

I think it is important that we know the viability of the flood insurance program. But overall, I think having Senate amendments and a Senate agreement is a major step forward. I'm excited about continuing to work together to move this program forward and reauthorize it, hopefully, for a 5-year term. But this step to agree to Senate amendments to extend the time for a total of 60 days to get us past July so that hopefully the Senate will have time in June to bring this up, I think allows us the time we need to make that happen.

I do think if anybody in this body cares about our housing market or cares about stopping taxpayer-funded bailouts or wants to make sure that we have accurate flood maps, they should vote to agree to these amendments, and I hope all my colleagues will do so.

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. I only have myself to close.

Mrs. BIGGERT. I have no further requests for time.

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. Again, let me thank the gentlelady from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) for her outstanding leadership on this. It's been a joy to work with her. The American people are certainly appreciative of her efforts in leading this fight. I also want to thank Ms. MAXINE WATERS, who is our subcommittee ranking member; and I also want to extend congratulations to Senator HARRY REID and Senator TOM COBURN.

I also want to just say a word for the bipartisan relationships that have developed on this bill. This is how we move bills forward. This is how we've got to move the country forward, and this is what the American people are looking to us to do. This is not a Democratic or a Republican Congress. It is a Congress of the American people. And the progress of this flood insurance bill is indicative of that fact.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. BIGGERT. I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned earlier, this bill is the 17th short-term extension of the National Flood Insurance Program. Our colleagues in the Senate have assured us that in June they will take up the version of a long-term NFIP reauthorization and reform bill, so I am confident that this will be our last short-term extension.

H.R. 5740, with the Senate amendment, extends the program for an additional 2 months in order to protect homeowners, communities in flood-prone areas, and the housing market. Including at least one reform provision in H.R. 5740—to eliminate subsidized rates for second and vacation homes—reduces some of the NFIP's risk to taxpayers.

H.R. 5740 also buys the House and Senate 2 more months to finalize a larger bill to reauthorize the 5 years and reform the National Flood Insurance Program.

Eleven months ago, over 400 Members of the House from both sides of the

aisle voted for H.R. 1309 to reform this program. Actually, the reform bill passed out of the Financial Services Committee 54-0. So this is a real bipartisan effort. The House also has approved the same 5-year NFIP reauthorization and reform bill as part of the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 in December, and as part of the Reconciliation Act that was passed a couple of weeks ago.

Again, earlier this month over 400 Members of the House voted for the first version of H.R. 5740 to ensure that NFIP doesn't lapse. NFIP is over \$17 billion in debt to taxpayers and it cannot continue without reforms, but shouldn't lapse, particularly at the start of the hurricane season, which begins this week on June 1.

With that, I urge my colleagues to again support H.R. 5740.

Finally, I would really like to thank Ms. WATERS for cosponsoring this bill as the lead cosponsor and Mr. SCOTT from Georgia for managing time for the other side and all other Members on both sides of the aisle. We've had a really great turnout for the NFIP reform effort.

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. Will the gentlelady yield?

Mrs. BIGGERT. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. I misspoke when I referred to Ms. WATERS as the ranking member of the Housing Subcommittee. That honor goes to the Congressman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ). So I just wanted to correct that. Ms. WATERS was the former chairman of the Housing Subcommittee. All of us worked together in such a way, but I did want to correct that as Mr. GUTIERREZ as the ranking member.

Mrs. BIGGERT. I thank the gentleman. Both of the Members have been great in working with this. I know that Ms. WATERS has been the ranking member for the committee in the past and has always worked on the flood insurance.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I once again rise in strong opposition to the reauthorization of the National Flood Insurance Program.

With all the challenges our nation faces I have a simple question for everyone . . . why in the world is the federal government in the flood insurance business?

The federal government is a bad insurance company. This program which began issuing policies in the 1970's is now almost \$19 billion in debt with no hope to ever repay that debt because it is not run with sound actuarial standards.

