contract specifications for that time period are not known.

¹² If official data were used as the basis of this computation, estimated losses would be \$2.49 million in 2001, \$2.83 million in 2002, and \$3.25 million in 2003.

¹³ If a different HTS number is recommended, see technical comments.

– CONTACTS WITH OTHER FIRMS/ORGANIZATIONS –

Contacts with firms or organizations <i>other than the proponents</i>			
Name of firm	Location contacted (city/state)	Date contacted	Response (Y/N) ¹⁴
Bombardier Transportation ¹⁵	Saint-Bruno, Quebec, Canada	7/20/00	N

– THE DOMESTIC INDUSTRY –

*[Note: This section is divided in two parts. The first part lists non-confidential written submissions received by the Commission which assert that **the imported product itself** is produced in the United States and freely offered for sale under standard commercial terms. The second part lists non-confidential written submissions received by the Commission which assert either that (1) the imported product will be produced in the United States in the future; or (2) another product which **may compete** with the imported product is (or will be) produced in the United States and freely offered for sale under standard commercial terms. All submissions received by the Commission in connection with this bill prior to approval of the report will be included in appendix D. The Commission cannot, in the context of this memorandum, make any statement concerning the validity of these claims.]*

Statements concerning current U.S. production			
Name of product	Name of firm	Location of U.S. production facility	Date received
None.			

Statements concerning “future” or “competitive” U.S. production			
Name of product	Name of firm	Location of U.S. production facility	Date received
None.			

¹⁴ Non-confidential written responses received prior to approval of this report by the Commission, if any, will be included in appendix D. Only statements submitted in connection with **this** bill will be included in the appendix.

¹⁵ Bombardier imports the hollow shells from Canada free of duty under the NAFTA and finishes them in Plattsburgh, NY (see technical comments).

– TECHNICAL COMMENTS –

*[The Commission notes that references to HTS numbers in temporary duty suspensions (i.e., proposed amendments to subchapter II of chapter 99 of the HTS) should be limited to **eight** rather than ten digits. Ten-digit numbers are established by the Committee for Statistical Annotation of Tariff Schedules pursuant to 19 U.S.C. 1484(f) and are not generally referenced in statutory enactments.]*

Recommended changes to the nomenclature in the bill:

To be more consistent with the nomenclature in chapter 86 of the HTS, it is suggested that the article description for the duty suspension provision be amended to read as follows:

Railway car body shells of stainless steel, the foregoing which are designed for gallery type railway cars each having a capacity of 104 passengers on two enclosed levels (provided for in subheading 8607.99.10).

This description also avoids reference to the 9th and 10th digits of the number designating this category; those digits are not part of the legal text of the HTS and are used for statistical reporting purposes. Moreover, it is hoped that the suggested language reduces compliance and administrative burdens by avoiding the “use” criterion in the original (“...for gallery type..capacity”) and substituting a “designed for use” criterion. We note that the number designating the new heading should be corrected if the measure is enacted and suggest that “9902.86.07” might be employed.

Recommended changes to any C.A.S. numbers in the bill (if given): n/a

Recommended changes to any Color Index names in the bill (if given): n/a

*Basis for recommended changes to the HTS number used in the bill:*¹⁶ n/a

Other technical comments (if any):

It is noted that the HTS number referred to in the bill covers a much larger group of goods than the subject product. Imports were estimated based on a percentage of trade reported under this HTS “basket” category and also by taking into account the number of railcars likely to be produced as a result of the specific contract let by the Chicago METRA system. Because the bill would be effective only through 2003, estimated duty losses are provided through that year. Information provided by the proponent indicates that deliveries under the contract are expected to occur between 2002 and 2005; importation of the railway car shells necessary for each car to be delivered under the contract would occur considerably prior to the delivery date.

