



Leo W. Gerard
International President

February 11, 2009

VIA FAX

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Majority Leader Reid:

On behalf of the members of the United Steelworkers, I want to thank you for your leadership in bringing the American Economic Recovery and Reinvestment Act to a vote so swiftly in both Chambers. We also applaud Senators Collins, Snowe and Specter for standing up for the good of the country by casting their votes in favor of the Senate package. It is now up to you and the Conferees to get our nation's economy back on its feet by choosing the best of both Chambers' bills.

I write as the President of a union whose membership is swiftly being decimated by the continuing economic crisis. This is a crisis which has seen demand for manufactured goods screech to a halt. Coupled with the unavailability of credit at reasonable rates, many manufacturers have ceased operations or planned investments.

That is why I urge you and the Conferees to maximize the funds that will be spent on infrastructure, including school construction and energy efficiency projects and also to retain the Buy America provision contained in the Senate-passed package in order to maximize the number of jobs created here in America.

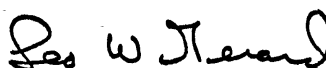
It is essential that the Senate version of the domestic-sourcing preferences become part of the final economic recovery package as it is a much stronger and more effective provision than the House version because it expands the preference to include manufactured goods, as well as iron and steel. Most importantly, the Senate version clarifies that the provision be applied in a manner consistent with U.S. obligations under international agreements, a clarification the USW strongly supports.

The majority of Americans (84%) and Congress clearly favor a strong domestic sourcing preference; the Senate overwhelmingly defeated an amendment to remove the Buy America preference from the Senate bill by 65-31 and the House also voted 55-0 to include its Buy America provision. Buy America provisions have been utilized for over 70 years and it can be implemented in a manner consistent with our international agreements.

In addition while, there are numerous provisions worthy of inclusion, I want to specifically mention our support for inclusion of provisions to help those most in need, such as the extension of assistance to the unemployed by an extension and expansion of UI benefits and COBRA along with the TAA reform package that has been agreed to by Senators Baucus and Grassley and Representatives Rangel and Camp.

On behalf of our members, I thank you and the Conferees for your leadership and urge that Congress put aside its differences and vote to quickly approve the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leo W. Gerard". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "L" and "G".

Leo W. Gerard
International President

c: Senator Durbin
Senator Baucus
Senator Inouye
Representative Hoyer
Representative Obey
Representative Rangel
Representative Waxman

LWG/ctl