

June 13, 2013

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senate
520 Hart Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Shaheen:

On behalf of the Small Business Exporters Association (SBEA)—the largest and oldest nonprofit association in the country dedicated exclusively to small and mid-size exporters, and our umbrella advocacy organization the National Small Business Association (NSBA), I am pleased to support the *Small Business Export Growth Act*. Your legislative initiative will increase U.S. exports and improve coordination amongst government agencies to collectively achieve our economic goals. While an increase in exports helps boost GDP and stimulate growth, small and medium-sized enterprises (SME's) rely heavily on exporting to reach new global markets and expand their customer base.

Even in sound economic times, small businesses are at a distinct disadvantage in the global economy. According to the 2013 NSBA/SBEA Exporting Survey, more small businesses are exporting today than just three years ago; and there has been a marked increase among non-exporters who said they would be interested in starting to export their goods and/or services from just 43 percent in 2010 to 63 percent today. NSBA and SBEA have been urging for years—decades, even—that more must be done to emphasize the needs of small business within the scope of U.S. trade.

Our survey shows a significant drop among non-exporters who said lack of goods or services to export was their main barrier to selling internationally. Today, their main barrier is a lack of information and an unclear understanding of where to start. Your legislation is key to making exporting more accessible for America's small businesses as it will better inform them about federal export promotion opportunities and resources.

With more than twenty federal departments and agencies playing some role in international trade, it is important that SME's have a place to turn. As many of these agencies overlap and offer duplicative services, the *Small Business Export Growth Act* establishes stronger congressional oversight and coordination between the federal and state export promotion agencies. This proposal goes hand-in-hand with a key recommendation NSBA and SBEA have been making for years—a one-stop-shop for small exporters.

Increased coordination between agencies will help more small businesses access the tools they need to export—especially for small companies that are new to exporting and those with specialty products for exotic markets, there are undeniable fear factors, knowing exactly where to go and who to call could alleviate some of this anxiety. Your recommendation for improving

export.gov as a “single window” for federal export services is commendable; it should be presented in a clear and easy-to-read format, and in turn will likely serve as a resource for businesses looking to enter a new market.

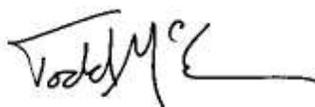
The *Small Business Export Growth Act* would establish the framework to ensure that federal and state trade agencies work in unison to assist their local exporters. SBEA and NSBA have long stated that enhanced export training and technical assistance are essential to small exporter’s success. Cross-agency outreach guides and learning materials on the intended foreign markets with virtual marketplace and virtual trade missions would make it easier and less expensive for small businesses to reach foreign partners. We are pleased your measure directs the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee (TPCC) to work with member agencies in providing a detailed list of current and future federal and state-led trade missions, trade fairs and other related activities.

Just over one percent or 287,000 of the approximately 27.9 million small businesses in the U.S. currently export. Although the number of small exporters has been steadily growing their share of overall U.S. exports—34 percent in 2010, up from 27 percent in 2002—exporting is still not as much a part of the business culture in the U.S. as it is worldwide. The presence of SME’s in America’s global trade strategy must continue to increase and the government needs to ensure that they facilitate the exporting process, and not hamper it through excessive regulations.

While U.S. exporting typically conjures images of large, massive firms, there is without a doubt an important and growing role small businesses play. We are pleased to endorse your bill as it helps create jobs while simultaneously expanding trade activities of small businesses.

Thank you for your continued leadership on this critical issue and I commend you for working to bring this legislation to the Senate floor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Todd McCracken". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "T" and "M".

Todd McCracken
President & CEO

Cc: Senator Kelly Ayotte