



February 4, 2009

President Barack Obama
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Re: Buy American Provisions: American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

Dear President Obama:

The Coalition for a Prosperous America represents over 2.7 million citizens through its agricultural, manufacturing and organized labor members. We advocate the reform of trade policy to promote the interests of those who produce in the United States as a major step towards fixing our economy.

We write to urge you to support inclusion of the provision in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act requiring that U.S. taxpayer money on projects be spent on goods produced in the United States to the maximum extent possible. There is considerable room to expand the Buy American provisions without violating our obligations under international law or agreements. The Senate bill S. 366 does this.

During the campaign, you advocated Buy American and criticized John McCain for not doing so. The American public rightly rejected your opponents ideological position during the campaign and, based upon polling numbers, continues to do so. Indeed, polls show that 86% of citizens support the Buy American provision.

The WTO Agreement on Government Procurement (AGP) establishes some agreed limitations on domestic preferences. Europe, Canada and other signatory countries have rules that prefer domestic production in iron, steel, transportation, telecommunications, construction and other sectors. We are unsure why those countries complain about the Senate proposal to do the same.

China, Russia and India are not parties to the AGP. We have no obligation to them and they have no rights with respect to us under any international agreement. If they chose to initiate any retaliatory trade action, they would clearly be in the wrong. We would be the aggrieved party.

Brian O'Shaughnessy
*Chief Co-Chair, and
Co-Chair for Manufacturing*
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Joe Logan
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Nelson Hoffman, Director
Aspen, CO

Pam Potthoff, Director
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Our trade deficit is a tremendous contributor to the lack of aggregate demand in our economy. Each additional dollar of imports must be financed with the equivalent borrowing from abroad. The U.S. rate of consumption versus production has become dangerously unbalanced. Credit card debt and home equity cannot replace income from employment. The plain fact is that we must produce more and borrow less. U.S. taxpayer money should be spent to benefit U.S. taxpayers. This principle is not controversial throughout the country, though it may be inside the beltway.

We urge you to maintain your campaign promises to demonstrate to the world your intention to stand up for legitimate American rights while respecting our international obligations. (See attached transcript of campaign radio advertisement and Obama campaign sticker). Hard working Americans want a reason to believe that their government is on their side. Please support the Buy American provision in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Respectfully,



Brian O'Shaughnessy
Chief Co-Chair,
Manufacturing Co-Chair



Joe Logan
Agriculture Co-Chair



Robert Baugh
Labor Co-Chair

Radio Advertisement for Barack Obama

(Motors revving)

Announcer: Listen to John McCain speaking to motorcycle enthusiasts in Sturgis, South Dakota, on Tuesday.

McCain: Not long ago a couple of hundred thousand Berliners made a lot of noise for my opponent. I'll take the roar of 50,000 Harleys any day...

Announcer: But when it comes to his record, American-made motorcycles like Harleys don't matter to John McCain. Back in Washington, McCain opposed the requirement that the government buy American-made motorcycles. And he said all buy-American provisions were quote "disgraceful." Surprised? You shouldn't be. This is the same John McCain who supported billions in tax breaks for companies who ship American jobs overseas.

(More motors revving)

Announcer: It's time to hear the roar of the strong American economy again -- and stop John McCain from shipping our jobs overseas.

Obama: I'm Barack Obama, candidate for president, and I approved this message. Paid for by Obama for America.