I opposed this bill a few weeks ago when it passed this House and while the Senate made improvements by taking away subsidized rates from second homes, which is a start, but it still provides others with subsidies while charging premium rates to others, like many in my district with little risk of ever flooding, to provide that subsidy to others in more flood prone areas.

I believe strongly that this is a practice best left to the private sectors or individual states.

It is long past time to get the federal government out of the flood insurance business and I continue to oppose this bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) that the House suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 5740.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the Senate amendment was concurred in.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPORT PROMOTION REFORM ACT

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4041) to amend the Export Enhancement Act of 1988 to further enhance the promotion of exports of United States goods and services, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4041

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Export Promotion Reform Act".

SEC. 2. IMPROVED COORDINATION EXPORT PROMOTION ACTIVITIES OF FEDERAL AGENCIES.

Section 2312 of the Export Enhancement Act of 1988 (relating to the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee; 15 U.S.C. 4727) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—
(A) in paragraph (5), by striking "and" after the semicolon;

(B) by redesignating paragraph (6) as paragraph (7); and

(C) by inserting after paragraph (5) the following:

"(6) in making the assessments under paragraph (5), review the proposed annual budget of each agency described in paragraph (5), under procedures established by the Committee for such review, before the agency submits that budget to the Office of Management and Budget and the President for inclusion in the budget of the United States submitted to Congress under section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code; and";

(2) in subsection (c)—
(A) by redesignating paragraphs (3) through (6) as paragraphs (4) through (7), respectively; and

(B) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

"(3) in conducting the review and developing the plan under paragraph (2), take into account recommendations from a representative number of United States exporters, in particular small businesses and medium-sized businesses, and representatives of United States workers;"; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:
"(g) EXECUTIVE ORDER AND REGULATIONS.—The President shall issue an executive order and such regulations as are necessary to provide the chairperson of the TPCC with the authority to ensure that the TPCC carries out each of its duties under subsection (b) and develops and implements the strategic plan under subsection (c).

"(h) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term 'small business' means a small business concern as defined under section 3 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632)."

SEC. 3. EFFECTIVE DEPLOYMENT OF U.S. COMMERCIAL SERVICE RESOURCES.

Section 2301(c)(4) of the Export Enhancement Act of 1988 (relating to the United States and Foreign Commercial Service; 15 U.S.C. 4721(c)(4)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraphs (B) through (F) as subparagraphs (C) through (G), respectively; and

(2) by striking “(4) FOREIGN OFFICES.—(A) The Secretary may” and inserting the following:

“(4) FOREIGN OFFICES.—(A)(i) In consultation with the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee, the Secretary shall conduct a global assessment of overseas markets to determine those with the greatest potential for increasing United States exports, and to deploy the Commercial Service personnel and other resources on the basis of the global assessment.

“(ii) The assessment conducted under clause (i) shall take into account recommendations from a representative number of United States exporters, in particular small- and medium-sized businesses, and representatives of United States workers.

“(iii) Not later than 6 months after the date of enactment of the Export Promotion Reform Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress results of the global assessment conducted under clause (i) and a plan for deployment of Commercial Service personnel and other resources on the basis of the global assessment.

“(iv) The Secretary shall conduct an assessment and deployment described in clause (i) not less than once in every 5-year period.

“(B) The Secretary may”.

SEC. 4. STRENGTHENED U.S. COMMERCIAL DIPLOMACY IN SUPPORT OF U.S. EXPORTS.

(a) DEVELOPMENT OF PLAN.—Section 207(c) of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 3927(c)) is amended by inserting before the period at the end the following: “, including through the development of a plan, drafted in consultation with the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee, for effective diplomacy to remove or reduce obstacles to exports of United States goods and services”.

(b) ASSESSMENTS AND PROMOTIONS.—Section 603(b) of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 4003(b)) is amended, in the second sentence, by inserting after “expertise” the following: “and (with respect to members of the Service with responsibilities relating to economic affairs) of the effectiveness of efforts to promote the export of United States goods and services in accordance with a commercial diplomacy plan developed pursuant to section 207(c).”.

