



September 21, 2004

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

Dear Mr. Parkhill:

On behalf of the iron mining industry in Minnesota, I am writing regarding the request for comments on the extension and expansion of the import monitoring system for steel that was instituted by President Bush in 2002. We strongly support the Administration's commitment to expand and extend the existing Steel Import Monitoring and Analysis system, and encourage expeditious action to make it permanent.

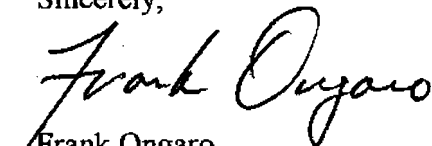
Timely and accurate information and data is essential for all government policy makers. A strong, stable and healthy steel industry is vital to the overall strength of our country. Any future import surge could unfairly damage the industry and the licensing and monitoring information is critical for responding quickly. Expanding the program will only enhance the quality of the information available.

The iron and steel industries have made remarkable efforts to adjust and recover from the very recent steel crisis. This recovery effort must not be jeopardized by not having the tools in place to monitor the marketplace and import developments.

In closing, it is important to point out that in Minnesota, nearly 4000 men and women work directly in our iron ore mines and plants. Another approximately 12,000 people in supplier companies have jobs that are dependent on the mining industry. For Northeastern Minnesota, a stable industry is the only way the region survives. Expanding and making permanent the existing program is an important step in that survival.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,


Frank Ongaro
President

Cc: The Honorable Donald L. Evans
Secretary of Commerce