

May 27, 1998

UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION
Washington, DC 20436

MEMORANDUM TO THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ON PROPOSED TARIFF LEGISLATION¹

Bill no., sponsor, and sponsor's state: H.R. 3426 (105th Congress), Representative LaHood (IL).

Companion bill: None.

Title as introduced: To provide for reductions in duty for the chemical DPX-E9260.

Summary of bill:²

Reduces the most-favored-nation rate of duty on imports of the chemical 3-(ethylsulfonyl)-2-pyridinesulfonamide during 1999 and 2000.

Effective date: None.

Retroactive effect: None.

Statement of purpose:

Representative LaHood stated in the *Congressional Record*:

I am introducing the attached four bills at the request of a chemical manufacturer in my Congressional District. Enactment will increase this company's ability to compete in a highly competitive U.S. agricultural market. These bills will also improve the health of our environment, because the products involved are used in lower concentrations than chemicals used today, and they break down quicker in the environment than the older generation of products. Suspension of the duty on these products will have a positive effect on U.S. companies, because they are not currently manufactured in the United States.³

¹ Industry analyst David G. Michels (205-3352); attorney Leo Webb (205-2599).

² See appendix A for definitions of tariff and trade agreement terms.

³ *Congressional Record*, March 10, 1998, p. E339.

Product description and uses:

3-(ethylsulfonyl)-
2-pyridinesulfonamide: An intermediate used by E.I. DuPont de Nemours and Co., Inc. (DuPont), principally in the production of Rimsulfuron Technical, the active ingredient in postemergent herbicides to control weeds and grasses.

Tariff treatment:⁴

<u>Product</u>	<u>HTS subheading</u>	Col. 1-general
		<u>rate of duty</u>
3-(ethylsulfonyl)- 2-pyridinesulfonamide...	2935.00.75	10.7% ad val. (1998)
		10% ad. val. (1999)
		9.3% ad. val. (2000)

Structure of domestic industry (including competing products):

3-(ethylsulfonyl)-
2-pyridinesulfonamide: According to industry sources,⁵ there was no production of the subject chemical in the United States during 1995-97. The chemical is used by DuPont to produce the active ingredient in postemergent herbicides to control weeds and grasses. There are some domestically produced materials that may compete with the subject chemical in some applications.

Private-sector views:

The Commission contacted 7 companies which market and produce intermediate chemicals that it believed might have an interest in this bill: BASF Corporation, Mount Olive, NJ (a subsidiary of BASF Aktiengesellschaft, Germany); Bayer Corporation, Pittsburgh, PA (a subsidiary of Bayer Aktiengesellschaft, Germany); Eastman Chemicals, Kingsport, TN; Hoechst Celanese Corporation, Somerville, NJ (a subsidiary of Hoechst Aktiengesellschaft, Germany); Ciba Specialty Chemicals, Tarrytown, NY; Shell Chemical, Houston, TX; and Sun Chemical, Cincinnati, OH. None of these companies had provided written comments to the Commission as of the date of preparation of this report..

⁴See appendix B for column 1-special and column 2 duty rates.

⁵Written statement dated March 25, 1998 from Bob Heine, representing DuPont.

U.S. consumption:

3-(ethylsulfonyl)- 2-pyridinesulfonamide:	<u>1995</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1997</u>
	-----(\$1,000)-----		
U.S. production.....	0	0	0
U.S. imports ¹	0	0	0
U.S. exports.....	0	0	0
Apparent U.S. consumption.....	0	0	0

¹U.S. imports of this product are classified in a residual, or “basket,” HTS subheading. As such, data are not available. Industry representatives provided the data shown.

Principal import sources: None.

Principal export markets: None.

Effect on customs revenue:⁶

Future (1998-2000) effect: The subject chemical is not currently imported. Imports are expected to begin in 1999. According to industry sources, the estimated average annual revenue loss is expected to be approximately \$400,000 to \$500,000 during the period.