(c) INSPECTOR GENERAL.—Section 209(b) of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 3929(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (4), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) by redesignating paragraph (5) as paragraph (6); and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (4) the following new paragraph:

“(5) the effectiveness of commercial diplomacy relating to the promotion of exports of United States goods and services; and”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. MANZULLO) and the gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

□ 1940

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members

may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend and to submit extraneous materials for the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this bill has been many years in the making and is the result of several hearings, including one I held as chairman of the House Small Business Committee back in 2006. This is simply a good-government bill that costs nothing.

I recognize that market forces play a predominant role in international trade. However, export promotion programs can play a useful role in helping small and medium-sized enterprises find new markets and customers overseas. Several small companies in northern Illinois expanded their operations and hired new workers after U.S. Commercial Service identified new exporting opportunities.

Also, according to the National District Export Council, every \$1 spent on export promotion has resulted in \$135 in exports. However, many of our trade-promotion programs are not fully integrated. This has been confirmed in various Government Accountability Office, GAO, and Inspector General reports measuring the effectiveness of the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee, which is known as the TPCC. Congressional intent behind the legislation this committee passed in 1992 has not been fulfilled.

Our trading partners are well organized and effectively market their businesses overseas. I recall on one of my trips to China some years ago, the CEO of a very large Chinese manufacturing company told me he often sees Europeans and Japanese as trade-promotion officials, but he had yet to see Americans doing the same thing. And he asked me the question: Where are the Americans?

According to the National District Export Council, while the U.S. spends about 21 cents per \$1,000 of total exports on trade-promotion programs and services, Japan spends 30 cents, France spends 43 cents, and Great Britain spends 75 cents. With small businesses offering the best prospect to boost export growth, we should make every effort that gets the greatest return for any taxpayer money spent on export promotion.

In 2006 and in 2008, I introduced legislation that would reform the TPCC and move its responsibilities into the executive office of the President. I was pleased in 2010 when the President announced the formation of the Export Cabinet and adopted many of the reform ideas contained in my legislation, such as instituting measurable benchmarks for achieving goals set forth in the annual National Export Strategy report.

However, there is one key reform missing from the President's proposal:

having an integrated trade budget. Currently, each trade-promotion agency submits its own budget to the Office of Management and Budget and the President on its own without a separate review as to whether or not each request fits within the overall trade agenda for the U.S. Government.

The TPCC needs budget-review authority in order to be fully effective. In 2010, I was proud to join with our former colleague, Representative Gabby Giffords, in introducing legislation to remedy this problem. While the bill did not pass in the previous Congress, I am proud to join with my good friend, Representative HOWARD BERMAN, in continuing Ms. Giffords' legacy and support the Export Promotion Reform Act.

While the President issued a subsequent memorandum last February that would give the Export Cabinet and the TPCC the ability to make recommendations to the Office of Management and Budget for more effective use of trade-promotion funds, this bill is needed to codify and clarify this role to guarantee that the TPCC will be able to influence decisions on the President's budget request prior to its submission to Congress.

Process and good-government reforms oftentimes do not get the attention they deserve. However, this bill recognizes their importance. I urge my colleagues to support this bill because it will ultimately benefit small and medium-sized exporters.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4041, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the Export Promotion Reform Act is a bipartisan, non-controversial bill that will help increase the export of American goods and services, and in the process create new, high-quality jobs. I want to thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. MANZULLO) for working with me on this legislation. He has been one of the strongest voices for export promotion and export control reform in this Chamber, and he's been a great partner to have on this legislation. I also want to thank my chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, ILEANA ROSLEHTINEN, and her staff for helping to move this through the legislative process to this point.

