

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 5, 2025

The Honorable Scott Bessent
Secretary
Department of the Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20220

Dear Secretary Bessent:

We write to express our belief that a strong, domestically owned and operated American steel industry is vital to our national security. If American steel production does not remain robust in peacetime, we risk unreliable supplies of critical steel products to the military in wartime. We urge you to consider this as the Department of Treasury (Treasury) assesses the national security risks in any review of foreign direct investment.

We also encourage you to consider the interrelationship between defense supply chains and domestic industrial supply chains in any such review. A strong American defense industrial base is impossible without a strong U.S. manufacturing base, and considering the sectors in isolation is outmoded and myopic. We disagree with those who have suggested that the strength of the U.S. steel industry is unimportant to supplying the military's needs, because the Defense Department only consumes a small fraction of national steel output and steel can be procured from abroad in a crisis.

Permitting foreign ownership or control of our steel industry risks ceding critical supply chains to foreign companies whose commercial interests may not always align with our national security interests. We should not entrust companies that have repeatedly circumvented our trade laws and have dumped large volumes of steel onto our shores with sustaining U.S. steel production capacity and rigorously defending U.S. trade remedy law.

Recent supply disruptions in other industries including electronics, automotive, medical, and semiconductors demonstrate how brittle elements of the U.S. industrial base have become. While the Treasury and the Department of Defense have extensive legal authorities to prioritize production for national defense, the experiences during the Tohoku earthquake and tsunami and the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrate the difficulties of requisitioning products that are unavailable and the protracted delays involved in starting up new production lines amid a crisis. In other words, once manufacturing capacity is gone, it is very hard to get back.

Temporary restrictions or mandates to place U.S. citizens on boards of directors on a term-limited basis are insufficient. Guarantees to maintain plants and production that contain exceptions do not assure the long-term sustainability of a critical domestic steel industry.

We share President Trump's goal to revitalize the American steel industry so it can compete head-to-head with any country in the world by cracking down on illegal dumping and negotiating fair treatment for U.S. exports. We have confidence that you will conduct all foreign direct investment reviews with integrity, fairness, and in accordance with the law while protecting this critical supply chain, national security, and our workers' interests.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jim Banks".

Jim Banks
U.S. Senator for Indiana

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Frank J. Mrvan".

Frank Mrvan
Member of Congress