

**OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT**



**Office of the United States Trade Representative
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FROM: Ambassador Ron Kirk c/o Ken Washington, Correspondence Analyst

TO: The Honorable Mary Landrieu

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SUBJECT/MESSAGE: If you receive this transmission incomplete, please contact Ken Washington at (202) 395-9416.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20508

MAY 21 2009

The Honorable Mary Landrieu
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Landrieu:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of the small business trade agenda. As a former Mayor of Dallas, I saw firsthand at the local level that having even one or two international customers can sustain profits and jobs for a small firm. As you point out, fully 97 percent of America's exporters have fewer than 500 employees, and more than two-thirds have fewer than 20 employees. So if we make trade work for small and medium-sized businesses, we make trade work for America.

My office was pleased to meet with members of your staff recently to outline the steps we are taking to make trade more available to small businesses. An aggressive effort to keep trade flowing during the economic downturn, open more markets to American goods and services, and engage in effective enforcement to ensure that foreign governments play by the rules and treat our companies and workers fairly will benefit the tens of thousands of small and medium firms across the country which rely on market access abroad to grow their businesses. We are actively addressing issues such as customs facilitation, non-tariff barriers to trade and intellectual property rights protection in trading partners around the globe. These are issues of particular concern to small business as they seek to get their products and services into foreign markets and also protect their innovations from infringement. We also are working to make trade information more available both at home and abroad. A transparent and rules-based multilateral trading system and online access to trade information especially benefits small firms that lack the resources of large companies to hire trade consultants and lawyers in order to do business overseas.

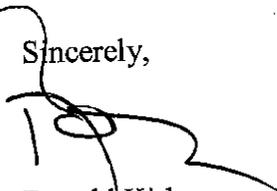
USTR's Office of Intergovernmental Affairs and Public Liaison is already stepping up USTR's efforts to reach out to small businesses to hear their issues and concerns and meeting with state and local chambers of commerce. We seek to further expand small business representation on our statutory trade advisory committees to ensure that the small business voice is heard consistently throughout the course of trade negotiations and in implementation and enforcement. We will partner closely with the Department of Commerce and the Small Business Administration (SBA) to reach out to networks of small businesses around the country regarding the Administration's trade agenda and hear their priority issues. We will soon launch a new user-friendly USTR website with critical information for small exporters, including links to resources from Commerce and SBA that can assist individual small businesses with their export promotion needs and solving specific problems which they may encounter.

As I indicated to the Finance Committee, we will continue to explore effective ways to integrate more fully the interests and concerns of small business into USTR's agenda, including, if it is the best way to ensure that we can expand small business opportunities, creating an Assistant USTR for Small Business.

The Honorable Mary Landrieu
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Thank you again for your interest in the small business trade agenda, I look forward to continuing discussions with you on these and other important matters.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ronald Kirk', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Ronald Kirk