

Testimony of the Honorable Debbie Halvorson, U.S. Representative
International Trade Commission Hearing on Certain Steel Grating from China

Inv. Nos 701-TA-465 and 731-TA-1161

May 25, 2010

Thank you Madame Chair and members of the Commission. I appreciate the opportunity to be here this morning to testify in favor of imposing antidumping and countervailing duty orders on imports of steel grating from China.

I am proud to represent the people of the Eleventh Congressional District of Illinois. My district is home to one of Alabama Metal Industries Corporation's steel grating facilities. Thousands of my constituents depend on manufacturing, including steel and related industries for their livelihoods. Manufacturing is an indispensable part of the economy in my district. The hard working men and women at AMICO's Bourbonnais facility are some of the most productive and innovative workers in the world, and are using state-of-the-art equipment to produce the highest quality steel grating. They can compete with anyone in the world, provided that the playing field is level.

However, as we have seen before, Chinese producers are not playing by the rules. They are shipping massive quantities of dumped and subsidized steel grating to the United States. In the space of only three years – from 2006 to 2008 – these unfairly traded Chinese imports have increased by more than 500 percent. By 2008, Chinese producers had captured almost 30 percent of the U.S. market, at the expense of AMICO and other American companies.

For AMICO, and its employees in my district, this influx of unfairly traded Chinese imports has had direct and harmful effects. The company has been forced to cut its production and idle capacity. Even worse, AMICO has been forced to lay off workers and to reduce pay for those who have managed to retain their jobs. Other domestic producers are experiencing similar harm as a result of these Chinese imports, including multiple rounds of layoffs. At a time when Illinois and our nation need more jobs and more exports, it is important to preserve our manufacturing base, and to enforce our trade laws to do so.

The Eleventh District is a diverse district, home to suburban communities south of Chicago as well as rural towns in central Illinois. But one unifying factor is that many of my constituents depend on manufacturing for their livelihood. Unfortunately, many of these manufacturing jobs are at risk because of China's continued unfair trade practices. These jobs, and the well-being of my constituents and their families, literally depend on enforcement of the trade laws. Unless trade relief is granted in this case, unfairly traded Chinese imports will continue to inflict harm on AMICO and the other domestic steel grating producers, including additional rounds of layoffs.

I urge you to ensure that my constituents have the opportunity to compete on a level playing field and help prevent further harm to AMICO and the domestic steel grating industry. I hope you will carefully consider the evidence before you and make an affirmative determination that Chinese imports have materially injured the domestic industry.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.