Retroactive effect: None.

Technical comments:

The proposed legislation would reduce rates of duty from their current staged rates. According to DuPont, the purpose of duty reductions is to effect new and lower staged rates of duty for the subject chemical that would be set at 6.0% in 1999 and reduced by 0.7% each year to a final rate of 3.9% in 2002. The new staged rates reflect a duty reduction of 4% each year from the current staged rates. The current legislation addresses only the first two reductions in rates. Additionally, the Commission notes that, in the case of products that are part of a broader “basket” category, duty reductions are generally provided for under Subchapter II of Chapter 99 of the HTS. Staged rates of duty are usually implemented by Presidential Proclamation after multilateral negotiations and Congressional approval.

⁶Actual revenue loss may be understated if a significant increase in imports occurs during the duty suspension period.

APPENDIX A

TARIFF AND TRADE AGREEMENT TERMS

In the **Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States** (HTS), chapters 1 through 97 cover all goods in trade and incorporate in the tariff nomenclature the internationally adopted Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System through the 6-digit level of product description. Subordinate 8-digit product subdivisions, either enacted by Congress or proclaimed by the President, allow more narrowly applicable duty rates; 10-digit administrative statistical reporting numbers provide data of national interest. Chapters 98 and 99 contain special U.S. classifications and temporary rate provisions, respectively. The HTS replaced the **Tariff Schedules of the United States** (TSUS) effective January 1, 1989.

Duty rates in the **general** subcolumn of HTS column 1 are most-favored-nation (MFN) rates, many of which have been eliminated or are being reduced as concessions resulting from the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations. Column 1-general duty rates apply to all countries except those enumerated in HTS general note 3(b) (Afghanistan, Cuba, Laos, North Korea, and Vietnam), which are subject to the statutory rates set forth in **column 2**. Specified goods from designated MFN-eligible countries may be eligible for reduced rates of duty or for duty-free entry under one or more preferential tariff programs. Such tariff treatment is set forth in the **special** subcolumn of HTS rate of duty column 1 or in the general notes. If eligibility for special tariff rates is not claimed or established, goods are dutiable at column 1-general rates. The HTS does not enumerate those countries as to which a total or partial embargo has been declared.

The **Generalized System of Preferences** (GSP) affords nonreciprocal tariff preferences to developing countries to aid their economic development and to diversify and expand their production and exports. The U.S. GSP, enacted in title V of the Trade Act of 1974 for 10 years and extended several times thereafter, applies to merchandise imported on or after January 1, 1976 and before the close of June 30, 1998. Indicated by the symbol "A", "A*", or "A+" in the special subcolumn, the GSP provides duty-free entry to eligible articles the product of and imported directly from designated beneficiary developing countries, as set forth in general note 4 to the HTS.

The **Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act** (CBERA) affords nonreciprocal tariff preferences to developing countries in the Caribbean Basin area to aid their economic development and to diversify and expand their production and exports. The CBERA, enacted in title II of Public Law 98-67, implemented by Presidential Proclamation 5133 of November 30, 1983, and amended by the Customs and Trade Act of 1990, applies to merchandise entered, or withdrawn from warehouse for consumption, on or after January 1, 1984. Indicated by the symbol "E" or "E*" in the special subcolumn, the CBERA provides duty-free entry to eligible articles, and reduced-duty treatment to certain other articles, which are the product of and imported directly from designated countries, as set forth in general note 7 to the HTS.

Free rates of duty in the special subcolumn followed by the symbol "IL" are applicable to products of Israel under the **United States-Israel Free Trade Area Implementation Act** of 1985 (IFTA), as provided in general note 8 to the HTS.

Preferential nonreciprocal duty-free or reduced-duty treatment in the special subcolumn followed by the symbol "J" or "J*" in parentheses is afforded to eligible articles the product of designated beneficiary countries under the **Andean Trade Preference Act** (ATPA), enacted as title II of Public Law 102-182 and implemented by Presidential Proclamation 6455 of July 2, 1992 (effective July 22, 1992), as set forth in general note 11 to the HTS.

