



**Testimony of  
Dan Pierce  
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Vice President  
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Before the  
Office of the United States Trade Representative  
Hearing on the  
"Global Steel Industry Situation"  
April 12, 2016**

Assistant U.S. Trade Representative Jim Sanford and members of the panel, I want to thank you for taking the time to examine the state of the global steel industry, the issue of global overcapacity in steel, and for inviting me to testify on behalf of the thousands of workers, who, like me, are unable to work because of the current crisis.

My name is Dan Pierce. I am a resident of Hibbing, Minnesota in the heart of the Iron Range. For nearly twenty years I worked at U.S. Steel's Keewatin Taconite (Keetac) operation in Keewatin, Minnesota. At Keetac, we mine, crush and process taconite into iron-ore pellets, a key ingredient of steel. Or at least we did, until our facility was idled in May of 2015 and virtually all of the 360 employees were laid off, including myself.

When our facility was up and running, the iron-ore pellets we produced were shipped to mills for final steel production. I worked as a diesel mechanic, keeping every piece of mobile equipment running; from the machines that dug taconite out of the ground to the trucks that hauled it to our processing facility. I was proud that my work kept Keetac running smoothly and helped my fellow coworkers do their jobs. I was also proud knowing that the iron-ore we produced went into the steel that ended up in our cars, bridges, skyscrapers and other structures.

The shutdown at Keetac has been a big adjustment. It means not getting up every day and going to work. It means tightening my belt to make ends meet. Not being able to work for the past 11 months has put stress on me, my family and my friends as we wrestle with the uncertainty of if and when I will be able to return to work.

Our family has had to hold off on home repairs and cut back on groceries and eating out. When we do this, and you multiply it by all the other workers going through the same things, it means local businesses suffer as people make less trips to places like the Super One Foods or the Erickson lumberyard. Everything in the range depends on the mining companies running. When they're shut down it affects everyone: from daycare providers to local car dealerships to hospitals.

But it's more than just the day-to-day of the job or the stress of working with a lot less income that has motivated me to speak with you today. The people I worked with have grown into a tight-knit community. If anyone needed help outside of work, it was normal to see their fellow steelworkers chipping in. Once you get to know your coworkers and their families the way I had after 17 years of service, it's hard to

suddenly not see them every day. And what's worse, if we can't address this crisis and get the Iron Range up and running again, I'm not sure how we can create that kind of community again. Without demand for iron ore, there is no other game in town where people who, like me, have spent years developing a particular set of skills in areas like maintenance or electrical work, can put those skills to work. Our options are limited: we can either try to get on with another mining company, which is hard if not impossible today, or simply leave our community and our home.

I was proud that when something at Keetac broke down, I was called in to fix it. I'm here to tell you that something is broken in the way we defend against trade cheating, and it needs to be fixed. We need to get back to making things in this country to put people to work. To do this we need to be more pro-active so that it doesn't take this – a crisis where people are being laid off across this country – to act. Until we start using more U.S.-made steel to put in the air, in the ground and to drive around, my neighbors in the Iron Range, and workers across America will be out of work when we could be putting our skills to use building a brighter future for our country.