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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6025

<http://appropriations.senate.gov>

October 9, 2018

The Honorable Wilbur Ross
Secretary
Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Ross:

As Chairman and Vice Chair of the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee, we write to request additional information on the Department of Commerce's (Department) efforts to help small businesses affected by the Administration's tariffs on our trading partners.

At a hearing on September 6, 2018, representatives from the Bureau of Industry and Security and International Trade Administration indicated that the Department recognizes the impact that tariffs have on small businesses. In addition to disrupting costs, supply chains and markets, the Administration's tariffs have added new red tape and bureaucratic processes that small businesses have been forced to navigate. Unlike large corporations, most small businesses do not have the time or resources to devote to reading the Federal Register, understanding the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States and making the case to federal agencies that their products should be exempt.

While we recognize the need to rein in unfair trade practices, we have concerns with the Administration's approach to imposing tariffs, especially on our allies. We hope to work with you to make any exclusion process and tariff impacts as painless as possible for small businesses and are eager to learn what steps the Department has taken to address these concerns. In particular, we request that you respond to the following questions:

- What specific steps has the Department undertaken to educate small businesses about tariffs and processes for filing exclusion requests?
- Has the Department provided any technical assistance to individual small businesses filing exclusion requests? If so, how many?

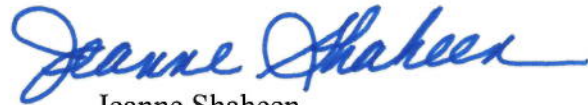
- Have you worked with the Small Business Administration (SBA) and its network of resource partners to provide information and assistance to small businesses related to filing exclusion requests?
- Does the Department offer a single point of contact for small businesses that have questions related to navigating your agency's exclusion process?
- What steps has the Department taken to ensure that affected small businesses are aware of potential tariffs on their products? Has the Department provided deadline extensions for small firms that may not have been aware that tariffs would be imposed on products that they import or export?
- What outreach, if any, has the Department done to examine the impact of tariffs on affected small businesses?

We urge you to respond to these questions promptly and look forward to working with you to ensure the small businesses are able to focus their energy on growth and job creation.

Sincerely,



Jerry Moran
Chairman
Subcommittee on Commerce,
Justice, Science and Related Agencies



Jeanne Shaheen
Vice Chair
Subcommittee on Commerce,
Justice, Science and Related Agencies

CC: The Honorable Linda McMahon
Small Business Administration