



**Opening Statement of Presiding Chairman Hanna
Subcommittee on Agriculture, Energy and Trade
Small Business Trade Agenda: Status and Impact of International Agreements
January 28, 2014**

Good morning. This hearing will come to order.

I want to thank the Assistant Trade Representative for taking the time to participate in today's hearing.

This hearing comes at an important time, as we have a number of trade policy initiatives in the pipeline, including the possible renewal of Trade Promotion Authority, or TPA. In addition, later today the President will deliver his State of the Union Address, outlining his vision and priorities for the upcoming year. I know many businesses are interested to hear if the President will make trade a priority issue, and actually back up his words with concrete actions.

Last year, our Committee held a hearing with a diverse panel of small businesses on their international trade policy priorities and how to best increase exports and create new jobs in the United States. All of our witnesses stressed the importance of international trade agreements to help grow their exporting capacity and better compete in the global market. They pointed to the various multilateral and bilateral agreements as opportunities to open new markets for their products and services. These agreements will help remove complex trade barriers, protect their intellectual property, and streamline the trade process. As you know, the Administration has estimated the Trans-Pacific Partnership (or TPP) will help spur exports to the rapidly growing Asian market and create or support 3.5 million jobs in the United States.

Our Committee understands the importance of these trade agreements and the opportunities they could provide for small firms. In 2012, my home state of New York exported over \$81 billion in goods, which helps support thousands of good paying jobs.

This brings me to a couple of key points. First, when conducting trade negotiations, the USTR needs to work in close coordination with Congress and small businesses to ensure that stakeholders are prepared to take advantage of such agreements. If the Administration seeks to renew Trade Promotion Authority, they need to build and gain the trust of Congress and the private sector to ensure their issues and concerns are being addressed. And second, I encourage USTR to work more closely with federal and state trade agencies to communicate those opportunities to domestic exporters and to help address their current export barriers. Increasing agency coordination will help more small firms increase their exports to those countries; and therefore create new, good paying jobs.

Today we will hear directly from the Office of the United States Trade Representative on the status of the current negotiations and how they are working to help more small firms export.

And as I've said before, we need leadership from the Administration to make these agreements a priority. We cannot sit on the sidelines while other countries negotiate trade agreements that put our businesses at a competitive disadvantage.

Again, I want to thank our witness for his participation. I now yield to our Ranking Member for his opening remarks.