

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2307

September 27, 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:

In response to the August 25th request by the Department of Commerce, I am writing to urge quick action to see that the existing Steel Import Monitoring and Analysis system is enhanced and extended. As the Administration itself has recognized, this is a critical program to ensure that the government and industry participants have access to timely and accurate data with regard to imports. Getting a new program up and running at the earliest possible date should be a top priority.

These are times of great change in the American steel industry. After a severe crisis that began in 1998, American steelmakers have enhanced their competitiveness through a series of dramatic steps to consolidate and restructure, while adopting new and innovative labor agreements. We all have a stake in seeing that this recovery continues and succeeds. Establishing an effective and permanent import monitoring system that covers all basic steel products is a key step in achieving that result.

The Administration's endorsement of this program last December was right on the mark. More and better information can only be a good thing for the effective functioning of the market, as well as for policy makers as they consider issues affecting the steel sector. This program in no way hinders or limits imports, is fully WTO-consistent, and similar systems are already in place abroad. Given that the existing program will expire next March, time is of the essence in getting an improved system up and running.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this critical program, and I would greatly appreciate it if you could keep me informed of developments as the Department of Commerce works to put in place a new system.

Sincerely,



Norm Coleman
United States Senate

cc: The Honorable Donald L. Evans, Secretary of Commerce

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