

Dear Representative,

Re: H.R. 4583. Please vote against this bill. It hurts American hat manufacturers. Materials for the making of hats such as hat bodies will continue to be dutied while finished hats will have their duty lowered by HR 4583. This bill helps hat importers at the expense of domestic hat manufacturers.

My wife and I own San Francisco Hat Company (www.sfhat.com) a hat manufacturing company in San Leandro that employs 10 people. Last week we were called by fellow hat manufacturers who called to tell us about HR 4583, a bill that may come to a vote next week we were told. Soon everyone in this industry was calling each other, disturbed, seeking clarification and wishing we had been given time to analyze the effects of the bill on our businesses.

We are frightened because H.R. 4583 may harm domestic hatters and manufacturers of hats. This is a vital if small industry made up mostly of ten to fifty person factories. We make cowboy hats, garden hats, sport hats, fashion hats and highway patrol and Smokey the Bear hats to name just a few.

H.R. 4583 reduces the duty on finished hats but not on our raw material, hat bodies. To be fair the bill would need to reduce duty on hat bodies which come into the USA under a different tariff number.

Maria at the Department of Commerce (202-482-4058) has been speaking with members of the industry. She usually learns of these bills well in advance but says that this bill came to her late. I have found that most American hat makers I spoke with are against this bill. Please protect our jobs and businesses.

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