

March 19, 2014

The Honorable Tim Johnson
Chairman
Committee on Banking, Housing & Urban Affairs
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Crapo
Ranking Member
Committee on Banking, Housing & Urban Affairs
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Johnson & Ranking Member Crapo:

The undersigned associations view the U.S. Export-Import Bank (Ex-Im), with its mission to provide competitive financing in order to create or sustain U.S. jobs, as one of the most important tools we have to promote economic growth through exports. Accordingly, we strongly support the swift reauthorization of Ex-Im Bank. We would appreciate your efforts to expedite legislation to reauthorize the Bank before its authorization expires on September 30. Exports are more important than ever to U.S. manufacturers, and access to competitive export financing terms plays a vital role in securing overseas sales and facilitating exports.

During FY2013, Ex-Im Bank enabled more than \$37 billion in export sales from more than 3,800 U.S. companies, supporting approximately 205,000 export-related American jobs. The Bank also set a record in its support of small business, approving more than 3,400 small business transactions. In fact, small business accounted for nearly 90 percent of the Bank's transactions last year.

Ex-Im Bank plays a vital role in leveling the global playing field by helping U.S. companies to offset some of the financing support that foreign competitors receive from their governments. In other cases, the Bank helps U.S. companies to secure new customers and increase market share in emerging markets. With the U.S. economy and export growth still improving slowly, it is vital that the United States maintain every tool we have to enhance the competitiveness of U.S. exporters in a very tough global economy.

Reliable access to export financing is vital part to U.S. competitiveness in global markets, particularly in today's unsettled financial environment. Overseas customers are financially stretched and U.S. exporters often face difficulties in obtaining credit and working capital – conferring a decisive advantage on exporters who can provide better financial terms.

Failure to reauthorize Ex-Im would amount to unilateral disarmament in the face of other nations' aggressive trade finance programs. For example, Germany and France extended roughly two and a half times as much official export financing (measured as a share of GDP) as Ex-Im Bank did in 2012. India provided nearly three times as much as the United States, and Korea ten times as much. Over the past six years, China has invested nearly three times as much in export credit financing as the United States in current dollars, and more than five times as much as a share of GDP.

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Without Ex-Im Bank acting as a “lender of last resort” to fill market gaps, many foreign customers may turn to non-U.S. suppliers that already have significant support from their own official export credit agencies. There are at least 59 other export credit agencies around the world, and many more that are aggressive in promoting their domestic companies and industries.

We urge you to move swiftly on legislation that will provide a long-term reauthorization for Ex-Im Bank and ensure it effectively fulfills its principal mission to support U.S. jobs through exports. Ex-Im Bank’s policies and guidelines should enable the Bank to fill market gaps left by private sector lenders, be competitive with other export credit agencies, encourage appropriate risk management to facilitate sound transactions and avoid targeting a single sector or industry for punitive treatment.

Delaying Ex-Im Bank reauthorization would hurt U.S. manufacturers of every size and sector, threatening the export sales of thousands of U.S. companies and the security of hundreds of thousands of American jobs that depend directly or indirectly on the Ex-Im Bank’s export financing. We appreciate your consideration, and we stand ready to work with you to expand America’s exports.

American Chemistry Council
Aerospace Industries Association
Association of Equipment Manufacturers
Business Roundtable
Coalition for Employment Through Exports
Financial Services Roundtable
General Aviation Manufacturers Association
National Association of Manufacturers
National Foreign Trade Council
National Small Business Association
Nuclear Energy Institute
Satellite Industry Association
Small Business Exporters Association
TechAmerica
U.S. Chamber of Commerce
U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce