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June 20, 2012

The Honorable Max Baucus
Chairman
Senate Committee on Finance
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Dave Camp
Chairman
House Committee on Ways & Means
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Orrin G. Hatch
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Finance
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Sander M. Levin
Ranking Member
House Committee on Ways & Means
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Comments requested on Miscellaneous Tariff legislation S. 2078/H.R. 5459

Dear Chairmen Baucus and Camp, and Ranking Members Hatch and Levin:

On behalf of Armstrong World Industries, we are writing to register our support for a key tariff-reduction measure - S. 2078/H.R. 5459, a bill to temporarily suspend duties for certain nonwoven fiberglass sheets for use as carrier for cushion vinyl flooring.

Armstrong is a leader in the design and manufacture of floors, ceilings, and cabinets. Headquartered in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, Armstrong and its subsidiaries operate 40 plants in 10 countries and have approximately 9,100 employees worldwide and over 4800 in the United States. Specifically, this nonwoven fiberglass sheeting for vinyl flooring is used in our flooring plant located in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Passage of this legislation would be of great benefit not only directly to these employees but also to the all our employees across the country.

The subject product is used in the production of vinyl sheet flooring for both residential and commercial use. The fiberglass sheets provide a dimensionally stable substrate on which to build our vinyl sheet flooring. Other possible uses for this product include for use in making roofing shingles and as industrial reinforcements and in various other building material applications. The scrim used for flooring adds ability to produce 12' wide rolls and acts as a carrier for the floor. The product also meets company requirements of low formaldehyde emissivity levels of 10-12 micrograms per square meter per hour. The subject product must be free of wrinkles, creases, plugs, holes, dirt and discolored spots to meet specifications for Armstrong manufacturing of the floor tiles.

We urge you to support passage of S. 2078/H.R. 5459 in particular. A version of this bill was originally included under Section 2123 of H.R. 6517, an MTB passed by the House in December 2010, but which did not receive a vote in the Senate before the 111th Congress adjourned. Specifically, it provides for the following:

'Smooth nonwoven fiberglass sheets, approximately 0.3 mm but not over 0.8 mm in thickness, predominantly of glass fibers bound together in a polyvinyl alcohol matrix or modified acrylic – polyvinyl alcohol matrix with a formaldehyde emissivity below 20 $\mu\text{gm}\Sigma\text{m}^{-2}\Sigma\text{hr}^{-1}$, in wide mats measuring between 3.5 and 5 meters, the foregoing of a kind primarily used as a carrier for cushion vinyl flooring (provided for in subheading 7019.32.00).

As a globally competitive U.S. manufacturer with global supply chains, Armstrong imports certain materials for which there is no U.S. manufacturer. These inputs are used to further manufacture into finished goods in the United States. Despite the fact that there is no U.S. production of these inputs, we are obliged to pay duties on these imported items. In the past, the Congress has passed the Miscellaneous Tariff Bill (MTB), legislation which suspends duties on imports of modest volume and for which there are no competing U.S. manufacturing operations. The MTB provides important benefits to U.S. manufacturers looking to trim costs by providing a duty break on materials they need for their operations.

We ask that you work closely with the bill's original sponsors, Senator Casey and Representative Pitts of Pennsylvania, in order to ensure passage of this legislation.

We appreciate that you, in both the House and Senate, are now considering MTB legislation for this year. On behalf of Armstrong and all of our employees, we thank you and ask that you support this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Nancy Chapusky".

Customs Compliance Officer