

Ways and Means Committee Member Day Statement – Rep. Rudy Yakym (IN-02)

Thursday, September 14, 2023

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the opportunity that you and Ranking Member Neal are providing those of us not on the Ways and Means Committee to present the priorities of our constituents.

I'm proud to represent the hardworking Hoosiers of Indiana's Second District. We're home to a dynamic economy, including some of America's top manufacturers, medical innovators, farmers and ranchers, and much more. They all have a stake in our country's policies pertaining to tax, trade, healthcare, and economic opportunity.

Many of you knew my predecessor, Jackie Walorski, a cherished and respected member of this committee who was taken from us all too soon. And if you knew Jackie, many of the priorities I'm highlighting will sound very familiar.

The Second District is the epicenter of the recreational vehicle industry. About 85% of RVs on the road come from Elkhart County and the surrounding area in my district.

That's why one of my top priorities is the passage of my bill, H.R. 3624, the Travel Trailer and Camper Tax Parity Act. The exemption of floor plan financing from interest deductibility changes in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act solved an issue for many car and equipment dealerships across the country. However, it unintentionally left out non-motorized towable RVs, which are about 88% of RVs sold. This has forced RV dealers to maintain two separate sets of books – one for motorized and the other for non-motorized RVs. H.R. 3624 would correct this unintended consequence, allowing dealers to focus less on unnecessary paperwork and more on selling RVs to Americans looking to explore the natural beauty of our great nation.

Another priority is the reauthorization of the Generalized System of Preferences, or GSP, program. As you might imagine, an RV has a unique, complex supply chain. The industry buys American whenever it can, but there are certain things it just can't. Lauan wood is an example of this. It is a tropical wood found almost exclusively in southeast Asia. Lauan is water-resistant and lightweight, which makes it ideal for the lining of an RV. It outperforms the other types of plywood on the market, providing superior durability and fuel economy. Lauan entered duty-free under GSP starting in 2019. However, since the program expired at the end of 2020, RV manufacturers resumed paying a million dollars a month in unnecessary tariffs. I support a long-term extension of GSP to help the RV manufacturers in my district, as well as other companies seeking to diversify their supply chains away from China.

A third priority is Mr. LaHood and Ms. DelBene's bill, H.R. 3238, the Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act. Inflation, supply chain disruptions, and rising interest rates have made it more and more difficult to find affordable housing. I'm a proud cosponsor of the LaHood-DelBene bill because it would enhance a proven tool that has successfully encouraged private investment in affordable housing.

Finally, across my district, I hear about the need for tax certainty. I hope we can work toward permanent, stable tax policy to give families the certainty to plan their finances and businesses and farmers the certainty to plan investments.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify, and I yield back the balance of my time.