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THE SENATE
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September 22, 2004

Mr. Kelly Parkhill, Director
Industry Support and Analysis - Import Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
14th Street and Constitution Avenue, NW Room 3713
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Mr. Parkhill:

I am writing today to express my strong support of the Steel Import Monitoring and Analysis System (SIMA). The Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (69 Federal Register 52,211) is seeking input on extension and improvement of SIMA. I am urging support of this by expanding the program and making it permanent, a commitment to American workers and companies.

The Administration's commitment to expand and extend SIMA is vital. We must act now before the existing program expires in March, 2005. Immediate action is necessary and the Administration should use their power to expedite the rulemaking process.

The current program can be enhanced by extending the language to include other products (not just Section 201 products) and to make this indefinite in duration. If this program is extended and enhanced, the steel market's volatility may stabilize and the steel crisis may be no more.

My constituency is based in a geographic area that readily relies on the steel industry for their living. They are watching this situation very closely. My constituents have asked for my involvement in seeing this program get off the ground. I am offering my suggestions and assistance to see this happen.

The program does nothing more than provide for the early collection and release of data that will be made publicly available in an event – i.e., as part of the normal Census trade statistics. It provides no material burden on importers and would in no way limit these imports. A similar program in Canada has been successful for years. Information is what is needed to make clear decisions. Expanding the program to make it indefinite and to cover all steel products (not just the Section 201 products) should be an easy decision.

Mr. Parkhill, again, time is a very important factor in this decision. I am asking you to please counsel the Administration and do what you can to expedite this necessary decision.

Sincerely,

SENATOR RAYMOND E. BASHAM
Co-Chairman - Michigan Legislative Steel and Mining Caucus

cc: Secretary of Commerce, Donald L. Evans
U. S. Senator Carl Levin
U. S. Senator Debbie Stabenow