

Dear Brian--

We – the U.S. International Trade Commission -- have been asked by the United States Trade Representative to conduct a study with three investigations addressing the role of small and medium-enterprises (SMEs) in trade, particularly exports. Our working definition of SMEs is companies with fewer than 500 employees. We are generally addressing all sectors, including manufacturing and services, but will also be looking at a few in detail and I would generally like to contact U.S. exporting SMEs, as well as those involved with chemicals, biotechnology, and/or nanotechnology, and other high-tech sectors.

The deadlines for the study are all fairly rapid. Attached is the *Federal Register (FR)* notice for the second study, as well as the press releases for the second and third investigations and a copy of the original request letter. Information about the study appears below, followed by specific requests for information.

Our first study, which summarizes the available data on U.S. exports by SMEs in the manufacturing, agriculture, and service sectors, will be published in mid-January, 2010.

The hearing information for the **Washington, DC, hearing on February 9th** is contained in the *FR* announcement for the second study (inv. No. 332-509). We have additional hearings planned for **March 10th in St. Louis, MO, and March 12th in Portland, OR**, but we don't have details on the venues yet. We'll be sending out another *FR* notice with a formal announcement of those hearings, probably later in January. The three hearings will focus on the second and third studies. If an exporting SME is interested in appearing at the Washington, DC, hearing, they need to file a request to appear by January 26. We are being flexible with the format such requests and I can forward you a format companies can use to file such requests! Anyone who wants to appear at the St. Louis or Portland hearings should contact me for any updates about filing deadlines.

The **second study** has 3 primary goals: (1) compare the exporting behavior of SMEs in the U.S. vs. the EU; (2) identify barriers to exporting noted by U.S. SMEs, and the strategies they use to overcome those barriers; and (3) identify the benefits to SMEs from increased export opportunities, including free trade agreements and other trading arrangements. Specific questions of interest are mentioned in the *FR* notice. This study will be published in **July 2010**.

The **third study** also has three parts: (1) examine U.S. SMEs engaged in providing services, including characteristics of those firms and their exports; (2) for goods and services firms, identify trade barriers that disproportionately affect SME performance, and possible linkages between exporting and SME performance; and (3) provide insights into the multinational operations of SMEs, including foreign affiliates of U.S. SMEs, and indirect exports through sales to larger exporting firms. This study will be published in **October 2010**.

It would be great, please, if you could help with the following (as well as, perhaps, providing information addressing the goals of studies 2 and 3):

- (1) Companies, trade associations, and other entities are invited to file a request to appear at any of the Commission's hearings as a witness and/or to file a written submission, either in addition to or in lieu of appearing at the hearing. Information about submitting a request to appear at the hearing or a written submission is included in the *FR* notice dated December 1. Requests to appear have to be received by **January 26** and written submissions by **March 26**. If you have any questions about filing such a request, please let me know!
- (2) We would appreciate it if you could forward this to others who may also be interested in our study and wish to provide information. If they are interested, please ask them to contact me! If it is easier, please send me the names of

the companies (and, perhaps, contact information) and I could contact them directly.

Please let me know if you have any questions about our SME studies!

Thanks!

Best regards,
Elli

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