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**Floor Statement of Senator Max Baucus (D-Mont.)
In Opposition to an Amendment to End the TAA for Firms Program**

Mr. President, this chamber approved three free trade agreements last week – and did so with overwhelming support. But for many, that support hinged on passage of a robust Trade Adjustment Assistance program, or “TAA.”

Last month, the Senate approved TAA. During floor consideration, an amendment similar to the one offered by Senator McCain was rejected. Why? Because a majority of Senators in this chamber want to help small businesses.

We want to help small businesses improve their competitiveness, and we want to help small businesses take advantage of the opportunities that trade provides.

But this amendment would end the TAA for Firms program. It would end the only program specifically designed to help small manufacturers hurt by import competition. It would end the program that helps companies adjust, retool and stay competitive in an increasingly global economy.

In 2010, TAA for Firms enabled 330 companies to devise strategies that got them back on track. It helped them identify new markets. It helped them improve inefficiencies. It helped them restructure their debt, and it helped them find new financing.

The results prove that TAA for Firms works. Ninety-eight percent of the companies that participate in the program are still in business after five years.

Without TAA for Firms, many of these companies would be out of business, and their workers would be out of jobs. The program has helped create or retain more than 50,000 good-paying manufacturing jobs since 2006.

Senator McCain’s amendment would put these jobs at risk. We should be creating jobs, not destroying them. For these reasons, I urge my colleagues to vote no on the amendment.

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