



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 22, 2013

CONTACT: [Julia Lawless](#), [Antonia Ferrier](#)
(202) 224-4515

HATCH STATEMENT AT FINANCE COMMITTEE HEARING ON LEGISLATION TO STRENGTHEN U.S. CUSTOMS AGENCIES, BOOST JOB-CREATING TRADE

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senator Orrin Hatch (R-Utah), Ranking Member of the Senate Finance Committee, today delivered the following opening statement at a committee hearing examining S. 662, the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Reauthorization Act of 2013:

The long and distinguished history of the United States Customs and Border Protection agency dates back to 1789, when the First Congress of the United States created its predecessor, the United States Customs Service.

The U.S. Customs Service was the first agency of the federal government. Its primary function was the collection of import duties, which placed the agency under the direct authority of the Secretary of the Treasury.

As our nation evolved so did the agency's mission.

Most recently, following the terrorist attacks of 9/11, Congress passed the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to help improve border security. That act reorganized the U.S. Customs Service along with other agencies into two new agencies now known as Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

Since their creation, these two agencies have faithfully carried out their dual missions of facilitating trade and protecting our nation from terrorist attacks.

Today, international trade is a vital component of our economy.

U.S. imports and exports amount to trillions of dollars.

Robust international trade enables companies such as Proctor and Gamble and Oracle to expand their operations around the world and in my home state of Utah.

As our future economic growth is increasingly linked to international trade it is important that Congress works to enhance our economic security.

That is why Senator Baucus and I have introduced S. 662, the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Reauthorization Act of 2013.

Among other things, this bill would improve our ability to protect one of our nation's most important economic assets: intellectual property.

We included in the bill provisions to codify the National Intellectual Property Rights Coordination Center which coordinates federal efforts to combat intellectual property rights violations.

The bill also significantly expands CBP's tools and authorities to protect intellectual property rights at the border by requiring the agency to share information about suspected infringing merchandise with rights holders.

Our legislation further requires CBP to establish a process for enforcing copyrights while registration with the Copyright Office is pending, and to publish information about unlawful circumvention devices that are seized.

S. 662 also strengthens CBP's targeting of goods that violate intellectual property rights, and requires an intellectual property rights education campaign for travelers at the border.

And, the bill requires the Customs declaration form that everyone entering the country fills out to contain a warning that the importation of goods that infringe intellectual property rights may violate criminal and/or civil laws and may pose serious risks to health and safety.

This seems to me to be an obvious way to raise awareness about the dangers of intellectual property rights infringement at no cost to U.S. taxpayers.

Our bill will do many other things to facilitate trade, including: improving the CBP Trusted Trader partnership programs; enhancing the private-sector advisory system so that U.S. importers and others involved in trade have a stronger voice in formulating trade policy; and ensuring that CBP completes and deploys information technology systems such as the Automated Commercial Environment which fosters trade facilitation through the use of automation.

Through these provisions, S. 662 will help alleviate unnecessary and costly delays at the border. At the same time, it will help to prevent unsafe and illegal goods from entering the United States as well as protect American businesses from unfairly traded goods coming into the country.

This legislation is long overdue.

S. 662 is a strong bill that will benefit our economy and help ensure that America remains one of the most competitive nations in the world.

I look forward to continuing our work with CBP to ensure that its dual mission of protecting our homeland and facilitating trade is successfully fulfilled.

At the same time, I hope that the administration will soon nominate a new CBP Commissioner.

This agency has been without a Senate-confirmed commissioner since December of 2011, which is far too long. In choosing a new commissioner, I hope the administration will make sure that individual has a strong foundation and understanding of international trade.

Mr. Chairman, thank you, once again, for holding this hearing today. I look forward to hearing from each of our witnesses about how S. 662 can help to strengthen and improve the trade facilitation and enforcement functions of CBP and ICE.

###