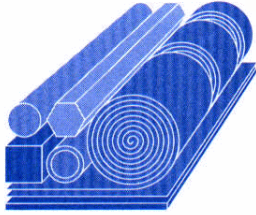


NEWS



SPECIALTY STEEL INDUSTRY OF NORTH AMERICA

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Congressmen Hunter and Hayes Champion U.S. Specialty Metals Industry

(Washington, DC) (November 11, 2003) -- The U.S. specialty metals industry today spotlighted two Members of Congress for their untiring efforts to ensure the enforcement of a longstanding provision requiring that all defense items be produced with strategic metals melted in the United States.

Henry S. Ashbaugh, a long-time executive in the titanium and superalloys industry, noted that House Armed Services Committee Chairman Duncan Hunter (R-CA) and Congressman Robin Hayes (R-NC) began the effort more than a year ago upon learning that the Department of Defense—succumbing to defense contractors who had been sourcing strategic materials offshore in violation of existing law—repeatedly waived the “Buy America” provision, or Berry Amendment as it is commonly known. Further, these waivers were done without any public disclosure.

“U.S. specialty metals producers, including producers of titanium and nickel alloys, were already in a precarious position as a result of the prolonged downturn in the commercial aerospace sector,” said Ashbaugh. “The one bright spot was the military business. Unfortunately, much of that business was lost due to the failure of the Department of Defense to enforce the ‘Buy America’ provision.”

Ashbaugh explained that Chairman Hunter and Congressman Hayes appreciated the importance to the defense industrial base of a viable domestic specialty metals sector. Said Ashbaugh, “They sought to enact provisions in the Defense Authorization Act to strengthen the existing protections accorded that sector, which ultimately were incorporated into the House-passed Defense Authorization bill.”

“The efforts of Chairman Hunter and Mr. Hayes have served notice on both the Department of Defense and the defense contracting community that Congress will not stand idly by when laws designed to preserve and maintain the critical strategic material base in this country are not enforced. We could not be any more grateful for their efforts,” said Ashbaugh.

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Ashbaugh chairs the Super Alloys Committee of the Specialty Steel Industry of North America (SSINA). SSINA is a Washington, DC-based trade association representing virtually all continental specialty steel producers. Specialty steels are high technology, high value stainless and other specialty alloy products.

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