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May 16, 2002

The Honorable Bill Thomas
Chairman
House Ways and Means Committee
2208 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Thomas:

In response to the request for written comments on technical corrections to U.S. Trade Laws and Miscellaneous Duty Suspension Bills, the Joint Industry Group (JIG) submits the following comments to support the inclusion of drawback legislation H.R. 1756 and H.R. 1838 in this year's miscellaneous trade package. The JIG believes these bills will provide significant benefits to U.S. industry and exporters by easing the regulatory and administrative burdens imposed by the current drawback program and clarifying ambiguities in implementing the program. The changes proposed by H.R. 1756 and H.R. 1838 will help the U.S. Customs Service administer a complicated program by making drawback procedures consistent with continuing congressional changes to trade laws. In addition, these bills will allow U.S. companies to be more competitive in the global marketplace when competing against foreign exports of similar or like products.

JIG is a member-driven coalition comprised of Fortune 500 companies, manufacturers, customs brokers, importers, exporters, trade associations, law firms, and accounting firms actively involved in international trade. JIG frequently engages the Congress and the Administration on a variety of international trade-related issues. We work particularly close with the U.S. Customs Service and Congress to promote trade policy that effectively supports Customs' dual mission of border enforcement and trade facilitation.

Drawback payments have decreased by \$160 million over the past ten years because of U.S. participation in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and declining tariff rates. However, drawback still remains vital for many US companies who export goods to non-NAFTA countries. Therefore, we again urge you to support American manufacturers by including H.R. 1756 and H.R. 1838 in the 2002 miscellaneous trade package.

Sincerely,



Ronald Schoof
Chairman