

Testimony

Congressman Peter J. Visclosky
International Trade Commission

Hearing on Carbon and Certain Alloy Steel Wire Rod from Belarus, Italy, Korea, Russia, South Africa, Spain,
Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, and the United Kingdom
November 16, 2017

I would like to thank Chairman Schmidlein, Vice Chairman Johanson, members of the Commission, and all of your staff, for your continued work to enforce American trade laws. I appreciate this opportunity to testify as part of today's hearing regarding carbon and certain alloy steel wire rod from several countries.

The American steel industry plays an integral part in each of our daily lives. The industry employs 140,000 people and directly supports a million U.S. jobs, and American steelworkers produce steel that is used to build our nation and strengthen our national defense. The steel product we are discussing today, wire rod, is particularly diverse in its range of uses and is essential a number of industries we rely on each day, such as the construction, energy, agriculture, and automotive industries. Unfortunately, it is also one of many steel products that countries throughout the world have consistently traded unfairly.

The Commission and the Department of Commerce have been working hard to address the issue of unfair imports by investigating a large number of steel-related cases over the past few years. This is the third time I have testified at the ITC this year, and the eleventh time I have testified in the past two years. However, we must not waiver in our efforts and must continue to apply pressure on countries that blatantly violate our laws and threaten domestic markets. The American Iron and Steel Institute recently reported that for the first ten months of 2017, steel imports are up 20 percent from the same time period in 2016. This highlights that now more than ever, we must remain vigilant in ensuring that bad actors who disregard American trade laws face consequences for their actions.

I appreciate the work that all of you and the Department of Commerce have already done in this case. In their preliminary determination, the Department proposed countervailing duty rates of up to 44 percent for certain countries involved in this case, and antidumping duties of up to a staggering 756 percent. The Department also indicated that critical circumstances exist with respect to dumping from Russia and imposed retroactive duties on those imports. These are important first steps to provide relief to the domestic industry that has been harmed by the countries involved.

Wire rod is a critical product in our daily lives, from the cars we drive, to the buildings we work in, to the farms that produce the food we rely on. We must ensure that law-abiding domestic producers who are making this vital product are not undermined by countries that continually, and egregiously, disregard our trade laws. That is why I strongly urge an affirmative determination.

I again thank you for your serious and thorough consideration of this case. I sincerely appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony today.