

CALIFORNIA CHAMBER of COMMERCE



May 3, 2019

**To: The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
 The Honorable Kamala Harris
 Members, U.S. Senate**

**From: (Mrs.) Susanne T. Stirling
 Vice President, International Affairs
 California Chamber of Commerce**

Re: SUPPORT FOR THE EX-IM BANK

In order to prevent the loss of U.S. jobs to our foreign competitors, I am writing on behalf of the California Chamber of Commerce to ask for your support in confirming Kimberly Reed as President/Chair the Export-Import Bank, and continuing the process to bring the Board to a full quorum as promptly as possible. Failure to restore the full authority of the Ex-Im Bank, which has not had a quorum since July 2015, will seriously disadvantage U.S. companies—small and large—in foreign markets, potentially resulting in the loss of thousands of U.S. jobs.

The California Chamber of Commerce, established in 1890, is the largest, broad-based business advocate that works at both state and federal levels to influence government actions affecting all California businesses. Our members include more than 16,000 firms of all kinds and sizes, as well as 300 affiliated local chambers of commerce and 200 trade associations. Our members employ one-fourth of the private sector workforce in California. Through its grassroots action program, the California Chamber reaches out to a statewide network of 430,000 small business owners.

The CalChamber, in keeping with long-standing policy, enthusiastically supports free trade worldwide, expansion of international trade and investment, fair and equitable market access for California products abroad, and elimination of disincentives that impede the international competitiveness of California business.

Ex-Im has a proven record of success, and turns a profit for the American taxpayer. Since 2009, Ex-Im has refunded \$4.8 billion to the U.S. Treasury above all costs and loss reserves.

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In fact, small businesses accounted for approximately 91% of Ex-Im's transactions in FY 2017; further, these small business transaction figures are in addition to the tens of thousands of small and medium-sized businesses that supply goods and services to large exporters. In FY 2017, Ex-Im provided almost \$2.2 billion in financing and insurance for U.S. small businesses.

California is one of the top economies in the world with a gross state product of over \$2.7 trillion. In 2018, California exported \$178.4 billion to approximately 230 foreign markets. Trade offers the opportunity to expand the role of California's exports.

In 2017 alone, Ex-Im Bank assisted nearly 200 California exporters, helping to support almost \$900 million in exports. Over the past 5 years, the Bank authorized \$6 billion in financing to support \$1.3 billion of California exports. Over this period, Ex-Im supporting nearly 670 California exporters, 500 of which were small businesses, including approximately 200 minority-owned and women-owned enterprises.

Failure to restore the quorum of the Ex-Im Bank Board has put at risk tens of thousands of U.S. jobs. Over the last decade, the Ex-Im bank has supported more than 1.8 million jobs in all 50 states; however, in FY 2016 and 2017, lacking a board quorum for consecutive years, that number of jobs supported has dwindled to 52,000 and 40,000 U.S. jobs, respectively. These American workers, and the more than 2,600 small businesses they worked for in FY 2017, depend on Ex-Im to compete in global markets.

The California Chamber of Commerce strongly urges you to confirm Kimberly Reed as President/Chair of the Export-Import Bank of the United States and to continue the process of restoring the Board to a full quorum as expeditiously as possible.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



(Mrs.) Susanne T. Stirling
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