

Steel Workers Rally at White House

December 8, 1999

Washington, DC—Steel workers gathered at the White House to urge President Clinton to take action against a flood of steel wire rod imports that has devastated the U.S. industry. The workers demonstrated across from the White House in the southeast quadrant of Lafayette Park and delivered a letter to President Clinton.

Forty-four steelworkers traveled by bus from Georgetown Steel Corp. in Georgetown, SC, to urge the President to proclaim urgently needed Section 201 relief for the industry and its workers. Rally speakers included William Klinefelter, Legislative Director, United Steelworkers of America, Mark Essig, President and CEO of GS Industries, the parent company of Georgetown Steel, and James Sanderson, President of USWA Local 7898, representing 750 steelworkers at Georgetown Steel.

Hundreds of steelworkers have already been laid off due to record levels of steel wire rod imports. President Clinton is now 10 weeks late on a decision as to what action to take on a Section 201 petition filed earlier this year by U.S. wire rod producers, the USWA, and the Independent Steel Workers Alliance. Under U.S. trade law, the President's decision was due September 27, 1999. More layoffs and plant closings are imminent if action is not taken quickly.

"The livelihood of these steelworkers is in peril," said Charles Owen Verrill, Jr., of Wiley, Rein and Fielding, counsel to petitioners. "Without meaningful relief from the President, this industry and its workers will remain in a free-fall from which they may never recover."

The U.S. steel wire rod industry includes 14 domestic manufacturers and two steelworkers' unions, and more than 4,300 production jobs nationwide. Steel wire rod is a hot-rolled, coiled steel product produced from semi-finished steel billets. Wire rod is sold to wire

Practice Areas

International Trade

drawers and wire products producers who draw the rod into wire for hundreds of applications, including hangers, cables, and fasteners.