

Chairman Dreier and Ranking Member Slaughter,

I would like to request that a technical correction to the State Trade and Export Promotion (STEP) program be included as a self-executing provision within the special rule that will provide for House consideration of the continuing appropriations act for Fiscal 2011, H.R. 1473.

I have submitted the proposed amendment to the Committee pursuant to your procedures.

STEP was established in the Small Business Jobs Act of 2010 (P.L. 111-240) to increase the number of U.S. small businesses that are exporting and increase the value of exports by those small businesses.

These are important goals as we work our way out of recession and look for ways to add jobs to our economy.

The Northern Marianas is the only part of our country not eligible and this exclusion appears to have been a drafting error, according to our discussions with staff involved.

The proposed technical correction simply adds the Northern Marianas to the rest of the United States in the definition section of the STEP program.

There is no additional cost to the U.S. Treasury associated with my request.

The STEP grant is completely competitive and, furthermore, requires a matching grant from a State or Territorial government.

Because of the non-controversial nature of this technical correction, because it fulfills our goals of economic expansion and job creation, and because it is without additional cost I hope the Committee will agree to include this self-executing provision in the special rule that will provide for House consideration of H.R. 1473 waiving such points of order as may arise.

Thank you.