H.R. 4041 would implement recommendations by the GAO, the Government Accountability Office, to make more effective use of our export-promotion programs. According to the Congressional Budget Office, the bill doesn't authorize any new programs, nor does it add any new spending or impose any new mandates.

The bill has been endorsed by a number of prominent business organizations, including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, and the Business Roundtable.

The Export Promotion Reform Act would make sound, practical improvements that would benefit many of the

Nation's 293,000 exporting firms, more than 97 percent of which are small and medium-sized businesses, while exercising fiscal prudence on behalf of the American taxpayer.

American firms have renewed opportunities for growth and increased employment through increased sales overseas. However, the competition in world trade is fierce, and our export-promotion programs often don't measure up to those of our competitors. GAO has told us repeatedly that these programs would be more effective with improved coordination. To that end, H.R. 4041 would eliminate duplicative activities and improve service delivery to exporters; require a global plan to identify and target the best growth markets for U.S. goods and services; and require our ambassadors to develop country-by-country commercial diplomacy plans aimed at increasing U.S. exports, while making the effectiveness of their commercial diplomacy efforts part of their annual performance review.

Mr. Speaker, the U.S. Department of Commerce estimates that every \$1 billion of U.S. exports supports approximately 5,800 jobs here at home. With 95 percent of the world's consumers living overseas, expanding U.S. exports in world markets is one of the best ways for American business to grow and create jobs.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, March 19, 2012.

Hon. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, House
of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for H.R. 4041, the Export Promotion Reform Act.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is Sunita D'Monte.

Sincerely,

DOUGLAS W. ELMENDORF.

Enclosure.

H.R. 4041—Export Promotion Reform Act

H.R. 4041 would require the Secretary of Commerce to assess overseas markets, at least once every five years, to determine which markets present the greatest opportunities to increase United States exports. The Secretary would be required to relocate personnel that promote U.S. trade opportunities based on the outcome of the assessment. The bill also would require Chiefs of Missions in foreign countries to use those assessments in promoting United States exports.

Based on information from the Department of State and the International Trade Administration, the agencies that would administer the bill's provisions, CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 4041 would have discretionary costs of less than \$500,000 a year, totaling about \$1 million over the 2012-2017 period, assuming the availability of appropriated funds.

Enacting H.R. 4041 would not affect direct spending or revenues; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply.

H.R. 4041 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would

impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

On January 17, 2012, CBO transmitted a cost estimate for H.R. 2987, the American Export Promotion and Job Creation Act, as introduced on September 21, 2011. The language in that bill is similar to that in H.R. 4041 and the estimated costs for the two bills are identical.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Sunita D'Monte. The estimate was approved by Theresa Gullo, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
Washington, DC., April 18, 2012.

Hon. HOWARD BERMAN,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. DONALD MANZULLO,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVES BERMAN AND MANZULLO: The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the world's largest business federation, representing the interests of more than three million businesses and organizations of every size, sector, and region, supports H.R. 4041, the "Export Promotion Reform Act," which would boost exports of goods and services by improving the coordination of U.S. export promotion programs.

International trade plays a central role in creating American jobs and boosting economic growth at home. More than 38 million American jobs already depend on trade, and more than 97% of the 275,000 U.S. companies that export are small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). However, this figure represents just one of every 100 U.S. SMEs, underscoring how difficult it is for smaller firms to enter export markets. At virtually no cost, this bill would ensure that the federal government's limited export promotion resources are used efficiently to offer these smaller companies the help they need to break into the international marketplace.

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) has determined that the 17 federal agencies with export promotion programs could be made more effective through better coordination, elimination of duplicative activities, and better allocation of resources. In particular, GAO found that strengthening the interagency Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee would improve the effectiveness of U.S. export promotion programs. GAO also found that effective export promotion programs can provide significant benefits to SMEs in the competitive global economy.

H.R. 4041 would put many of the GAO recommendations into effect. It would require the Secretary of Commerce to assess overseas markets at least once every five years to determine which markets present the greatest opportunities for U.S. exporters. The bill also would require U.S. ambassadors abroad to use those assessments as U.S. embassies promote U.S. exports of goods and services.