¹⁶ The Commission may express an opinion concerning the HTS classification of a product to facilitate the Committee’s consideration of the bill, but the Commission also notes that, by law, the U.S. Customs Service is the only agency authorized to issue a binding ruling on this question. The Commission believes that the U.S. Customs Service should be consulted prior to enactment of the bill.

Although the subject railway car shells are not currently produced in the United States, one other firm with operations in the United States, Bombardier, provides further assembly for similar railway cars at Plattsburgh, NY. Bombardier's steel car body shells are produced in Canada, and final assembly of interior components, etc. is performed at Plattsburgh in a similar process to that of Sumitomo at its New York facility.

APPENDIX A

TARIFF AND TRADE AGREEMENT TERMS

In the **Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States** (HTS), chapters 1 through 97 cover all goods in trade and incorporate in the tariff nomenclature the internationally adopted Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System through the 6-digit level of product description. Subordinate 8-digit product subdivisions, either enacted by Congress or proclaimed by the President, allow more narrowly applicable duty rates; 10-digit administrative statistical reporting numbers provide data of national interest. Chapters 98 and 99 contain special U.S. classifications and temporary rate provisions, respectively. The HTS replaced the **Tariff Schedules of the United States** (TSUS) effective January 1, 1989.

Duty rates in the **general** subcolumn of HTS column 1 are normal trade relations rates, many of which have been eliminated or are being reduced as concessions resulting from the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations. Column 1-general duty rates apply to all countries except those listed in HTS general note 3(b) (Afghanistan, Cuba, Laos, North Korea, and Vietnam) plus Serbia and Montenegro, which are subject to the statutory rates set forth in **column 2**. Specified goods from designated general-rate countries may be eligible for reduced rates of duty or for duty-free entry under one or more preferential tariff programs. Such tariff treatment is set forth in the **special** subcolumn of HTS rate of duty column 1 or in the general notes. If eligibility for special tariff rates is not claimed or established, goods are dutiable at column 1-general rates. The HTS does not enumerate those countries as to which a total or partial embargo has been declared.

The **Generalized System of Preferences** (GSP) affords nonreciprocal tariff preferences to developing countries to aid their economic development and to diversify and expand their production and exports. The U.S. GSP, enacted in title V of the Trade Act of 1974 for 10 years and extended several times thereafter, applies to merchandise imported on or after January 1, 1976 and before the close of September 30, 2001. Indicated by the symbol "A", "A*", or "A+" in the special subcolumn, the GSP provides duty-free entry to eligible articles the product of and imported directly from designated beneficiary developing countries, as set forth in general note 4 to the HTS.

The **Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act** (CBERA) affords nonreciprocal tariff preferences to developing countries in the Caribbean Basin area to aid their economic development and to diversify and expand their production and exports. The CBERA, enacted in title II of Public Law 98-67, implemented by Presidential Proclamation 5133 of November 30, 1983, and amended by the Customs and Trade Act of 1990, applies to merchandise entered, or withdrawn from warehouse for consumption, on or after January 1, 1984. Indicated by the symbol "E" or "E*" in the special subcolumn, the CBERA provides duty-free entry to eligible articles, and reduced-duty treatment to certain other articles, which are the product of and imported directly from designated countries, as set forth in general note 7 to the HTS.

Free rates of duty in the special subcolumn followed by the symbol "IL" are applicable to products of Israel under the **United States-Israel Free Trade Area Implementation Act** of 1985 (IFTA), as provided in general note 8 to the HTS.

Preferential nonreciprocal duty-free or reduced-duty treatment in the special subcolumn followed by the symbol "J" or "J*" in parentheses is afforded to eligible articles the product of designated beneficiary countries under the **Andean Trade Preference Act** (ATPA), enacted as title II of Public Law 102-182 and implemented by Presidential Proclamation 6455 of July 2, 1992 (effective July 22, 1992), as set forth in general note 11 to the HTS.

