

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

November 30, 1999

The Honorable Charlene Barshefsky
United States Trade Representative
Executive Office of the President
600 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Ambassador Barshefsky:

We appreciate the opportunity to attend the Seattle World Trade Organizations Talks. It appears that there is good progress in a number of areas; however, we would like to draw your attention again to the particular concerns of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) now engaged, or seeking to enter, international trade. It is imperative that this occur since 97 per cent of all U.S. exporters are SMEs. Of this group, 65 per cent employ 20 or fewer persons and almost 20 per cent are sole proprietors. This group is not represented in international trade negotiations and deserves a permanent place at the table.

Your staff has been provided the particulars of some of the unique problems which U.S. small businesses experience in international trade. For that reason, we strongly urge that you make a maximum effort to include in the Ministerial Declaration recognition of the importance of SMEs in the world economy as well as a concrete plan of action to identify and address SME concerns as they pertain to functional trade areas.

We would request that as part of the recommendations and plan of action that there is specific mention made of the requirement to include SMEs all subsequent trade negotiations as required by the *Small Business Act*. Moreover, we would welcome, as part of the plan of action/recommendation, that a symposium be hosted by the WTO to further identify and refine the types of international trade problems which SMEs experience across the full spectrum of trade sectors.

To fully consider the specific needs and concerns of small and medium sized enterprises in all forthcoming trade negotiations in the Seattle Round;

*To convene a WTO sponsored symposium on small and medium sized enterprises in first half of 2000 to identify and propose plans of action to address the particular concerns of small and medium sized businesses in international trade;
and*

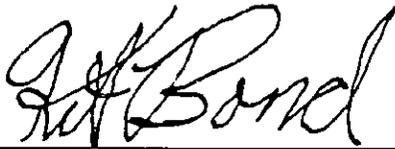
To incorporate the findings of the symposium into the WTO deliberative process

We would further urge that in the "objectives" section of the preamble that there is strong mandatory language, which will ensure that SMEs are represented and participate in all upcoming negotiations which result from the Seattle Round. We would propose the following specific language:

To ensure that small and medium sized businesses are invited to participate in the upcoming negotiations and that the full spectrum of issues, which inhibit their full participation in international trade, are identified and resolved.

Thank you very much for your attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely yours,



The Honorable Christopher "Kit" Bond
Chairman
Senate Small Business Committee



The Honorable Donald A. Manzullo
Chairman
House Small Business Tax, Finance &
Exports Subcommittee



The Honorable Max Baucus
Member
Senate Finance Committee

CC:

Secretary Albright
Secretary Daley
Deputy Secretary Eisenstat
Secretary Glickman
Administrator Aida Alvarez