

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

December 10, 2015

The Honorable Thomas E. Perez
Secretary
U.S. Department of Labor
200 Constitution Avenue Northwest
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Secretary Perez:

We write in strong support of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers and United Steelworkers' applications for Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) and Alternative Trade Adjustment Assistance (ATAA) for workers and on-site contractors employed at Alcoa Intalco Works in Ferndale, Washington and Alcoa Wenatchee Works in Malaga, Washington.

On November 2, 2015, Alcoa announced a significant reduction in its aluminum smelting capacity and their intentions to idle aluminum smelting operations at Intalco Works early next year and at Wenatchee Works by the end of 2015. As a result, 880 employees at both facilities have been notified that they will lose their jobs by March 2016.

Smelting operations have been key employment centers throughout Washington for many years and Alcoa has operated in the state for more than 60 years. In 1998, seven major aluminum plants were operating in Washington. Due to weak aluminum prices and high energy costs, Intalco Works and Wenatchee Works were the only two smelters in operation in 2005. By March 2016, there will be no active smelting operations in Washington state. It's clear that idling these facilities will be a huge blow to Washington.

Wenatchee Works was the first smelter built in the Pacific Northwest after World War II and opened in 1952. Intalco Works began operations in 1966. Both are large employers in the Ferndale and Wenatchee communities, providing good paying, middle class jobs for 880 employees and their families. TAA and ATAA are critically needed resources to help provide our constituents with job placement, job training, and an income as they train and prepare for new careers.

With the price of aluminum at six-year lows, there is clear evidence that global and unfair competition have affected the ability of Alcoa to compete in the global marketplace and to remain in business. Unabated overproduction of aluminum in China, as well as imports from Canada and Mexico, have created adverse market conditions, made profitability increasingly difficult, and led to Alcoa's decision to idle these two aluminum smelting facilities.

As Members of Congress representing Ferndale and Wenatchee, we understand the significant impacts idling these plants will have on our constituents and these communities from financial insecurity for hundreds of families to slower economic growth. While both facilities have been idled before, and the smelting potlines could be restarted at an unknown time in the future, the employees and their families need immediate assistance. It is imperative that the resources provided by TAA and ATAA be made available to retrain workers for new careers, to assist workers in updating and increasing their job skills, and to aid workers who must rapidly reenter the workforce.

We believe TAA and ATAA will assist employees and their families in mitigating the harmful effects of idling Intalco Works and Wenatchee Works. Therefore, we strongly urge you to approve the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers and United Steelworkers' applications for TAA and ATAA.

We look forward to hearing from you on this important matter.


Sincerely,



Patty Murray
United States Senator



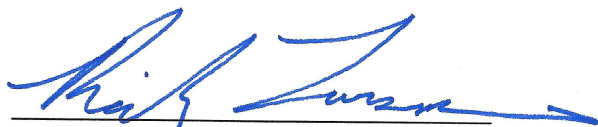
Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



Suzan DelBene
Member of Congress



Dave Reichert
Member of Congress



Rick Larsen
Member of Congress