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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6350

TELEPHONE: (202) 224-5175 FAX: (202) 224-5619

August 3, 2009

Mr. Gene Dodaro
Acting Comptroller General
U.S. Government Accountability Office
441 G Street, NW
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Mr. Dodaro:

Since the beginning of the 111th Congress, the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship (the Committee) has held several events focusing on the challenges faced by small exporters. At each event we have heard two common themes; first, that there is a lack of effective coordination of trade promotion activities between Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee (TPCC) member agencies; and second, that the programs and services offered by TPCC member agencies to small businesses need improvement.

As the new Administration gets underway, it is crucial that all TPCC member agencies, particularly those involved in promoting or providing services and opportunities to small businesses are on the same page. Accordingly, we request that the Government Accountability Office conduct a study updating previous reports published in 1993, 2002 and 2006 regarding the TPCC's progress in achieving a government-wide strategy for effective export promotion.

When conducting your analysis, please focus on the export promotion activities and programs offered by the Small Business Administration (SBA), as well as other TPCC member agencies most involved in promoting export opportunities for small businesses. In addition to the issues previously mentioned, other areas of interest to the Committee include:

- Steps the SBA and TPCC member agencies are taking to improve interagency coordination, training and outreach to small businesses;
- The allocation of SBA resources to export promotion efforts as compared to other TPCC member agencies that serve small businesses, as well as government-wide export promotion priorities;
- A review of the National Export Strategy in relation to small business export promotion, for example, whether including a section on small business is appropriate – such a section could outline agency goals regarding the participation of small businesses and information related to the promotion of export opportunities for small businesses; and

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- The organizational and management structure of the TPCC and whether the Department of Commerce's management and control of the TPCC's activities impacts its effectiveness for other participating Federal agencies.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact John High with Senator Landrieu's staff at (202) 224-5175, or Meredith West with Senator Snowe's staff at (202) 224-7884.

Sincerely,



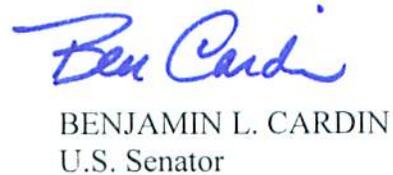
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