

The International Advocacy Program of the North Carolina Department of Commerce

- Supports,
- Intervenes,
- Assists companies...

Encountering unforeseen difficulties entering or competing in foreign markets.

These circumstances could include:

- Unfair or illegal trade practices
- Tariff or non-tariff barriers that may restrict or delay product from reaching a foreign market
- Complex or difficult trade regulations, policies or standards
- Ensuring a level playing field when competing for foreign government contracts

Services Provided

The advocacy program is available to companies operating in North Carolina. With its partner relationship with the US Department of Commerce and North Carolina's six Foreign Offices strategically located around the world, the experienced staff at the International Trade Division offers

Four principal ways to help your company:

- 1. Provide research and insight on how to maneuver through foreign government bureaucracies.**
- 2. Advocate directly to foreign governments on behalf of a client company. This can be done by contacting the appropriate foreign officials both in-country and at their embassies in Washington, DC.**
- 3. Enlist the support of our NC Government leaders, state and federal officials, to act on behalf of NC clients.**
- 4. Other appropriate interventions that will be beneficial to the employers of North Carolina citizens.**

A few real life examples of how the NC Advocacy program can benefit your company:

1) ANC furniture company was told by a buyer they could not sell into Canada because their upholstery did not meet local fire standards. The NC Representative in Canada stepped in and provided appropriate documentation that demonstrated that the product did conform to Canadian standards.

2) ANC company recently won a bid to provide environmental services in Asia. Once the company set up its equipment and sent service technicians to Asia, they were notified by the local government that they needed an operation license before beginning the project. As the NC company's wage and travel costs began to pile up, the company contacted the US&FCS in Charlotte for assistance with the license. The US&FCS Charlotte offices contacted their contacts in Asia to speed the delivery of the license. The license was processed and the project got underway within a month of the advocacy.

3) A medical equipment company had been exporting equipment to South Korea that included a containerized gas manufactured by another company. Sales to that country alone represented one quarter of a million dollars annually. New Korean Food and Drug Administration (KFDA) regulations requested a complete breakdown of the inert ingredients in the gas to be written on the import license. The manufacturer of the gas was reluctant to release their trade secrets which prevented the product from entering the market, and the ability of the NC company to continue sales into Korea. The NC Representative in Korea worked with the KFDA and the US Embassy in Korea to find a means of fulfilling the regulatory statutes; yet at the same time safeguarding proprietary information of the manufacturer of the gas.

Statement on Advocacy

As we recognize the often unfair competition in the worldwide marketplace, the International Trade Division helps North Carolina businesses "level the playing field" in foreign markets by tapping into the collective might of the U.S. Government's Advocacy Center in Washington, D.C. We encourage you to work with us to protect your products and markets through intellectual property protection, effective market research, and aggressive maintenance prior to the onset of a conflict.

For more information contact:
Kuldip Wasson at 919 733-7193
kwasson@nccommerce.com