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**January 2, 2026**

The Honorable Representative Roger Williams  
Chair, Committee on Small Business  
2336 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nydia Velazquez  
Ranking Member, Committee on Small Business  
2302 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

**RE: January 7 Hearing on Small Businesses**

Chair Williams, Ranking Member Velazquez, and Committee Members,

As the founder of Line in the Sand, a small waterwear brand I launched at 57 after surviving leukemia, I set out to do business “the right way,” including donating to cancer research, and manufacturing in the United States.

We tried to produce domestically, first in New York City, then with a manufacturer in Arizona; after nearly a year in development they closed. Then we tried in California where quality and reliability fell short. Ultimately, we learned that keeping production fully domestic was nearly impossible for a small brand without deep reserves of capital. I deliberately avoided China for as long as I could, but eventually found a reputable factory staffed by skilled women, and our business began to grow, until new tariffs hit and turned our economics upside down overnight. Suddenly, a garment that costs about \$50 to produce faced an additional \$73 in tariffs, pushing our cost to \$123; to stay in business we’d have to charge around \$250, which is simply beyond what our customers will pay.

After six years, 10,000 garments sold, and a loyal customer base, our future is now uncertain. Switching manufacturers isn’t a quick fix and requires expensive sampling, time, and major risk, and when profit disappears, so does our ability to give back.

The short, shifting “truces” and whiplash-inducing policy changes make planning almost impossible: if shipments slip by weeks, will they be hit with new rates retroactively, and what happens when the truce ends?

Customs and Border Protection officials are destroying items. We recently shipped a container from China, but because officials determined that parts of the container were undervalued, our portion of the container would not be released. They ultimately destroyed the container, including dresses, skirts and tops. The materials, manufacturing costs and shipping costs are a total loss. This practice was highlighted on December 26, in [this Wall Street Journal article](#).

I'm urging you to push for tariff relief that doesn't punish small American businesses and consumers, whether through rolling back these tariffs, creating clear and targeted exemptions for small companies, or restoring predictable trade policy. Furthermore, we need your help to enhance accountability at Customs, and stop unreasonable situations like the destruction of my shipment. Please help entrepreneurs like me keep people employed, keep products affordable, and keep delivering on the values we built our companies around.

Sincerely,

Lynne Fletcher O'Brien, Founder  
Line in the Sand