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WSWA Applauds the introduction of the FAIR TARIFF Act

The Wine & Spirits Wholesalers of America applauds the introduction of the bipartisan For Accurate Import Relief to Aid Retailers and Importers of Foreign Freights (FAIR TAIRFF) Act by Representatives Bill Pascrell (D-NJ) and Jodey Arrington (R-TX)

WASHINGTON, D.C., 02/13/2020 – The Wine & Spirits Wholesalers of America (WSWA) today announced its strong support of the proposed, bipartisan For Accurate Import Relief to Aid Retailers and Importers of Foreign Freights (FAIR TAIRFF) Act.

“We are happy that Congress could unite behind small business owners, including our members,” said WSWA President and CEO Michelle Korsmo. “Importers across all of the industries were unprepared for such a large hit in October on goods they ordered in August, and when margins are tight, unexpected expenses can have major consequences.”

The FAIR TARIFF Act seeks to aid importers of European Union goods that were subject to a 25 percent tariff implemented in October 2019 in direct response to the ongoing Airbus-Boeing dispute. Nearly every product affected by this tariff, including wine, spirits, olive oil, seafood, coffee and consumer and industrial products, are imported by sea which can take anywhere from 25 to 40 days. This means that goods ordered as early as August were still subject to these duties once they hit U.S. shores.

“The World Trade Organization ruled in favor of our importers and yet, because some goods take weeks to arrive in port, American firms have not yet received their due and have continued to bear a heavy financial burden. My bill will remedy that oversight and provide a key refund to American importers who have already suffered enough,” said Representative Bill Pascrell, a member of the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Trade and co-sponsor of the bill.

“I commend this Administration’s continued fight to protect our nation’s interests in global trade at the World Trade Organization (WTO). However, despite the WTO’s favorable ruling that allowed the U.S. to take countermeasures against the European Union, American importers were left to bear unfair penalties on goods already in transit. By rightfully shifting the burden of these retaliatory tariffs back to European producers as intended, this America-first legislation will ensure that the cost of tariffs doesn’t fall on the backs of faultless American businesses or consumers,” added co-sponsor Representative Jodey Arrington.



If passed, the new legislation will direct the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to provide a limited refund for duties imposed on goods in transit from the European Union on or before October 9, 2019 and which entered the U.S. on or after October 18, 2019. The FAIR TARRIF Act seeks to reverse the burden of the tariffs on U.S. importers in industries uninvolved in ongoing trade disputes.

About Wine & Spirits Wholesalers of America

WSWA is the national trade association representing the distribution tier of the wine and spirits industry, dedicated to advancing the interests and independence of distributors and brokers of wine and spirits. Founded in 1943, WSWA has more than 380 member companies in 50 states and the District of Columbia, and its members distribute more than 80 percent of all wine and spirits sold at wholesale in the United States.

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