

November 23, 2004

The Honorable Donald Evans
Secretary of Commerce
U.S. Department of Commerce
Pennsylvania Ave. & 14th Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Re: "Zeroing" of Duties

Dear Secretary Evans:

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Consumers for World Trade (CWT), I am writing to express our opposition to the procedure known as "zeroing" and request that you eliminate this procedure before leaving the Dept of Commerce. As you are aware, the World Trade Organization has ruled this procedure to be non-compliant with our international trade obligations.

CWT is a national, non-profit, non-partisan organization, established in 1978 to promote the consumer interest in international trade and to enhance the public's awareness of the benefits of an open, multilateral trading system to everyone's daily life. CWT is the only consumer group in America whose sole mission is to educate, advocate and mobilize consumers to support trade opening legislation.

We strongly oppose the practice of "zeroing", which results in unfairly high duties. Duties are nothing more than a tax on American consumers and importing industries. Any practice that makes that tax higher than absolutely necessary is strongly objectionable. Not only do duties make finished products more expensive for the end user, they threaten the livelihoods of workers in industries that must import their intermediary inputs.

We respectfully request that you remember the interests of U.S. consumers and consistent with the WTO ruling against the United States, eliminate the practice of zeroing in all dumping cases. All it would take is a decision on your part.

Thank you for your support and best wishes in your future endeavors.

Yours truly,

Erik Autor
President
Consumers for World Trade