



**Opening Statement of Vice Chairman Mike Bost  
Bipartisan Congressional Steel Caucus  
State of the American Steel Industry Hearing  
March 5, 2020**

Steel is a critical industry to America's economy and national security. But it's an industry that had been in a severe crisis.

Foreign steel competitors have distorted the market by flooding it with unfairly traded steel imports. Many of these products are produced by non-market economies that produce and sell steel at below fair market value.

While China is the worst offender, many other nations, including close U.S. allies also engage in unfair trade practices.

The President's decision to invoke Section 232 has provided a crucial lifeline. Look no further than my own district in Southern Illinois, where resumed operations of two blast furnaces at the Granite City Works facility has led to the return of more than 800 workers.

Section 232 is about ensuring that the United States has sufficient domestic capacity to produce steel to meet our defense and economic security needs.

Allies are important, but they are no substitute for having our own domestic capacity.

To that end, we must continue to ensure that we make full use of our trade remedy laws. After many years of effort, the House-passed legislation in 2015 that I sponsored to vastly improve the ability of steel workers and the industry to rapidly respond to illegally dumped and subsidized exports.

Prior to enactment of this law, the steel industry was forced to absorb significant damage from unfair trade before they could even file a case. As a professional firefighter, this is like telling a

homeowner that they shouldn't call the fire department to protect their house until the blaze in their kitchen spreads to the roof.

In addition to fighting unfair trade, we should be investing more in our nation's infrastructure, particularly resilient infrastructure. In recent years, our nation has experienced repeated natural disaster that have done significant damage to homes, businesses and community infrastructure.

Some are calling this the new normal. We know that natural disasters have long been a fact of life in many regions of the United States. Ensuring our infrastructure can withstand and recover from natural disasters must be priority in any infrastructure package we eventually produce. American-produced steel will be a vital component in any resiliency effort.

Last year, I was pleased that the House adopted my Amendments to better ensure agency compliance with President Trump's "Strengthening Buy-American Preferences for Infrastructure Projects." However, as we move forward with an eventual infrastructure package, we must ensure that domestic sourcing preferences are protected and strengthened.

Again, I want to thank the witnesses for appearing today and look forward to hearing your testimony.