

June 6, 2002

TO: Committee on Ways and Means FAX: 1-202-225-2610
RE: H.R. 4583

We are writing to you to oppose H.R. 4583, a bill proposing to permanently reduce the duty on certain straw hats. Our company is the Jay Gerish Co., located at 2 York Avenue, West Caldwell, NJ 07006 – telephone number 973-403-0655. We are importers of straw hat bodies. Hat bodies are hat forms which we sell to American manufacturers. These manufacturers shape and style the hat bodies into a finished hat and then sell them to retail outlets. Over the past ten years, the American hat manufacturers have been crippled because of the increased volume of finished straw hats that have been imported into the United States. Many manufacturers have been forced to go out of business because of this trend. The bill that is being proposed will further destroy the hat manufacturing industry in the United States. We ask that you reject this bill in order to save and protect the American manufacturers and their employees from further hardships.

Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,

Kathleen Gerish, VP
Jay Gerish Co.