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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
The Under Secretary for International Trade
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dr. Steven Landefeld
Director Bureau of Economic Analysis
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Dr. Landefeld:

Recently, Nancy McLernon, President and CEO of the Organization for International Investment (OFII), raised with me her organization's concerns regarding BEA's announced cuts to the BE-15 annual survey of foreign direct investment (FDI) in the United States. I understand that several states have expressed similar concerns through a letter from the Council for Community and Economic Research to OMB with a copy to David Galler of BEA.

OFII uses state-specific data to inform lawmakers of the economic impact foreign investors have in their districts and to encourage the United States to remain committed to open investment policies. The BE-15 survey provides the main state-specific data elements on FDI. As noted in the letter to OMB, states use the data to analyze the contribution of foreign-owned businesses to state economic development goals and determine how to allocate state spending between domestic and foreign programming. Without the data, states fear that funding for their FDI programs and activities will be more difficult to justify. This data is also important to the International Trade Administration in our work to promote foreign investment in the United States, especially in light of the current financial crisis.

I appreciate BEA's work to provide data and insightful analysis on foreign direct investment, and I hope that BEA can find a way to retain the four state-level data elements in the BE-15 survey that are currently slated for elimination. I look forward to continued dialogue with BEA on the data required to track this important source of capital, jobs, and innovation.

Sincerely,

Michelle O'Neill, Acting

