GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Washington, D.C. 20230

July 21, 2004

The Honorable William M. Thomas
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-6348

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Enclosed is a matrix that includes the Administration's positions regarding a number of miscellaneous tariff bills contained in H.R. 1047, the "Miscellaneous Trade and Technical Corrections Act of 2003," as passed by the House of Representatives on March 5, 2003. We have already discussed most of these views with the staff of the Subcommittee on Trade. We understand that the United States Senate recently acted on a similar bill which may soon be reconciled with the House-passed version. We have included in the matrix only those provisions in the bill which the Administration requests be amended or which we oppose.

The Administration does not oppose the remaining provisions in the bill provided that the term of the temporary tariff reduction does not extend beyond December 31, 2007. We oppose any longer suspension period at a time when the United States is engaged in multilateral trade negotiations that provide opportunities to gain concessions from other countries and export opportunities for U.S. manufacturers. Longer suspension periods would reduce U.S. trade negotiators' bargaining leverage in negotiations to gain reciprocity for U.S. duty changes.

The Office of Management and Budget advises that there is no objection to the submission of this report to Congress from the standpoint of the Administration's program.

Sincerely,

Jane T. Dana

Jane T. Dana
Acting General Counsel

Enclosure

cc: The Honorable Charles B. Rangel
The Honorable Philip M. Crane
The Honorable Sander M. Levin

GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Washington, D.C. 20230

July 21, 2004

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley
Chairman, Committee on Finance
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510-6200

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Enclosed is a matrix that includes the Administration's positions regarding a number of miscellaneous tariff bills contained in H.R. 1047, the "Miscellaneous Trade and Technical Corrections Act of 2003," as passed by the Senate on March 4, 2004. We have already discussed most of these views with the staff of the Finance Committee. We understand that the House of Representatives passed similar legislation on March 5, 2003, which may soon be reconciled with the Senate-passed version. We have included in the matrix only those provisions in the bill which the Administration requests be amended or which we oppose.

The Administration does not oppose the remaining provisions in the bill provided that the term of the temporary tariff reduction does not extend beyond December 31, 2007. We oppose any longer suspension period at a time when the United States is engaged in multilateral trade negotiations that provide opportunities to gain concessions from other countries and export opportunities for U.S. manufacturers. Longer suspension periods would reduce U.S. trade negotiators' bargaining leverage in negotiations to gain reciprocity for U.S. duty changes.

The Office of Management and Budget advises that there is no objection to the submission of this report to Congress from the standpoint of the Administration's program.

Sincerely,

Jane T. Dana
Acting General Counsel

Enclosure

cc: The Honorable Max Baucus
The Honorable Craig Thomas