

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

R. BRUCE JOSTEN
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20062-2000
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May 27, 2014

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE U.S HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the world's largest business federation representing the interests of more than three million businesses of all sizes, sectors, and regions, as well as state and local chambers and industry associations, and dedicated to promoting, protecting, and defending America's free enterprise system, urges you to provide for programs and initiatives important to the business community as you consider H.R. 4660, the "Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2015," including the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) program, the Department of Commerce's Census Bureau, the Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS), and the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA). The Chamber would also like to highlight the importance of funding dedicated Intellectual Property (IP) enforcement as provided in the PRO-IP Act, providing adequate funding for the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR), and mitigating improper practices by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).

The MEP program helps manufacturers become more competitive by improving their productivity, leveraging private sector investments, and assisting the U.S. industrial base to become an innovative high tech global competitor. The Chamber urges greater investment in the program by providing at least \$141 million for qualified MEP centers.

The Chamber strongly urges you to fully fund the Census Bureau and the American Community Survey for FY15. ACS data points are critical for business decision-making and long range planning. The business community uses census information daily to drive sound investment decisions affecting the allocation of resources throughout the country. The Economic Census provides important statistics that are critical to the competitiveness of U.S. business and industry. The Chamber and business community remain concerned that cuts to the Census Bureau's budget at this time could have a damaging effect for quality data collection.

In addition to meeting the Census Bureau's funding needs for the ACS, the Chamber strongly urges you to support full funding for the Department of Commerce's BEA. If fully funded, the BEA would continue its critical work to improve the quality and depth of important economic data and allow the BEA to improve the accuracy of GDP estimates, speed up the release of regional statistics, and provide business investment data on an annual basis.

The Chamber has consistently voiced strong support for legislation which strengthens federal IP laws and authorizes necessary resources for federal, state, and local law enforcement to combat IP crimes. For FY15, the Chamber urges the Committee to ensure that the FBI continues to make IPR enforcement an investigative priority, and that U.S. Attorney Offices continue to make it a prosecutorial priority. We urge the Committee to include strong reporting

requirements, and ask that it once again fund competitive state and local grants used to combat IP theft and counterfeiting. Additionally, the Chamber supports the Administration's request for \$2.2 million and 11 positions to support the Criminal Division in combating international IP theft.

The Chamber also requests that you commit at least \$56.2 million for the Office of the USTR for FY15, an amount representing a modest increase from FY14. At present, USTR is engaged in negotiations for three of the largest trade pacts in U.S. history: the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), a trade agreement with 11 Asia-Pacific nations; the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) with the EU; and the Trade in Services Agreement (TISA) with more than 50 nations. Once concluded, these agreements will provide American exporters and the workers they employ with significantly improved access to markets representing two-thirds of the global economy. This moderate increase in funding is badly needed to strengthen USTR's ability to open international markets to U.S. goods and services and ensure effective enforcement of U.S. trade agreements for the American people.

It must also be noted that within the last two years the EEOC has been ordered to pay employers over \$5.6 million as a result of its improper litigation and conciliation tactics, and that sum does not include the value of the Commission's resources used. Accordingly, proper oversight of the EEOC is required to ensure that its resources are being expended properly. To that end, the Chamber supports banning funding to be expended litigating matters where the EEOC has failed to engage in good faith conciliations under the same standard that governs good faith collective bargaining negotiations under the National Labor Relations Act. The Chamber also supports banning funding to be expended litigating multi-plaintiff cases that have not been approved by a majority vote of the Commission, and banning funding to be expended by the EEOC developing or promoting any guidance, or litigating any matter arguing, that unconscious biases against particular groups influence behaviors, choices and/or judgment.

Finally, the Chamber appreciates the Committee on Appropriation's recognition of the importance of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration's (NTIA) responsibilities relating to the eventual transition of the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA) functions. NTIA has steadfastly opposed a transition to any mechanism that would deviate from the current multistakeholder model of Internet governance and should be allowed to take any needed steps to achieve the cautiousness and transparency that we agree is essential for a safe and smooth transition of the technical functions. Any hindering of NTIA's ability to conduct the proper levels of due diligence through the use of currently available resources could result in harm to U.S. businesses and Internet users as a whole.

The Chamber appreciates your consideration of these recommendations as you consider H.R. 4660, the "Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2015."

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Bruce Josten". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

R. Bruce Josten