

CalChamber Reiterates Importance of Free Trade Agreements to Economy



The California Chamber of Commerce is emphasizing again to a congressional committee the importance of the pending free trade agreements to both the California and U.S. economies.

The CalChamber submitted comments on February 7 to the U.S. House Ways and Means Committee, which held a hearing February 9 on President Barack Obama's trade policy agenda.

"Trade offers the opportunity to expand the role of California's exports. In its broadest terms, trade can literally feed the world and raise the living standards of those around us," CalChamber President and CEO Allan Zaremberg wrote to the committee.

CalChamber Positions

The CalChamber urged approval of

the pending free trade agreements with South Korea, Colombia and Panama.

The CalChamber also:

- supported the extension of trade promotion authority so the President of the United States may negotiate new multilateral, sectoral and regional trade agreements;

- expressed hope that appropriate funding will be made available to make the U.S. Commercial Service and export assistance a core part of the economic recovery package;

- opposed protectionism as a move that only invites retaliation from U.S. trading partners;

- encouraged continued participation in negotiations leading to U.S. accession to the Trans-Pacific Partnership;

- voiced support for a successful Doha Round of negotiations by the World Trade Organization (WTO); and

- urged a quick resolution to the cross-border trucking dispute with Mexico under the North American Free Trade Agreement.

The committee hearing focused on current trade issues, such as:

- the pending trade agreements with Colombia, Panama and South Korea;

- the full range of issues impeding U.S. companies from selling goods and services in China and distorting trade flows through unfair trade practices;

- the ongoing Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations;

- the prospect for trade expansion in agriculture, industrial goods and services through the Doha Round negotiations at the WTO and issues surrounding Russia's efforts to accede to the WTO; and

- management of trade disputes and concerns and other trade issues.

Comments

The CalChamber is encouraging businesses to comment on the President's trade policy agenda.

Written comments are being accepted by close of business on February 23 at <http://waysandmeans.house.gov>.

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CalChamber Seeking Nominees for Small Business Advocate Award

The California Chamber of Commerce is seeking nominations for its Small Business Advocate of the Year Award.

Each year, the CalChamber recognizes several small business owners who have done an exceptional job with their local, state and national advocacy efforts on behalf of small businesses.

The CalChamber will recognize the award winners at its Business Summit on June 1 in Sacramento.

Application

The application should include information regarding how the nominee has significantly contributed

as an outstanding advocate for small business in any of the following ways:

- Held leadership role or worked on statewide ballot measures;

- Testified before state Legislature;

- Held leadership role or worked on local ballot measures;

- Represented chamber before local government;

- Actively involved in federal legislation.

The application also should identify specific issues the nominee has worked on or advocated during the year.

Additional required materials:

- Describe in approximately 300 words why nominee should be selected.

- News articles or other exhibitions as supporting materials.

- Letter of recommendation from local chamber of commerce president or chairman of the board.

Deadline

Award nominations are due to the CalChamber Local Chamber Department by April 15. The nomination form is available on the CalChamber website at www.calchamber.com/smallbusiness or may be requested from the Local Chamber Department at (916) 444-6670.