

## **News from U.S. Rep. John Spratt (D-SC)**

Assistant to the Democratic Leader

Ranking Member, Committee on the Budget

US House of Representatives – Washington, DC

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### **Spratt Disappointed by Bush's Decision to Scrap Steel Tariffs**

WASHINGTON – U.S. Rep. John Spratt (D-SC) today expressed disappointment with President Bush's decision to eliminate tariffs on imported steel.

"Today, the President broke a promise to the hardworking men and women of America's steel industry," said Spratt, the Assistant to the House Democratic Leader. "I am disappointed the President has decided to terminate prematurely the tariffs put in place to deal with foreign steel dumped into our market."

On Thursday, President Bush announced his decision to bring an early end to the 36-month tariff plan aimed at protecting U.S. steel manufacturers from artificially low-priced steel imports. The program, implemented in March 2002, was in its 20<sup>th</sup> month.

"I supported the special steel duties from the beginning," Spratt said. "I encouraged the President to levy them in 2002. I testified in favor of them during the mid-term review at the International Trade Commission this summer; and in a letter two weeks ago, I urged the President to stand his ground."

The World Trade Organization, however, ruled against the steel tariffs in November and European Union countries have threatened retaliation for the tariffs as early as December 15<sup>th</sup>.

"I stand with the steel workers in support of this program," said Spratt. "And I will continue doing all I can to see that the steel industry gets a fair playing field in the global marketplace."

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