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www.house.gov/shuster

Contact: Jeff Urbanchuk, Press Secretary
(202) 225-2431
(202) 593-1040 cell
(202) 225-2486 fax
jg.urbanchuk@mail.house.gov

Shuster Acts to Protect American Jobs

Calls on Department of Commerce to Quickly Investigate Unfair Foreign Trade Practices

Washington, D.C. – **Congressman Bill Shuster** joined Representatives Steve Kagen (D-WI), Thomas Petri (R-WI), Michael Turner (R-OH), and John Olver (D-MA) and eighteen other Members of Congress in a letter to Commerce Secretary Gutierrez expressing concern over unfair trade practices of foreign paper companies and their impact on the American paper industry.

For example, Appleton Papers is an American producer of Light Weight Thermal Paper (LWTP) commonly used in ATMs and cash registers. Appleton is the larger of the only two remaining LWTP producers in America. The company has 2,400 employees and operates a facility in Roaring Spring, Pennsylvania that employs 509 people.

Recent increases in the cost of raw materials and energy have made paper products more expensive to produce. Despite the weakening value of the dollar compared to foreign currencies, foreign competitors in China and Germany have undercut the American LWTP market and flooded it with unfairly priced and, in the case of China, unfairly subsidized goods.

“I am an advocate of free trade,” Shuster said. “But free trade must also be fair trade. American companies like Appleton are important contributors to our nation’s industrial base that pay good wages and employ skilled workers. They should not be put in jeopardy because of unfair trade practices.”

“The government should investigate whether these foreign companies are taking advantage of an uneven playing field,” Shuster added. “In a time of a slowing economy, good jobs should not be put on the chopping block because of predatory foreign competition.”

The Department of Commerce is expected to conclude its preliminary investigation into this issue on May 7th.

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