



## NEWS IN BRIEF

### First KORUS Meeting Concludes

The office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) issued a release that the first meetings between the United States and the Republic of South Korea on the review of the Korea- United States Free Trade Agreement (KORUS) have concluded. The discussions focused on market access and tariffs, and covered challenges to the trade imbalance which has grown since the agreement was signed. Both sides anticipate establishing dates for the next set of meetings in Washington, DC.

A copy of the USTR release can be found at:

<https://ustr.gov/about-us/policy-offices/press-office/fact-sheets/2018/january/statement-conclusion-us-korea-korus-0>.

### Safeguard Duties Put in Place for Large Washers, Solar Cells and Modules

President Trump issued two Presidential Proclamations for duty safeguards to protect U.S. industry, one solar crystalline silicon photovoltaic (CSPN) cells and solar modules and another for larger residential washers, presented by the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR). The safeguard duties went into effect on February 7, 2018. Both products are subject to a tariff rate quota for the additional duties.

For the large residential washer, the first 1.2 million units imported will be subject to a safeguard duty of 20% and all subsequent washers imported in 2018 will be assessed at 50% for the first year. Parts for these washers that are imported will be assessed a safeguard duty of 50%. The safeguards are in effect for 3 years and the assessments will be refused each of the next two years. For the solar cells and solar panels there will be a 30% safeguard duty that will be reduced by 5% each year through 2021. The first 2.5 Gigawatts will be exempt for the safeguard duties each year.

A fact sheet on the details of the above can be found at: <https://ustr.gov/about-us/policy-offices/press-office/press-releases/2018/january/president-trump-approves-relief-us>.

The two Presidential proclamations can be found on the Federal Register website. The Presidential Proclamation for the crystalline silicon photovoltaic (CSPV) cells can be found at:

<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-01-25/pdf/2018-01592.pdf> and the Presidential Proclamation for the residential washers can be found at: <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-01-25/pdf/2018-01604.pdf>.

### Renewal of GSP Proposed

Congressman Dave Reichart (R, Washington), a member of the House Ways and Means Committee, has introduced legislation that would reinstate the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP). H.R. 4979 would extend GSP to 2019. It includes retroactivity, so that entries filed after January 1, 2018 which would have qualified for GSP (but still had duty paid) will be allowed to get duty refunds. The bill is expected to go to floor for a vote in the House of Representatives by this week. It will then move to the Senate. It is expected that the Senate will want to attach it to a larger bill that we hope will be a must-pass vehicle. The larger bill will then have to be returned to the House of Representatives for the final passage.

The text of this bill should be posted this week on the Congressional website at: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/4979?q=%7B%22search%22%3A%5B%22H.R.%2C+4979%22%5D%7D&r=1>.

By **Todd Boice**, *President*