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Senate of Pennsylvania

April 17, 2024

The Honorable Joseph Biden
President of the United States of America
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW,
Washington, D.C., 20500

Dear President Joseph Biden,

I grew up in a blue-collar town where everyone worked in a coal mine or a steel mill. There was great pride that western Pennsylvania was considered the steel capitol of the country and there was much gratitude for the thousands of good paying steel jobs. We worked hard and persevered with the great American spirit of getting things done which kept our nation strong. We all knew that dedication and diligence paved the way to a better life. We lived the American dream, or so we thought, until the early 1980's when it all came crashing down.

I witnessed firsthand the challenges faced by the steel industry during the tumultuous decades of the 1970s and 1980s. Like many families reliant on steel for their livelihoods, my own family experienced the devastating effect of foreign competition. My father, a machinist working in the steel industry, lost not only his job but also his pension during those difficult times. It was a period of great hardship for countless families in Pennsylvania, including my own, and it is this personal history that compels me to write to you today. We can't have that happen ever again to the dedicated men and women who work diligently every day in the steel industry.

The steel industry is the foundation for many families in Pennsylvania. In fact, many of the hardworking employees and their families reside in the Pennsylvania Senate District which I serve. It's of utmost importance that they are positioned to continue to thrive here in Southwestern Pennsylvania.

Like many, I have followed closely the recent discussions involving the sale of United States Steel Corporation to Nippon Steel. I share the concerns of the sale by the United Steelworkers union and believe this is a private matter that needs to be worked out between the companies and the United Steelworkers union. This deal must be about jobs and keeping the jobs here in Pennsylvania. That means keeping United States Steel operating in southwestern Pennsylvania. As it stands, the parties are continuing to negotiate on this complex matter trying to come to a mutually beneficial outcome that will preserve steelworker jobs and support steel's future in Pennsylvania.

Pennsylvania has long been at the forefront of the steel industry, maintaining its leadership position over the years. The rich history of our steel industry intertwines with the story of our nation itself, playing a pivotal role in defending our country during times of conflict and propelling America into an era of industrial dominance. But behind that history are people. These are the hardworking men and women in the steel industry who were, and are, supporting their families and communities.

The steel and metals industry in the Commonwealth provides more than 123,000 full and part-time jobs, and more than 30,000 of those jobs are employed directly in iron and steel mills. Additionally, the industry provided more than \$55 billion in annual economic output in Pennsylvania. United States Steel Corporation alone has a \$3.6 billion total economic impact in southwestern Pennsylvania. The company's Mon Valley Works employs 3,000 directly while supporting more than 11,000 jobs in southwestern Pennsylvania.

Mr. President, it is imperative that we collaborate to secure the future of the steel industry in Pennsylvania, fostering an environment where it can flourish and prosper. Steel is foundational and indispensable to our progress as a nation and Commonwealth, encompassing infrastructure projects, energy generation and distribution, transportation systems, housing construction and the safeguarding of our national security.

The Pennsylvania State Senate is dedicated to sustaining a competitive business landscape that invites and fosters capital investments for industry and manufacturing within the Commonwealth. We are devoted to empowering our workforce with the necessary resources to compete effectively and invest in securing prosperous futures for their families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kim L. Ward". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "K" and "W".

Kim L. Ward
Senate President Pro Tempore