

AMERICA'S SMALL BUSINESSES NEED THE EXPORT-IMPORT BANK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HECK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HECK of Washington. Mr. Speaker, today I have a simple ask: let the Export-Import Bank answer the call. 2,655—2,655—that is how many small businesses called the Export-Import Bank last year and asked for their assistance in selling American-made goods and services around the globe. That is how many businesses the Export-Import Bank said yes to, without any impact on taxpayers—no cost to taxpayers whatsoever—in order to help those 2,655 businesses be competitive in a global market.

The truth is, in each district—Democratic districts, Republican districts, urban, rural, coastal, interior—each district is rich with businesses large and small. Every Member has small businesses that are the result of hard work, families pulling together to build something of value and worth that can be assisted by the Export-Import Bank—brand-new business as well, not just those that are intergenerational. These are the businesses that create jobs and employ millions of our loved ones and our neighbors and our family. When they want to export their goods and services, who do they call? They call the Export-Import Bank.

Alliance Rubber Company is just one of the 2,655 small businesses that made that call. Alliance is the largest manufacturer of rubberbands in America. It is a women-owned small business located in Hot Springs, Arkansas. They employ a whole 156 employees. Alliance plans to add 15 employees within the next year, but without exports, they will be cutting 10 jobs—our family members, our neighbors. Add 15 or cut 10? It seems like the choice is obvious to me.

Here is what another company said: “Thanks to credit insurance available through the Ex-Im, we have hired a salesman dedicated to growing international sales. Growing our traffic and safety business internationally will mean more jobs in our Fife facility and more business for our local vendors.”

That is in my district, Fife, Washington. The company is Pexco, another one of the 2,655 businesses. There are Pexcos in Republican districts and in Democratic districts all over this country. There are Alliance Rubber companies in Republican Districts and Democratic districts. And if you listen to these business leaders, it makes sense to help them do what they are doing.

Who will answer the call after June 30? Well, unfortunately, not local banks or even the big banks. If you don't believe me, ask them. They are the ones that usually refer the businesses to the Export-Import Bank.

We have 10 days left, 10 legislative days to act before the help on the other end of the line is gone. Companies have 15 business days to make the call and see how they can sell their goods and

expand their exports to foreign customers. If you are a small business looking to export, call 1-800-565-EXIM, 1-800-565-3949. That is why the Bank is there. That is why it should remain.

As a matter of fact, Chairman HENSARLING's own witness—I couldn't make this stuff up—who testified against the Bank as a small-business owner last week told her hometown newspaper this later: “The fact is that there are a lot of small businesses and large businesses that need the Bank right now, and to pull that rug out from under them would be devastating.” I couldn't make this up.

Hold a vote, Mr. Speaker. Hold a vote. Give your colleagues the opportunity to vote for our small businesses and the jobs they provide. They are the backbone of this community and this economy and this Nation; 2,655 of them and counting. Let the Export-Import Bank answer the call.

AMERICANS DESERVE TO KNOW WHO RAISED THEIR FOOD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. MASSIE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MASSIE. Mr. Speaker, Americans want to know: Where does their food come from? Parents want to know before they give it to their children: How was this food raised? Where did it come from? Moms want to know, dads want to know, and today they can; but if proposed legislation passes this body this week, we won't have that information necessary to make those decisions for our family and our family's health.

What legislation am I talking about? I am talking about the country of origin labeling. In other words, right now, if you buy food and it comes from a foreign country, it must be labeled. If you buy pork, you buy beef, you buy chicken, wouldn't you want to know where that food came from?

Why would you want to know? Well, different countries have different rules and different cultures. If you remember back in 2007, we had some pet food that came from a foreign country that killed a lot of pets. It was enhanced with melamine to up the protein readings in it, and it was unsafe for pets. A lot of pets died as a result. Well, it came from a different country that has different ethics. I think Americans deserve to know who raised their food, which country did it come from. But the legislation that is in front of us this week will repeal that requirement to label beef, poultry, and pork.

Now, why are we doing this? Why are we in such a rush? Because we have been told that the World Trade Organization requires it.

What is the World Trade Organization, and who are they to tell Congress what laws we have to pass? These judges weren't appointed by the President. They weren't confirmed by the Senate. These are not judges from our Constitution. These are extra-constitutional judges, yet they are telling us

here in Congress you have got to do this or there will be repercussions.

I think our Founding Fathers would be appalled at this notion, that we have given up our sovereignty. I don't accept the premise that we have to make laws here based on what some world court agrees to, but I suppose somebody made a trade agreement in some Congress previous that bound us to decisions of this court.

Now, even if you accept the premise that we have to abide by the World Trade Organization, and because they have ruled that we can no longer label pork and beef as from foreign countries to inform our consumers, then you have got to ask the question: Why did we add chicken to this bill? The World Trade Organization is silent on the subject of chicken, yet it is in the bill.

We are going to remove the labeling requirements for chicken. I think it is a bad idea. I think it is probably motivated by some large meat packing companies; but they are represented here in Congress, and the American consumer and small livestock farmers are not.

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I proposed voluntary country of origin labeling last night in the Rules Committee. I had an amendment. It said: Okay. Maybe we shouldn't mandate. Maybe we shouldn't force the foreigners to label their meat when it comes into the country; but how about voluntarily letting American producers put that proud stamp and know that it is the seal of approval that most consumers want so they know that beef, that pork, was raised in this country?

I was shot down in the Rules Committee. It was just a voluntary program. In fact, it was proposed 10 years ago by this Speaker of the House, by the former chair of the Ag Committee, by the current chair of the Ag Committee, and by the current chair of the Rules Committee; yet they wouldn't allow my amendment for a vote in the Rules Committee. All I sought to do was let American farmers proclaim that their beef is raised in the United States.

Today, Mr. Speaker, that is why I am here. I am here today to say that we need to assert our sovereignty, the sovereignty of this body. We all took an oath to the Constitution. We didn't take an oath to the World Trade Organization. We need to assert our sovereignty, and we need to uphold our commitment to the Americans who sent us here.

I urge my colleagues to vote “no” on the repeal of the country of origin labeling bill later today.

ISRAEL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. WILLIAMS. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, our Commander in Chief admitted that, in the fight against the Islamic State, the U.S. does not have “a complete strategy.”