

IMPORTANT LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION

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TARIFF legislation is pending in the United States Senate which should vitally interest every dentist as well as every person receiving dental services. Therefore, it behooves every reader of this article to assume and discharge his full responsibility by promptly writing to both senators from his state, requesting them to support an amendment to the pending tariff bill which will separate surgical and dental instruments by striking out "and dental" in paragraph No. 359 and adding a new paragraph to be known as No. 359-A as follows:

Dental instruments, or parts thereof, composed wholly or in part of iron, steel, copper, brass, nickel, aluminum, or other metal, finished or unfinished, 35 per centum ad valorem: Provided, That all articles specified in this paragraph, when imported shall, when practicable, have the name of the maker and beneath the same the country of origin die sunk conspicuously and indelibly on the outside, or if a jointed instrument on the outside when closed.

This makes a separate sub-paragraph for dental instruments and eliminates the specific duty on same, but it retains the 35 per cent ad valorem duty as provided in the House bill. The Senate Finance Committee made two changes in paragraph No. 359, as follows: First, it exempted surgical and dental instruments with a value of less than \$2.00 per dozen from the specific duty as provided by the House, but everything from \$2.00 to \$5.00 per dozen is on a basis of 60 cents a dozen specific duty. Valued at more

than \$5.00 per dozen 12 cents per dozen for each \$1.00 per dozen of such value. Second, it increased the ad valorem duty from 35 to 60 per cent. In this connection the present ad valorem duty is 20 per cent, with no specific duty. Our recommendations were submitted to the Senate Finance Committee on August 23, 1921, after having been approved by our Association, as well as the Dental Manufacturers' Club and the Dental Trade Association. Also, the separating of dental instruments from surgical instruments was approved on August 24 by a spokesman for the surgical instrument industry.

The only reason assigned for our recommendations not being accepted is the fact that some members of the Finance Committee contend that there is no difference between the two industries, but in this connection you can very appropriately remind your senators that the dental profession and the dental manufacturing industry are both well recognized as developments resulting from American ingenuity. As an evidence of this, note that the ratio of dental exports to dental imports is in excess of 20 to 1, while it was stated by a speaker for the surgical industries that not 2 per cent of their product was exported. Further, dental imports will not produce a sufficient revenue to make their proposed legislation meritorious from that angle.

The surgical instrument industry was never well developed, in our country until

the necessity for this arose during the world-war and, therefore, they may be termed "infant industries." No doubt they are entitled to a greater amount of protection than should be provided for industries which are producing the percentage of supplies indicated in the ratio of dental exports to imports.

Please write your senators at once, emphasizing the difference between these two industries and respectfully urge that they support an amendment for a separate paragraph for dental instruments with only an ad valorem duty of 35 per cent. Otherwise it is only reasonable to anticipate that the cost of our instruments and supplies will be in harmony with the tariff duty and that this can only tend to add an increased overhead which the public must absorb; also, this will tend to make dental treatment unavailable to an increased number when its importance in health conservation is more fully recognized than at any previous time.

In behalf of the members of our committee and the executive officers, I desire to thank in advance everyone who responds to this request.

Every member of our Association should give heed to Dr. Brown's request for help to bring pressure to bear in Congress to induce them to adopt the recommendations of the Manufacturers' Club, the Dental Trade Association, and the officers of the National Dental Association.

Every man in the National Dental Association should clearly understand the fact that if the enormous rise in tariff is permitted to become law, dental costs will be correspondingly increased and the advantage of the very few foreign made materials which we need will be taken away from us.

Therefore, we should bring the combined power of our influence to bear upon the men in Congress who have this matter in charge to see to it that the health interests of the country represented by dentistry are not made to bear this heavy increase in costs of dental service to the people at large.

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