

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

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AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY
AND NATURAL RESOURCES

April 4, 2014

The Honorable Michael Froman
United States Trade Representative
Office of the United States Trade
Representative
600 17th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20250

The Honorable John Manfredo
Administrator
Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau
1310 G Street NW, Box 12
Washington, DC 20005

Dear U.S. Trade Rep. Froman and Administrator Manfredo:

I write today to urge your continued vigilance against geographical indication (GI) restrictions sought by the European Union (EU). As you know, the United States is currently in negotiations with the EU over the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). Beer brewers both large and small are seriously concerned about the EU's attempts to directly impair U.S. competition by imposing GI restrictions through TTIP.

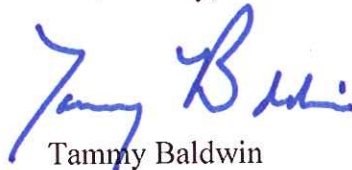
I request that you make clear to your EU counterparts that the United States will reject any proposal in TTIP negotiations that would in any way restrict the ability of U.S. brewers to use common beer names like 'Bavarian' or 'Kolsch.'

In addition to the agreement currently under negotiation, I am concerned with EU attempts to restrict our beer exports to nations with which we have already signed free trade agreements (FTAs). In country after country, the EU has been using its FTAs to persuade its trading partners to impose barriers to U.S. exports under the guise of protection for its geographical indications. For example, Canada agreed as part of its recently concluded FTA with the EU to impose new restrictions on the use of 'Munchener.' More worrying, 'Oktoberfest' is currently pending GI protection within the EU which could soon find its way into bilateral negotiations with our trading partners.

In states across the country, businesses with proud local roots and a brewing heritage could have their products barred from shelves by the EU's push to use GIs as a trade barrier. As we begin to engage the EU in TTIP negotiations that are intended to bring about better economic climates on both sides of the Atlantic by increasing export opportunities, I strongly oppose the EU's gratuitous use of GIs as a protectionist measure.

I ask that United States Trade Representative and the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau continue to work aggressively to ensure the EU's GI efforts on commonly used beer names do not impair U.S. businesses' ability to compete domestically or internationally and that you make this a top priority through both official TTIP and bilateral negotiations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tammy Baldwin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Tammy" and last name "Baldwin" clearly distinguishable.

Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator