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Supplemental Information for Testimony of Roger Quarles

April 30, 2010

Mr. Steffon Brown
Management Analyst
USDA/Foreign Agricultural Service
Office of Negotiations and Agreements
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington D.C. 20250

Dear: USDA's Consultative Group to Eliminate Child Labor and Forced Labor in Imported Agricultural Products.

We continue to urge this group to look at the effects that Child Labor and Forced Labor has on America's Tobacco Farmers. As I stated in my comments at the hearing on March 29th: There are easily validated reports of child labor abuse in what some would say is forced if not slavery in some instances. These are largely concentrated in Africa and some in Asia and South America. We would encourage this group to consider the following action to help our U.S Tobacco Growers compete in this Global Market Place with this cheap Imported Tobacco. More tobacco tonnage is being imported from these countries for domestic cigarette production than is being used of our own production.

The following countries can import tobacco into the United States under our Tariff Rate Quota that is not being taxed in anyway. These countries do not pay the 350% fine as long as they stay under their allotted Quota for that fiscal year. The small fee that they pay is offset by the tobacco companies importing tainted tobacco that has been produced with child labor and by exporting tobacco from the United States that is not produced with child labor to another country. So in short these Dealers and manufacturers pay no fees or tariffs for imported tobacco. The countries under the Tariff Rate Quota are Argentina, Brazil, Chile, European Union, Guatemala, Malawi, Philippines, Thailand, Zimbabwe, and the Category "Other" which is not defined as to where the Tobacco comes from. Of these countries the largest imports are coming from Brazil, Malawi, Argentina, and Zimbabwe. We believe that child labor issues are present in each of these countries.

We wish for these countries that are using child labor for Tobacco production to be suspended from the Tariff Rate Quota benefits. We also believe that the Multi-National Companies that buy tobacco would support this since they have condemned the use of child labor in tobacco. They also fund the ELCT Foundation which was created for the elimination of child labor in tobacco worldwide.

If this is not possible then the Group should look at the idea of taxing these imported products to a level that makes the price of their tobacco equal to the U.S price. If tobacco from Malawi cost \$5.00 per kilo delivered and the U.S price is \$7.50 per kilo then the tax would be \$2.50. This money should be used for social programs in that country to educate these children for a brighter future in their home countries. These profits from cheap tobacco caused by cheap labor should not be reaped by the large multi-national tobacco companies. This would also allow our farmers to be competitive on the domestic market.

We look forward to working with you in the future and would be glad to assist you in this difficult task.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Roger Quarles". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Roger Quarles
President
Burley Tobacco Growers Cooperative Assoc.