



**Testimony**

**of**

**Roxanne D. Brown  
International President  
The United Steel, Paper and Forestry, Rubber,  
Manufacturing, Energy, Allied Industrial and Service  
Workers International Union (USW)**

**for the**

**Congressional Steel Caucus**

**Hearing on**

**the State of the Steel Industry**

**June 24, 2026**

Good morning Steel Caucus Co-Chairs Crawford and Mrvan, my name is Roxanne Brown and I am the International President for the United Steelworkers (USW), the largest single union in the North American steel sector. Our members mine the materials needed for steel production, melt and pour these materials, and also work in countless downstream steel consuming industries.

I want to thank you for the opportunity to testify today and wish to focus my testimony on three key areas. First and foremost for our steel members is the upcoming Basic Industry Steel Bargaining that will occur over the next few months between our major steel employers and the union. This is a process that has occurred for over 75 years and we look forward to negotiating a fair contract for the 25,000 workers at major steelmakers, like U.S. Steel and Cleveland-Cliffs, where those agreements are set to expire on September 1 this year.

When we bargain a contract, we do not just negotiate wages, hours, and benefits; we know that our facilities need investment too. Steel facilities are capital intensive and need continuous improvement to maintain competitiveness in the global market. This investment should not come at the cost of reduced benefits for the workers who make the steel that generates dramatic value in the American economy.

Second, maintaining our domestic steel industry is critical. Former USW International President Leo Gerard would regularly say that steel is the “backbone of our economic and national security”, and his statement is as true today as it was years ago. That is why USW remains supportive of the Section 232 steel tariffs which stopped the bleeding of steel jobs from global excess capacity. However, we need to ensure our member companies also invest in our facilities to maintain a competitive edge.

Our labor agreements help push investment, but the Steel Caucus can help too. We need to set policies that create certainty for the domestic steel industry, so that they don't just maintain, but expand markets. My written testimony provides a series of bills the union supports that will help push demand and encourage domestic investment and global sales.

We have heard quite a bit from our steel consuming industries that in certain market segments, the domestic steel industry has an opportunity to expand. An example we hear frequently is tire cord, which is a wire rod product. We have mills such as Liberty Steel in Peoria, Illinois where a bit of investment and help with qualifications could reduce import dependence and create a long-term market segment for U.S. companies and American steelworkers.

We need to identify these market segments where a bit of federal investment could reduce our import reliance and create additional market competition. Providing a bit of federal support in qualification of products could reduce wait times and ensure producers and suppliers make and get product in a timely manner.

We also need to improve our trade agreements like the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA). The Steel Caucus should push to expand the melt and pour standard past just automotive steel into other steel-intensive markets. Last year, the United States imported \$25 billion of direct steel imports, but imported another \$1.4 TRILLION worth of steel derivatives.

This expanded melt and pour standard could ensure that South Korea will not get slabs from the People's Republic of China (PRC) and then roll them into products that can be shipped into the U.S. While there are Section 232 tariffs in place now, we need to permanently stop this transshipment of semi-finished steel and the steel caucus will be vital to ensuring steel trade is fair.

Our union also continues to lead on rebuilding major steel consuming industries. The caucus heard previously about how the state of our domestic shipbuilding industry is in a dire straight. The U.S. produces less than six commercial oceangoing vessels a year while the PRC delivers nearly 60 percent of annual oceangoing vessels globally. The steel caucus should do everything it can to encourage the passage of the SHIPS for America Act, which would aid in revitalizing domestic shipbuilding.

Finally, our union is growing in the steel sector. Earlier this year you heard from District 7 Director Michael Millsap about the JSW Steel workers who voted to organize with USW in Mingo Junction, Ohio. Just a couple weeks ago, workers were forced through another vote to maintain their union as the company delayed bargaining by a year. We won that vote again, but it highlights a broader issue. A multinational steel producer based in India with \$21 billion in annual revenue continues to slow walk the bargaining process for American workers in Ohio. That is why our union is supportive of private sector labor law reform, including the Faster Labor Contracts Act.

Our union knows steel; I can turn to my left and to my right and see companies that we have worked with for decades to defend against global excess capacity and illegal foreign subsidies, and support procurement policies, like Buy America, which the Steel Caucus has led on and ultimately changed the direction of our industry. When workers want to join our efforts to defend their jobs as USW members – we should have clear timelines to get a fair and robust contract.

While not every member of the Steel Caucus supported the Faster Labor Contracts Act this time, I must use this opportunity to educate the caucus on this issue. My testimony and support for the domestic steel industry are reasons why every member of the Steel Caucus – no matter their party – should support this union's effort to organize the unorganized. I do want to thank the 10 Steel Caucus Republicans, along with nearly every Steel Caucus Democrat who voted in support of the Faster Labor Contracts Act. Steelworkers shouldn't have to fight for basic things such as grievance procedures, more certainty on schedules, and transparent pay structures.