The Chamber supports H.R. 4041, which would help more U.S. companies tap export markets and create American jobs, and applauds you for your leadership on this important issue. The Chamber looks forward to working with you on this important legislation.

Sincerely,

R. BRUCE JOSTEN.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
MANUFACTURERS,
Washington, DC., April 10, 2012.

Hon. HOWARD BERMAN,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.
Hon. DONALD MANZULLO
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVES BERMAN AND MANZULLO: The National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) very much appreciates the opportunity to support legislation that will streamline U.S. export promotion activities. We believe that The Export Promotion Reform Act (H.R. 4041) will help increase the export of domestically made goods.

The NAM is the nation's largest industrial trade association, representing small and large manufacturers in every industrial sector and in all 50 states. The ability of U.S. companies to export has always been a critical issue for the NAM, and exports are increasingly important to the U.S. economy and to the success of American manufacturing.

Foreign markets, particularly in emerging economies, are growing faster than the mature U.S. domestic market. That means in order to obtain the jobs growth we all want, manufacturers need to turn increasingly to export markets. Unfortunately, the United States is falling behind. We are still the world's largest manufacturer, but we lack the export orientation of our major competitors and have been losing share in world markets. In fact, the United States exports less than half as much of its manufacturing output as the global average. And in comparing the United States with the 15 major manufacturing economies, we rank 13th in the proportion of our manufacturing output that is exported.

Increasing U.S. exports contributes directly to jobs for American workers. Global trade flows are recovering, and there are increasing opportunities for sales overseas. However, the more than 90 percent of exporters that are small or medium-sized firms need more effective export promotion assistance in order to compete with the support that foreign firms received from their governments. H.R. 4041 can help here.

According to the GAO, 17 federal agencies have export promotion programs. With improved coordination, these agencies can eliminate duplicative activities and utilize their resources more efficiently. The NAM believes that strengthening the interagency Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee (TPCC), led by the Secretary of Commerce, will improve federal export promotion programs and help the global competitiveness of manufacturers in the United States.

H.R. 4041 will strengthen the TPCC by requiring it to assess current export promotion programs, outline necessary improvement, and coordinate the implementation of export promotion activities by other agencies. The Export Promotion Reform Act will also improve export promotion and provide much-needed practical help to manufacturers and manufacturing workers by providing for the redeployment of U.S. Commercial Service resources. This will help exporters find more customers and better understand foreign Customs rules and regulations.

The NAM hopes to see The Export Promotion Reform Act move quickly toward becoming law, and want to express our strong support for its passage as we all work toward the goal of doubling U.S. exports.

Sincerely,

FRANK VARGO.

BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE,
Washington, DC, April 17, 2012.

Hon. HOWARD BERMAN,
House of Representatives, Rayburn House Office
Building, Washington, DC.

Hon. DONALD MANZULLO,
House of Representatives, Rayburn House Office
Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVES BERMAN AND MANZULLO: Business Roundtable supports your bipartisan legislation, H.R. 4041—the Export Promotion Reform Act, which will help expand U.S. exports and thereby support U.S. economic growth and jobs.

In its recent report, Taking Action for America: A CEO Plan for Jobs and Economic Growth, Business Roundtable put forward a comprehensive plan to revitalize U.S. economic growth and job creation. The plan recognizes that expanding international trade and investment is one of several critical areas for action. The facts demonstrate clearly that international trade is an important engine for U.S. economic growth and job creation:

Over the last two decades, 24 million new trade-related jobs for American workers were created.

In 2008, more than 38 million jobs in America—more than one in five—depended on international trade—exports and imports.

In 2009, more than 275,000 U.S. companies exported merchandise to customers abroad.

Exports support higher-paying jobs. Positions in the manufacturing sector linked to the export of goods pay on average 18 percent more than other jobs.

