



**Testimony of
James Sanderson
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President
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Before the
Office of the United States Trade Representative
Hearing on the
"Global Steel Industry Situation"
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Assistant U.S. Trade Representative Jim Sanford and members of the panel, I want to thank you for taking the time to examine the state of the global steel industry and for inviting me to testify on behalf of the thousands of workers, who, like me, are unable to work because of the current crisis.

My name is James Sanderson, and I am president of United Steel Workers Local 7898. I proudly represented steelworkers at the ArcelorMittal mill in Georgetown, South Carolina. The plant produced wire rod in the United States and closed its doors in 2015 because it could no longer compete with unfair foreign steel wire imports. The closing left 226 workers without jobs.

The USW is the largest industrial union in North America with more than 850,000 active members. The USW represents workers in the domestic wire rod industry at numerous facilities in addition to ArcelorMittal Georgetown, including another ArcelorMittal mill in Indiana; Cascade Steel Rolling Mills in Oregon; Evraz Pueblo in Colorado; Gerdau Ameristeel US in Texas; Republic Engineered Products in Ohio; and Sterling Steel Company in Illinois.

I'm here today to testify on behalf of all our steelworker members, retirees and their families as to why it is essential that the administration do more to provide relief from unfairly traded imports of steel and address global overcapacity in steel manufacturing.

For years, our union has been fighting against foreign governments and companies seeking to gain an unfair advantage by violating trade rules. Unfair trade has had an enormously corrosive effect on the nation's manufacturers and workers. From personal experience, I can tell you that it has certainly hurt the steelworkers in Georgetown in the form of bankruptcies, plant closures and layoffs.

In the 1990's, the Georgetown mill suffered greatly due to unfair competition from imports, leading it to the brink of closure. Between 2001 and 2007, the steel workers at Georgetown endured two bankruptcies, four different ownership structures, and a nine-month closure in 2003. We also watched as a sister mill in Kansas City was permanently closed in 2001 with the loss of 650 jobs.

Since then, many other steel mills closed across the country, costing steelworkers' jobs, retirees' benefits, and many communities their sense of security. The United Steelworkers Union fought tirelessly to save those jobs throughout the industry and to secure some benefits for our many retirees who were so inequitably stripped of benefits earned over a lifetime of hard work in a challenging environment. It was no different at Georgetown. The union and its members worked with ownership to do everything possible to make the Georgetown wire rod mill competitive.

The trade orders against dumped and subsidized wire rod imports from countries like Brazil, Indonesia, Mexico, Moldova, Trinidad and Tobago and Ukraine were extremely important to Georgetown's survival. Early on, they helped to keep Georgetown's workers from suffering the same permanent fate as the steelworkers at the Kansas City mill, and they set the stage for Georgetown to eventually become part of ArcelorMittal.

Unfortunately, this reprieve was short lived. By the end of 2012, unfairly traded imports of wire rod from China were pouring into the U.S. market, forcing the company to again lay off an entire production shift, putting 40 steelworkers out of work. And while the plant was able to stay open for a while longer, in July of last year, ArcelorMittal shut down the entire plant, leaving 226 workers without jobs. These employment numbers represent American workers, each having families and communities that relied on the continued viability of the U.S. steel wire rod industry.

American steelworkers continue to do everything we can to ensure the viability of the industry. But we cannot stop the injury that is caused by the massive overcapacity, government subsidies, and unfair pricing of products from other countries we have to compete with – but you can. No U.S. steelworker should have to lose a job because we allow unfairly traded steel into this country.

On behalf of our U.S. Steelworker members, retirees, and their families all over the country, I urge the administration assure unfairly traded steel does not have unrestricted access to the United States market and that you defend American jobs from global overcapacity in steel manufacturing.