Together, we can continue the strong tradition of American steelmaking, and I look forward to answering any questions you may have. Thank you for this opportunity to testify today.

### **USW Supported Policies We Urge the Steel Caucus to Support**

Below are a series of policies that would maintain and improve the domestic steel industry. They are in no particular order.

- H. Res. 1286 – Fair Trade for Working Families Resolution
  - A resolution which highlights an alternative trade vision focused on improving existing and new trade agreements. It provides support for domestic procurement provisions, like Buy America, preventing outsourcing from countries with low pollution and environmental standards.<sup>1</sup>
- USMCA Modernization
  - The first major renegotiation of a U.S. trade agreement made several significant improvements to a free trade agreement that led to millions of American jobs being outsourced. The AFL-CIO in testimony before the Senate Finance Committee highlighted that the bilateral trade deficit between Mexico and the U.S. has expanded and the continued existence of protection unions in Mexico, which do not bargain legitimate agreements.<sup>2</sup>
- H.R. 2653 – Manifest Modernization Act of 2025
  - This legislation would improve disclosure of import manifests from rail and truck traffic entering into the United States. This data is already collected for oceangoing vessels, and when over \$100 billion in trade traffic crosses between Canada and Mexico into the U.S. every month. A more comprehensive understanding of goods entering the market will prevent duty evasion and ensure compliance with U.S. law.
- H.R. 1869 – the Protecting American Industry and Labor from International Trade Crimes Act (PAIL Act)
  - This bipartisan bill strengthens the Department of Justice's ability to investigate and prosecute trade-related crimes by establishing a new task force within the Criminal Division.<sup>3</sup>
- H.R. 1548 – Leveling the Playing Field Act 2.0

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<sup>1</sup> [U.S. Representative DeLauro](#), “DeLauro Introduces Resolution Outlining a Democratic, Worker-Centered Vision for Trade Policy”, May 14, 2026.

<sup>2</sup> [U.S. Senate Finance Committee](#), “Testimony of Eric Gottwald, AFL-CIO, for the Hearing on The U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement: Evaluating North American Competitiveness”, February 12, 2026.

<sup>3</sup> [Congress.gov](#), “Legislation – 119<sup>th</sup> Congress – H.R.1869 – Protecting American Industry and Labor from International Trade Crimes Act of 2025”, March 5, 2025.

- This bipartisan bill addresses unfair trade practices by making various changes to U.S. antidumping and countervailing duty laws. These include major provisions such as:
  - Applying countervailing duty law to subsidies provided by a foreign government or public entity to a company operating in a different country;
  - Using another method for calculating the cost of production in specific circumstances; and
  - Requiring importers to certify that the imported merchandise is not subject to an antidumping or countervailing duty order.<sup>4</sup>
- H.R. 7805 – Trade Adjustment Assistance Modernization Act, or a clean reauthorization of Trade Adjustment Assistance
  - Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) provides up to two years job retraining benefits for workers who lost their job due to trade related reasons. Recent research highlights that by 2030, an estimated 2.1 million skilled trades jobs could go unfilled, with potential economic losses reaching \$1 trillion annually.<sup>5</sup> Renewing TAA provides a proven successful pathway to reskilling workers who are familiar with the demands of manufacturing.
- H.R. 3151 – SHIPS for America Act of 2025
  - This comprehensive legislation would focus and dramatically improve our nation’s commercial shipbuilding industry. Representatives John Garamendi and Trent Kelly have offered a bipartisan amendment to the National Defense Appropriations Act (NDAA).<sup>6</sup>
- Export-Import Bank Reauthorization
  - Congress must renew the Export-Import (Ex-Im) Bank this year, with over \$120 billion in loan authority and strong procurement standards. USW provided a detailed statement for the record to the House Financial Services Committee in March of this year where we called for improvements to Ex-Im staffing, risk tolerance, procurement standards, and other needed reforms.

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<sup>4</sup> [Congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov), “Legislation – 119<sup>th</sup> Congress – H.R.1548 – Leveling the Playing Field 2.0 Act”, February 24, 2025.

<sup>5</sup> [U.S. Department of Education](https://www.ed.gov), “Connecting Talent to Opportunity: A National Challenge to Build Talent Marketplaces”, January 13, 2026.

<sup>6</sup> [Congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov), “Legislation – 119<sup>th</sup> Congress – H.R.3151 – SHIPS for America Act of 2025”, May 1, 2025.