H.R. 4041 will put in place policies and reforms needed to make U.S. export promotion programs more efficient and effective and help U.S. exporters compete for sales around the world against our foreign competitors. I understand that H.R. 4041 will accomplish these important objectives at existing funding levels.

If given the tools, American companies and exporters can increase their share of world trade. H.R. 4041 will give them more of the tools they need to expand U.S. exports.

Sincerely,

JOHN ENGLER.

COALITION FOR EMPLOYMENT
THROUGH EXPORTS, INC.,
Washington, DC, April 2, 2012.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives,
Office of the Speaker,
Capitol Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER BOEHNER: On behalf of its members, the Coalition for Employment through Exports (CEE) writes in support of H.R. 4041, The Export Promotion Reform Act. CEE is comprised of the largest exporters and manufacturers in the country and thus understands the importance of exports to the creation of American jobs and improving the economy. However, with countries all over the world focused on exporting their way out of the economic downturn, it is essential that U.S. companies—large and small—have the necessary tools and support to compete in the global marketplace. H.R. 4041 helps sharpen the focus of U.S. export promotion efforts with special emphasis on small and medium size firms; CEE hopes the House will take up action on this Bill over the next few weeks.

We are especially pleased with the provisions focused on finding export opportunities, granting the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee (TPCC) more authority, and seeking the advice of SME exporters. The last item is especially critical as it recognizes the unique needs small businesses have when exporting. It is very difficult for small companies to locate customers, verify the stability of the foreign company and line up financing; this bill will enable export pro-

motion efforts to better target the needs of these exporters. If enacted, CEE believes H.R. 4041 would help mitigate the complications faced by the job-creating American small business.

CEE urges the Congress to act quickly on this critical bill.

Sincerely,

JOHN HARDY, Jr.

NATIONAL FOREIGN TRADE
COUNCIL, INC.,
Washington, DC, March 19, 2012.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives,
Office of the Speaker,
Capitol Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: The National Foreign Trade Council, a business organization advocating for an open, rule-based global trading system and representing over 250 member companies, would like to express our support for H.R. 4041, The Export Promotion Reform Act. We hope this bill will be considered on the House floor soon.

We believe that the Export Promotion Reform Act would increase the exports of American goods and services, thereby creating more American jobs and spurring more economic growth. It is estimated that one in three manufacturing jobs depends on exports, and, according to the Department of Agriculture, one in three acres on U.S. farmland is planted for consumers abroad. If America is to continue reaching consumers all across the globe, we must actively pursue legislation that promotes American exports.

The Export Promotion Reform Act amends the Export Enhancement Act of 1988 requiring the Commerce department to assess global markets to identify opportunities for increases in U.S. exports. Such actions are critical to addressing America's growing trade deficit. Between 2003 and 2009, the U.S. fell from first to third place behind China and Germany in dollar value of exports. Addressing the prospect of new and untapped markets is crucial if American firms are to increase sales and to continue the trend of job growth.

Additionally, by enhancing interagency coordination through strengthening the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee and by setting directives for ambassadors to develop country-by-country commercial diplomacy, the bill provides a clear and cohesive plan for government agencies to communicate with businesses on U.S. trade promotion.

Finally, the bill addresses the fact that more than 97% of U.S. export companies are small and medium-sized enterprises (SME's) and account for nearly a third of U.S. merchandise exports. By directing the Commerce Department to seek recommendations for U.S. exporters, specifically SMEs, the bill upholds a standard that all companies should have an opportunity to access new markets.

The NFTC urges your full support of H.R. 4041, the Export Promotion Reform Act.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM A. REINSCH,
President.

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Berman/Manzullo bill to reform how we promote exports. This is a great down payment on a whole host of reforms we can make to how the government works with U.S. businesses to create jobs by exporting our goods and services.

We have enormous business opportunities in overseas markets, and we have overwhelming data and analysis that shows that other countries have been doing a better job at promoting their exports and that we can easily do much better.