Preferential free rates of duty in the special subcolumn followed by the symbol "CA" are applicable to eligible goods of Canada, and rates followed by the symbol "MX" are applicable to eligible goods of Mexico, under the **North American Free Trade Agreement**, as provided in general note 12 to the HTS and implemented effective January 1, 1994 by Presidential Proclamation 6641 of December 15, 1993. Goods must originate in the NAFTA region under rules set forth in general note 12(t) and meet other requirements of the note and applicable regulations.

Other special tariff treatment applies to particular **products of insular possessions** (general note 3(a)(iv)), **products of the West Bank and Gaza Strip** (general note 3(a)(v)), goods covered by the **Automotive Products Trade Act (APTA)** (general note 5) and the **Agreement on Trade in Civil Aircraft (ATCA)** (general note 6), **articles imported from freely associated states** (general note 10), **pharmaceutical products** (general note 13), and **intermediate chemicals for dyes** (general note 14).

The **General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade 1994** (GATT 1994), pursuant to the Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization, is based upon the earlier GATT 1947 (61 Stat. (pt. 5) A58; 8 UST (pt. 2) 1786) as the primary multilateral system of disciplines and principles governing international trade. Signatories' obligations under both the 1994 and 1947 agreements focus upon most-favored-nation treatment, the maintenance of scheduled concession rates of duty, and national treatment for imported products; the GATT also provides the legal framework for customs valuation standards, "escape clause" (emergency) actions, antidumping and countervailing duties, dispute settlement, and other measures. The results of the Uruguay Round of multilateral tariff negotiations are set forth by way of separate schedules of concessions for each participating contracting party, with the U.S. schedule designated as Schedule XX. Pursuant to the **Agreement on Textiles and Clothing (ATC)** of the GATT 1994, member countries are phasing out restrictions on imports under the prior "Arrangement Regarding International Trade in Textiles" (known as the **Multifiber Arrangement (MFA)**). Under the MFA, which was a departure from GATT 1947 provisions, importing and exporting countries negotiated bilateral agreements limiting textile and apparel shipments, and importing countries could take unilateral action in the absence or violation of an agreement. Quantitative limits had been established on imported textiles and apparel of cotton, other vegetable fibers, wool, man-made fibers or silk blends in an effort to prevent or limit market disruption in the importing countries. The ATC establishes notification and safeguard procedures, along with other rules concerning the customs treatment of textile and apparel shipments, and calls for the eventual complete integration of this sector into the GATT 1994 over a ten-year period, or by Jan. 1, 2005.

Rev. 1/4/00

APPENDIX B

**SELECTED PORTIONS OF THE
HARMONIZED TARIFF SCHEDULE OF THE UNITED STATES**

[Note: Appendix may not be included in the electronic version of this memorandum.]

APPENDIX C

STATEMENTS SUBMITTED BY THE PROPONENTS

[Note: Appendix C may not be included in the electronic version of this memorandum posted on the Commission's web site if an electronic copy of the statement was not received by the Commission.]

APPENDIX D

STATEMENTS SUBMITTED BY OTHER FIRMS/ORGANIZATIONS

[Note: Appendix D may not be included in the electronic version of this memorandum posted on the Commission's web site if an electronic copy of the statement was not received by the Commission.]

106TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2495

To suspend temporarily the duty on stainless steel rail car body shells.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 2, 2000

Mr. BREAUX introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance

A BILL

To suspend temporarily the duty on stainless steel rail car body shells.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 99 of
4 the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States is
5 amended by inserting in the numerical sequence the fol-
6 lowing new heading:

“	9902.xx.xx	Stainless steel rail car body shells for gallery type, bi-level trailer coaches (104-passenger capacity) (provided for in the subheading 8607.99.1000)	Free	No change	No change	On or before 12/31/2003	”.
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1 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by
2 subsection (a) applies with respect to goods entered, or
3 withdrawn from warehouse for consumption, on or after
4 the 15th day after the date of enactment of this Act.

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