

**Opening Statement
Chairman Tim Murphy
Congressional Steel Caucus
“2015 State of Steel” Hearing
March 26, 2015**

I now convene and would like to welcome everyone to the 2015 Congressional Steel Caucus “State of Steel Hearing.”

The United States was literally and figuratively built by the American steel industry. It is an industry that helped to build the cars we drive, the bridges we traverse, and the skyscrapers we marvel at. Simply put, the steel industry, perhaps more than any other, has provided America with the means to grow and prosper over generations.

However, despite having the world’s highest quality product and most talented workforce, the domestic steel sector is not faring well. Part of the problem is that some of global trading partners seek to thwart the spirit and letter of international trade laws. As well, illegal dumping and currency manipulation yield tremendous harm to the American steel industry while giving foreign competitors an unfair leg up. For example, this year alone, China is on pace to produce as much steel as the rest of the world combined, despite steel usage in China only being up 1% in 2014.

In Southwestern Pennsylvania, the National Tube Works plant in McKeesport was shut down in June of last year in large part due to illegal dumping, which flooded the market with cheaper inferior tubular products. Over 200 workers are now out of work. This is a story that is all too familiar to families living in steel towns like Gary, Indiana, Lorain, Ohio, and Keewatin, Minnesota.

What’s needed to reverse the trend of steel industry layoffs and plant closures is to ensure that the trade laws that have been enacted by Congress are respected and strongly enforced. If this does not happen, more good-paying American jobs will be lost and communities will be left to pick up the pieces.

The Congressional Steel Caucus has played an important role in combating the illegal trade practices of countries determined to break our trade laws and undermine the notion of fair trade. Over the past year, the Caucus has successfully led efforts to impose countervailing duties on illegally dumped oil country tubular goods from Korea, steel rebar from Mexico and Turkey, and ensured our trade laws were enforced on imported Russian hot-rolled steel.

But we cannot do it alone.

The Department of Commerce must be willing to partner with Congress and vigorously enforce our trade laws to ensure domestic steel manufacturers have a fair shot to compete in the global marketplace.

If the Administration makes this commitment, I firmly believe the U.S. steel industry is well-positioned to thrive once again. We have the world's best workforce and abundant energy resources that are critical for the steel industry.

We all agree that our roads need urgent repair, but funding challenges prevent us from getting the work done on our nation's aging bridges, highways, sewer and water lines without raising taxes or adding to our debt or deficit. I authored a bipartisan solution to rebuild our crumbling infrastructure and lower energy prices without raising gas taxes or more deficit spending. My Infrastructure Jobs and Energy Independence Act (H.R. 1861) funds critical construction projects by safely expanding offshore energy exploration to generate new federal revenues and economic and dedicating those new leasing funds and royalty payments to transportation related construction projects. This new funding will be used to rebuild our nation's aging infrastructure, which according to the American Society of Civil Engineers, is in need of \$2.2 trillion dollars in repairs. The Infrastructure Jobs and Energy Independence Act will have a meaningful and positive impact on our domestic steel sector.

I thank our witnesses for being here today and contributing to our discussion on the state of the steel industry. In particular, I would like to recognize the members our panel from Southwestern Pennsylvania: Mario Longhi, CEO of U.S. Steel; Thomas Conway, International Vice President of the United Steelworkers; and Carl Moulton, Chairman of the Specialty Steel Industry of North America and a constituent of Pennsylvania's 18th Congressional district.

Welcome.

I now recognize the Vice-Chairman of the Steel Caucus, Representative Pete Visclosky of Indiana.