



## Mississippi Manufacturers Association

June 9, 2015

Congressman Steven Palazzo  
U.S. House of Representatives  
331 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Palazzo:

On behalf of the Mississippi Manufacturers Association, I urge you to support the Bipartisan Congressional Trade Priorities and Accountability Act of 2015, legislation to renew and modernize Trade Promotion Authority (TPA). This new TPA legislation contains long-sought updates to the negotiation objectives to direct U.S. negotiators to address growing challenges to our manufacturer's competitiveness in overseas markets. It also includes new process and transparency provisions to ensure that trade negotiations proceed with full input from Congress, manufacturers, and other stakeholders.

This legislation is vital because economic growth and job creation at home depend on our ability to sell American goods and services to 95% of the world's customers living outside our country. Many American firms are already seizing these opportunities in our states and communities, as one in three manufacturing jobs depend on exports overseas. More than 97% of the 300,000 U.S. companies that export their products are small- and medium-sized businesses.

Since TPA was last renewed in 2002, U.S. goods exports have more than doubled to a record high of almost \$1.4 trillion in 2014. The U.S. enjoys a nearly \$55 billion manufacturing trade surplus with its 20 existing free trade agreement (FTA) partners. Manufacturing employees in the "most trade-intensive industries" earn 56% more than those in manufacturing companies that were less engaged in trade, as found by the Manufacturing Alliance for Productivity and Innovation.

The record of America's FTAs is outstanding. While our 20 FTA partners represent approximately 10% of the global economy, they buy nearly half of U.S. exports. U.S. FTA partners purchased 12.8 times more U.S. exports per capita than other countries in 2012. Here in Mississippi, companies are actively engaged in trade with 193 foreign countries and territories, accounting for roughly 13% of our state's GDP in 2013. That year alone, \$7.9 billion of Mississippi's goods exports (60%) went to FTA partners.

With so much at stake for Mississippi and American jobs, growth and competitiveness, we urge you to act quickly to pass the Bipartisan Congressional Trade Priorities and Accountability Act for manufacturers and workers.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jay C. Moon", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Jay C. Moon, CEcD, FM, HLM  
President and CEO