May 18, 2018

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
United States Senate
455 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Alexander:

On behalf of the U.S. producer member companies of the American Iron and Steel Institute (AISI), I write to urge you to oppose the Protecting Rational Incentives in Newsprint Trade Act of 2018 (PRINT Act). Adoption of this legislation would be a dramatic departure from the way the U.S. antidumping and countervailing duty laws are administered and would set a dangerous precedent for all industries that rely on these laws to remedy injury from foreign unfair trade practices.

The PRINT Act would require the Department of Commerce to review the economic health of the newspaper publishing industry before antidumping or countervailing duties could be applied as a result of the investigation of Canadian uncoated groundwood paper. Antidumping and countervailing duties could then only be applied if the President certifies that it is in the national interest to impose them.

Currently, antidumping and countervailing duties are only imposed after a lengthy and thorough investigation through which the Department of Commerce determines the existence of dumping or subsidies and the International Trade Commission determines whether the domestic industry is harmed by the dumped or subsidized imports. If imports are dumped or subsidized and there is injury to the domestic industry as a result, a duty is applied to offset the unfair dumping or subsidies, as mandated by Congress. Any appeals of these determinations go to the federal courts, just as in other legal cases. The proposed legislation would intervene in these legal proceeding in one specific case and delay and condition relief on a new standard – a “national interest” test which is not part of current law. Furthermore, because trade remedy duties increase with the extent of dumping and subsidization, the worst violators of our trade laws would perversely benefit the most from such a test. This is not in the “national interest.”
While this bill as drafted is tailored to one investigation, it would set a dangerous precedent, as other companies purchasing dumped and subsidized imports will undoubtedly make similar requests in other cases, calling into question the ability of many U.S. industries to obtain relief against foreign unfair trade practices.

On behalf of the U.S. producer members of AISI, we strongly urge you to oppose this legislation.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Gibson