Preferential or free rates of duty in the special subcolumn followed by the symbol "CA" are applicable to eligible goods of Canada, and rates followed by the symbol "MX" are applicable to eligible goods of Mexico, under the **North American Free Trade Agreement**, as provided in general note 12 to the HTS and implemented effective January 1, 1994

by Presidential Proclamation 6641 of December 15, 1993. Goods must originate in the NAFTA region under rules set forth in general note 12(t) and meet other requirements of the note and applicable regulations.

Other special tariff treatment applies to particular **products of insular possessions** (general note 3(a)(iv)), **products of the West Bank and Gaza Strip** (general note 3(a)(v)), goods covered by the **Automotive Products Trade Act** (APTA) (general note 5) and the **Agreement on Trade in Civil Aircraft** (ATCA) (general note 6), **articles imported from freely associated states** (general note 10), **pharmaceutical products** (general note 13), and **intermediate chemicals for dyes** (general note 14).

The **General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade 1994** (GATT 1994), pursuant to the Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization, is based upon the earlier GATT 1947 (61 Stat. (pt. 5) A58; 8 UST (pt. 2) 1786) as the primary multilateral system of disciplines and principles governing international trade. Signatories' obligations under both the 1994 and 1947 agreements focus upon most-favored-nation treatment, the maintenance of scheduled concession rates of duty, and national treatment for imported products; the GATT also provides the legal framework for customs valuation standards, "escape clause" (emergency) actions, antidumping and countervailing duties, dispute settlement, and other measures. The results of the Uruguay Round of multilateral tariff negotiations are set forth by way of separate schedules of concessions for each participating contracting party, with the U.S. schedule designated as Schedule XX.

Pursuant to the **Agreement on Textiles and Clothing** (ATC) of the GATT 1994, member countries are phasing out restrictions on imports under the prior "Arrangement Regarding International Trade in Textiles" (known as the **Multifiber Arrangement** (MFA)). Under the MFA, which was a departure from GATT 1947 provisions, importing and exporting countries negotiated bilateral agreements limiting textile and apparel shipments, and importing countries could take unilateral action in the absence or violation of an agreement. Quantitative limits had been established on imported textiles and apparel of cotton, other vegetable fibers, wool, man-made fibers or silk blends in an effort to prevent or limit market disruption in the importing countries. The ATC establishes notification and safeguard procedures, along with other rules concerning the customs treatment of textile and apparel shipments, and calls for the eventual complete integration of this sector into the GATT 1994 over a ten-year period, or by Jan. 1, 2005.

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APPENDIX B

**SELECTED PORTIONS OF THE
HARMONIZED TARIFF SCHEDULE OF THE UNITED STATES**

(Appendix not included in the electronic version of this report.)

105TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 3426

To provide for reductions in duty for the chemical DPX-E9260.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 10, 1998

Mr. LAHOOD introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on Ways and Means

A BILL

To provide for reductions in duty for the chemical DPX-
E9260.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. REDUCTION IN DUTIES FOR DPX-E9260.**

4 (a) REDUCTION IN DUTIES.—Notwithstanding any
5 other provision of law, the general column rate of duty
6 for the article described in subsection (b) shall be—

7 (1) 6.0% for goods entered, or withdrawn from
8 warehouse for consumption, during calendar year
9 1999; and

1 (2) 5.3% for goods entered, or withdrawn from
2 warehouse for consumption, during calendar year
3 2000.

4 (b) DESCRIPTION OF ARTICLE.—The article to which
5 subsection (a) applies is DPX–E9260, 3-(ethylsulfonyl)-
6 2-pyridinesulfonamide (CAS No. 117671–01–9), provided
7 for in subheading 2935.00.75 of the Harmonized Tariff
8 Schedule of the United States.

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