

530 business corporations and other organizations vitally interested in trade relations between the United States and Italy. I would like to stress the fact that we are an independent, self-sustaining American trade association, not affiliated with any foreign interest.

Most of our members import a variety of products from Italy, including, among other things, apparel, appliances, automobiles and equipment, beverages, ceramics, china, furniture and handicraft items, chemicals, footwear, marble products, food products, and textiles. Other members of the chamber export a number of products produced in the United States to Italy and elsewhere. This highly profitable business includes exports of cotton, coal, minerals, grains, metal products, machinery, and other manufactured items. As you know, American exports to Italy increased 7 percent last year, to \$946 million. Imports from Italy totalled approximately \$856 million, indicating, of course, a favorable balance of trade between the two countries. The Italy-American Chamber of Commerce supports continuance of our trade policies through appropriate legislation. It is sincerely hoped that final action by Congress on the Trade Expansion Act of 1968 will result in a continuation of current liberal trade policies. We recognize that there may be certain instances where restrictions on imports and exports must be imposed. It is believed that H.R. 17551 as finally enacted should include provisions which will protect American consumers, industry, and labor, where it has been established that legal restrictions are necessary. It has the experience of our membership and U.S. businessmen in general, that continued free exchange of products and know-how between the United States and Italy leads to a better life in both countries. We have learned from history that unwarranted restriction of free trade with friendly nations serves only to induce retaliation against us. This is why we register unrelenting opposition to unnecessary tariff and nontariff barriers proposed for imported textiles, steel, certain food products, and other necessary items of commerce. It is sincerely believed that these types of legislative proposals would include a trade war, which would be particularly unfortunate with Italy, a country which has been a loyal friend of the United States.

Italian industry has actually created markets in the United States and throughout the world in a number of commodities. Italian food products and cheese created a demand that now supports a large section of food industry. In the case of business machines and other complex mechanical devices, Italy, in partnership with our industries, has helped produce better products for a broader market. In the case of textiles and items of wearing apparel, styled leadership has created a tremendous demand in America for all such products. Nonrubber footwear made here almost invariably reflects Italian style and design. Few, if any, American-made automobiles can be found which do not reflect Italian style leadership. Many of our newest and most decorative buildings are constructed utilizing Italian technology and design. Most consumer items, whether made in America or in Italy, bear witness to the favorable effect Italian imports have had on Americans. In no area has this free trade of ideas and material been more evident than in the field of textiles and textile products.

In conclusion, we submit that the strongest arguments supporting enactment of the Trade Expansion Act of 1968, or similar legislation,