

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

R. BRUCE JOSTEN
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

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March 10, 2010

The Honorable Johnny Isakson
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Benjamin Cardin
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Isakson and Cardin:

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the world's largest business federation representing the interests of more than three million businesses and organization of every size, sector, and region, thanks you for your leadership on pension funding relief and provisions that you authored on this issue that are included in the Baucus substitute to H.R. 4213, the "Tax Extenders Act of 2009."

As you are aware, funding relief for defined benefit plans is critical to many of our members. Without funding relief, many jobs will be lost and the economic recovery will be significantly slowed. Providing defined benefit funding relief is directly related to improving the economy and employment. Unexpectedly large funding requirements will continue to require many employers to lay off workers, close plants, and postpone investments in order to fund their pension plans, which are long-term obligations.

Because funding relief is needed to promote economic recovery and allow companies to continue business as normally as possible, the Chamber does not believe that conditions should be attached to funding relief. However, if conditions must be included, we made several recommendations to decrease the negative impact these conditions would have on funding relief. We appreciate your responsiveness to our concerns and the inclusion of several of our recommendations in the legislation – such as shortening the applicable time of the conditions, refining the definitions of excess compensation and extraordinary dividends and providing transition relief for mergers and acquisitions. The changes included in the legislation will go a long way in helping sponsors of defined benefit pension plans participate in the economic recovery.

Thank you again for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,



R. Bruce Josten