Today's bill will focus our export promotions activities and reduce obstacles to exporting without spending any more money.

As you may know, Mr. REICHERT and I also have a bill with a couple of additional export promotion provisions that also have no cost and are uncontroversial.

Because of a quirk in the tax code we are getting inaccurate data on services exports that could be up to one-third wrong. We need to fix it. We also need to have a better annual report and plan from the TPCC on how the government's overall export work is matching up with the needs of U.S. businesses.

I'd ask the members for their support in continuing to push on this bill, to get it through the Senate, and on other measures too, like what Mr. REICHERT and I have put together—costless improvements we can make to improve exports and create jobs.

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4041, the Export Promotion Reform Act, which will revise the duties of the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee (TPCC) to improve the research conducted for export promotion efforts. If enacted, this bill will increase the effectiveness of the steps that are taken by the TPCC to boost international trade. I support the bill because expanding America's share of the export market is critical if we are to compete and win in the global economy of the 21st century and provide jobs that will sustain a middle-class standard of living for our people.

Mr. Speaker, this bill will require the government to take into account the recommendations of small- and medium-sized businesses when developing federal trade promotion efforts. This requirement will enable policymakers to better understand the environment in which they are attempting to promote trade.

A more focused understanding of the current economic environment can help the government create more effective export expansion initiatives. By creating targeted initiatives, the Federal Government can help the U.S. economy by expanding economic opportunity for local business to increase foreign sales, thereby creating more good-paying jobs, and economic growth.

This bill also requires the Secretary of Commerce to conduct global assessments of overseas markets to determine which markets have the greatest export potential, and deploy resources accordingly. This will assist U.S. businesses in identifying profitable market opportunities abroad, making it easier for them to begin exporting goods and services. Additionally, the deployed personnel and other resources will help to limit barriers to entry of foreign markets by U.S. businesses.

I support this bill also because of the strong positive impact that an increase in exports will have on the constituents of the 37th Congressional District of California, which I am privileged to represent. The Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach are major economic engines in the Southern California economy, currently providing nearly \$14.5 billion a year in trade-related wages, and more than \$47 billion in direct and indirect business sales.

An increase in international exports will boost these figures and create jobs. Additionally, an increase in exports will, provide more opportunities for local businesses to thrive by expanding into foreign markets.

For these reasons, I urge my colleagues to join me in support of H.R. 4041.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. MANZULLO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4041, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

JEWISH AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on the topic of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor May as Jewish American Heritage Month. I'm so pleased to be joined by my colleagues tonight as we honor our Nation's Jewish community through Jewish American Heritage Month.

□ 1950

As the first Jewish woman to represent the State of Florida in the United States Congress, I am so proud to be a strong voice on many issues crucial to our community, from tolerance and understanding to *tikkun olam*—repairing the world.

In 2005, members of the Jewish community in south Florida approached me with the idea to designate a month to honor the contributions that American Jews have made to our Nation. As a result, I was the proud sponsor of Jewish American Heritage Month, which the House and Senate unanimously passed in 2006 and has been proclaimed by both President Bush and President Obama annually since then.

This year, in 2012, is the Seventh Annual Jewish American Heritage Month. JAHM promotes awareness of the contributions American Jews have made to the fabric of American life from technology and literature to entertainment, politics, and medicine.

As we are all well aware, the foundation of our country is built upon the strengths of our unique cultures and backgrounds. The American Jewish experience is the story of the immigrant, the labor movement, the battle for civil rights, and so much more. Jews in America have blazed trails from the battlefield to the Supreme Court, from the sports field and symphony hall to

the pages of our Nation's history books and our Nation's Capital.

From the time of the Colonies until today, Jewish communities have played a significant role in American history and telling the American story. That's why communities across the country have come together to celebrate Jewish American Heritage Month during the month of May.

