

WASHINGTON, DC - Congressman Steny Hoyer today signed a petition in the House of Representatives that would force the House to vote on a bipartisan plan to immediately help American manufacturers avoid billions of dollars in WTO trade sanctions and tariffs on their goods, which started on March 1.

Maryland's manufacturing sector spans all industrial classifications, with particular strengths in food processing, computer and electronic products, industrial machinery and equipment, and printing and publishing. These industries and our state's more than 180,000 manufacturing employees could be dramatically affected by trade sanctions, particularly the food processing and industrial machinery and equipment industries. Congressman Hoyer released the following statement after signing the discharge petition:

"Today I signed a petition in the House of Representatives that would force this House to vote on a bill that would grow American manufacturing jobs. Workers in our state need action - our nation has suffered from job loss in the manufacturing sector every single month since January, 2001. More than 2.8 million manufacturing jobs have been lost over the past three years, and more than 27,400 of those have been manufacturing jobs in Maryland - over ten percent of our manufacturing workforce.

"Inaction on an issue that is affecting such a key sector of our nation's economy is unacceptable. Manufacturing jobs provide a high standard of living for Maryland's working families and in 2001, manufacturing workers earned 23 percent more than those workers in service sectors of the economy. It is critical that this discharge petition force the Republican leadership to act on a bipartisan bill which will end the sanctions and keep good paying jobs at home.

"We must support companies that are creating jobs for our state's workforce and this means opposing tax incentives to move jobs overseas. It is long past time to re-examine the course of our economy and implement the job creation priorities the American people demand. I will continue to work to reform our tax code by lowering tax rates on all domestic producers, including small businesses and farms, and eliminating the tax incentives for companies to ship jobs overseas. I also support efforts to create new tax benefits for companies that create jobs here at home."

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