



Legislative Alert

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TRADE UPDATE

Miscellaneous Tariff Bill & 2013 Trade Policy Agenda

This past Wednesday, House Ways & Means Chairman Camp (R-MI), along with Senator Bob Casey (D-PA), participated in an event hosted by the National Association of Manufacturers to highlight the need for passage of a Miscellaneous Tariff Bill (MTB). The most recent MTB expired at the end of 2012, although the Ways and Means Committee and Senate Finance Committee had worked throughout 2012 to draft a new MTB.

A new MTB was introduced in early January, just before the end of the 112th Congress, but did not see final passage. That measure is generally viewed as being the framework for a new bill this congress. Camp and Casey both stressed the importance of passage of a MTB this year.

The MTB event came just two days before the Administration released its *2013 Trade Agenda and 2012 Annual Report* today. The office of the US Trade Representative is the lead agency for development of the President's Trade Policy Agenda – which is required by statute to be provided to Congress no later than March 1 each year. The annual report for the previous year is also required and is a review of progress on trade issues over the past year.

The Obama Administration's 2013 Trade Policy Agenda includes:

- **Advancing negotiations on the Trans-Pacific Partnership**
- **Launching negotiations with the EU on a Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership**
- **Securing results at the World Trade Organization through “fresh, credible approaches for trade liberalization.”**

[Access the 2013 Trade Policy Agenda and 2012 Report here.](#)

In his statement today, USTR Ron Kirk said “President Obama’s trade strategy for 2013 calls for continued progress and bold steps that will build on last year’s record-setting U.S. export performance in support of greater economic growth and jobs for more Americans. Under the President’s trade policy, U.S. producers are selling more goods around the world stamped with ‘Made in America’ than ever before, and trade is supporting more 21st century jobs and industries here at home. In 2013, trade will continue to move us forward toward President Obama’s goal of an economy built to last – one that is globally competitive and that will support a thriving American middle class for generations to come.”

In response to the release of the 2013 Trade Policy Agenda, Chairman Camp and Trade Subcommittee Chairman Devin Nunes (R-CA) released the following statements:

Chairman Camp: “I welcome the Administration’s focus on ensuring that our trading partners play by the rules and that we use ongoing and new negotiations to increase exports of American-made goods and services. In particular, we’ve made significant progress in the Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations, and I hope that the Administration will conclude a high-level, comprehensive agreement by October. In addition, the International Services Agreement, a U.S.-EU trade agreement, a WTO agreement on trade facilitation, and an expansion of the Information Technology Agreement would bring significant gains to our sluggish economy. However, I am disappointed that the Administration has not engaged with Congress concerning Trade Promotion Authority. This authority is necessary both to set out the negotiating objectives that Congress sees as vital at the outset of negotiations, to define the terms for Congressional consultations during the negotiations, and to establish the rules for consideration of implementing bills after the negotiations. I urge the President to demonstrate his commitment to a vigorous and productive trade policy by nominating a qualified and committed U.S. Trade Representative and by immediately beginning discussions with Congress on renewing Trade Promotion Authority.”

Chairman Nunes: “The Administration is behind in its goal of doubling exports in five years, and we must remedy this shortcoming through a concentrated and sustained trade agenda that opens new markets and enforces our rights. While the President’s Trade Policy Agenda appropriately acknowledges and advances economic freedom as an agenda for job creation in the United States and development abroad, it does so without meaningful discussion of Trade Promotion Authority, which is critical to moving a robust and ambitious trade policy agenda forward. In the House, we will continue to provide leadership to advance an ambitious and harmonized trade agenda with Latin America, where the President’s agenda falls short. Our bilateral relationships with Brazil and India also deserve higher-level engagement, rather than the fractured approach the Administration has used to date. I look forward to working with the Administration to further these goals.”

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