



Southern Shrimp Alliance

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September 6, 2012

Via First-Class Mail

The Honorable Rebecca Blank
Acting Secretary of Commerce
U.S. Department of Commerce
14th Street and Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: Commerce's Response to Circumvention of Antidumping Duties

Dear Acting Secretary Blank:

On behalf of the Southern Shrimp Alliance (SSA), I write to express the domestic shrimp industry's gratitude to the staff and leadership of Import Administration for their substantial efforts to address circumvention of the antidumping duty orders on frozen warmwater shrimp.

Nearly a decade ago, while considering the merits of seeking relief from unfairly-traded imports, we received foreboding warnings from importers and seafood distributors that any trade relief imposed would be ineffective. Duties, we were told, would simply be evaded. The very public history of the enforcement problems of the antidumping duty order on crawfish tails lent support to these predictions.

Sure enough, since the antidumping duty orders were imposed in February 2005, SSA has been heavily involved in uncovering and documenting evasion schemes that have substantially undermined the trade relief granted to the shrimp industry. By working with U.S. Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and NOAA Law Enforcement, we have successfully closed down several circumvention tactics . . . only to see new circumvention schemes replace them.

In addition to working with government agencies to directly address rampant fraud in the seafood importing business, we have also worked to draw more attention to the problem. Our public comments on the issue have often been critical of the Department of Commerce's response to circumvention. Over the last year, officials within Import Administration have stressed concern about evasion of trade remedies and fraud before the Department. It is with this history in mind that I convey our sincere appreciation for the actions taken to address an issue of great importance to vulnerable domestic industries.

We recognize that Import Administration will make determinations at times accepting and at other times rejecting the positions taken by the domestic shrimp industry. This letter is not prompted by any specific outcome. Rather, we wish to commend the Department for taking seriously allegations of fraud and circumvention in a recently completed administrative review of the antidumping duty order on certain frozen warmwater shrimp from the People's Republic of China. Separate and apart from the final determinations made in the review, we understand that the staff of Import Administration gave careful consideration to information placed on the record of that

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review and the leadership of Import Administration committed the additional resources necessary to fully investigate that record.

Investigating illegal fraud and circumvention in the context of the administrative proceedings undertaken by Commerce is a significant burden on a staff that is already heavily-taxed. Nevertheless, without a continued strong commitment to rooting out fraud, our trade laws are gravely threatened. We are therefore grateful for Import Administration's concrete demonstration of concern regarding widespread circumvention and fraud. On behalf of our members and the shrimp industry generally, thank you.

Please let us know if there is any way in which our organization or our members can be of additional assistance to Commerce's efforts to eliminate illegal fraud and circumvention undermining our nation's trade laws.

Sincerely,



John Williams
Executive Director

cc: Senator Max Baucus, Chairman, Committee on Finance
Senator Orrin G. Hatch, Ranking Minority Member, Committee on Finance
Congressman David Camp, Chairman, Committee on Ways & Means
Congressman Sander M. Levin, Ranking Minority Member, Committee on Ways & Means
Congressman Charles Boustany, Member, Committee on Ways & Means
Congressman Cedric Richmond
Hon. Paul Piquado, Assistant Secretary for Import Administration