Seven years ago, this idea gained momentum as 250 of my colleagues joined me as original cosponsors of a resolution urging the President to issue a proclamation for this important month. Senator Arlen Specter led the effort in the Senate, and together the House and Senate unanimously passed resolutions supporting the creation of Jewish American Heritage Month.

Now, each year, the month of May introduces Jewish culture to the entire country in order to raise awareness and dispel harmful prejudices. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, we have seen a precipitous rise in intolerance and anti-Semitism, not just in this country but across the globe. It is my hope that by providing the framework for the discussion of Jewish culture and contributions to our Nation we will be able to reduce the ignorance that ultimately leads to anti-Semitism.

Over the last number of years, I have talked about the impact and the contributions of the Jewish community to our country over more than 350 years of Jewish life in America. It has always struck me that Jews in America are less than 2 percent of the American population, and so as much, many of our colleagues—most Americans—never actually spend much time around the Jewish community. So our traditions are unfamiliar, our culture and our religion—of which we are both—are not something that most folks encounter every day. That is the reason that we honor communities like the Jewish community with a cultural awareness month so that we can raise that awareness and make sure that people who don't usually have an opportunity to get the kinds of information that these months provide can really reach out to one another and learn more so that we can be the melting pot and also the salad bowl that is always debated about the United States of America.

Over the last 7 years, we have seen JAHM grow from an inspired idea to a national reality. We've had a group of committed organizations and museums around the country that have worked to get JAHM into the classroom, on the airwaves, and into the halls of our government, as today's activities demonstrate.

Just before votes this evening, President Obama hosted the Third Annual Jewish American Heritage Month reception at the White House, welcoming leaders from the Jewish community into the Nation's House.

The President told the story—not a really wonderful note in our Nation's history—of General Ulysses Grant who, at the time of the Civil War, had actu-

ally issued an order, Mr. Speaker, to expel Jews from their homes in the war zone during the Civil War. President Obama went on to also talk about how President Lincoln issued an order rescinding that order. The Library of Congress brought out from its archives all of the documents related to General Grant's order and President Lincoln's order to make sure that we could protect the rights of individuals and make sure that our commitment as a Nation to religious tolerance and freedom was preserved from then through history.

Tonight, I'm so pleased to be joined by my colleagues to commemorate the American Jewish experience. From sports games, to concerts, to lectures and films, JAHM is truly an interdisciplinary and multimedia experience, and we want to see these efforts continue to grow. However, it's vital that this idea takes hold not only for Jewish organizations, because, after all, we're already familiar with the contributions of Jewish life in America. We want to make sure that this month is an opportunity to grow that knowledge and reach out to communities across the country.

It's our responsibility to continue this education. If we as a Nation are to prepare our children for the challenges that lie ahead, then teaching diversity and celebrating it is a fundamental part of that promise. Together, we can help achieve this goal of understanding with the celebration of Jewish American Heritage Month.

The lessons of Judaism inspire us to do great things, from our commitment to service, to our political advocacy, to our cultural contributions to this Nation. Together, we can and should celebrate our community's history and values so that not only the Jewish people, but all Americans may go from strength to strength.

Now I'm delighted to recognize one of my colleagues who has been an incredible leader for the United States of America, for the people of her district in New York, and someone that I am proud to say has been a mentor throughout my time here in the U.S. House of Representatives, Congresswoman NITA LOWEY from the great State of New York. By the way, let me add, Mr. Speaker, that Congresswoman LOWEY is the ranking member on the Foreign Operations Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee.

Mrs. LOWEY. Let me thank my outstanding colleague from the State of Florida, Congresswoman WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. I personally want to express my appreciation for the work you have done to make this day a reality so that we can all acknowledge Jewish American Heritage Month. It's because of you that this day is noted, and it's because of you that we have gathered at the White House for a really inspirational speech from President Obama. So as a Jewish American, I want to express my appreciation to you.

I know that it may not be coincidental that this was a special time in