



[Billing Code 3290-F8]

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE

[Docket Number USTR-2018-0016; Dispute Number WT/DS533]

WTO Dispute Settlement Proceeding Regarding United States – Countervailing Measures on Softwood Lumber from Canada

AGENCY: Office of the United States Trade Representative.

ACTION: Notice with request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) is providing notice that Canada has requested the establishment of a dispute settlement panel under the Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization (WTO Agreement). That request may be found at www.wto.org in a document designated as WT/DS533/2. USTR invites written comments from the public concerning the issues raised in this dispute.

DATES: Although USTR will accept any comments received during the course of the dispute settlement proceedings, you should submit your comment on or before June 25, 2018, to be assured of timely consideration by USTR.

ADDRESSES: USTR strongly prefers electronic submissions made using the Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments in section III below. The docket number is USTR-2018-0016. For alternatives to on-line submissions, please contact Sandy McKinzy at (202) 395-9483.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Assistant General Counsel

Katherine Wang at (202) 395-6214, or Senior Associate General Counsel J. Daniel Stirk at (202) 395-9617.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

Section 127(b)(1) of the Uruguay Round Agreements Act (URAA) (19 U.S.C. 3537(b)(1)) requires notice and opportunity for comment after the United States submits or receives a request for the establishment of a WTO dispute settlement panel. Pursuant to this provision, USTR is providing notice that the United States has received a request for a dispute settlement panel pursuant to the WTO Understanding on Rules Procedures Governing the Settlement of Disputes (DSU). The WTO has established a dispute settlement panel, and the panel will hold its meetings in Geneva Switzerland.

II. Major Issues Raised by Canada

On March 16, 2018, Canada requested the establishment of a WTO dispute settlement panel regarding certain countervailing measures on softwood lumber products from Canada as well as an alleged measure treating Nova Scotia and New Brunswick as in-country benchmarks for provincial stumpage markets in Alberta, Ontario, and Québec. Canada argues that these measures are inconsistent with Articles 1, 2, 10, 14, 11, 19, 21, and 32 of the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures and Article VI:3 of

the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade 1994. The United States and Canada held consultations regarding these matters on January 17, 2018, which failed to resolve the dispute.

III. Public Comments: Requirements for Submissions

USTR invites written comments concerning the issues raised in this dispute. All submissions must be in English and sent electronically via www.regulations.gov. To submit comments via www.regulations.gov, enter docket number USTR-2018-0016 on the home page and click “search.” The site will provide a search-results page listing all documents associated with this docket. Find a reference to this notice by selecting “Notice” under “Document Type” on the left side of the search-results page, and click on the link entitled “Comment Now!” For further information on using the www.regulations.gov website, please consult the resources provided on the website by clicking on “How to Use Regulations.gov” on the bottom of the home page.

The www.regulations.gov website allows users to provide comments by filling in a “Type Comment” field, or by attaching a document using an “Upload File” field. USTR prefers that comments be provided in an attached document. If a document is attached, it is sufficient to type “See attached” in the “Type Comment” field. USTR prefers submissions in Microsoft Word (.doc) or Adobe Acrobat (.pdf). If the submission is in an application other than those two, please indicate the name of the application in the “Type Comment” field.

For any comments submitted electronically containing business confidential

information, the file name of the business confidential version should begin with the characters “BC”. Any page containing business confidential information must be clearly marked “BUSINESS CONFIDENTIAL” on the top and bottom of that page and the submission should clearly indicate, via brackets, highlighting, or other means, the specific information that is business confidential. If you request business confidential treatment, you must certify in writing that disclosure of the information would endanger trade secrets or profitability, and that the information would not customarily be released to the public. Filers of submissions containing business confidential information also must submit a public version of their comments. The file name of the public version should begin with the character “P”. The “BC” and “P” should be followed by the name of the person or entity submitting the comments or rebuttal comments. If this is not sufficient to protect business confidential information or otherwise protect business interests, please contact Sandy McKinzy at (202) 395-9483 to discuss whether alternative arrangements are possible.

USTR may determine that information or advice contained in a comment, other than business confidential information, is confidential in accordance with section 135(g)(2) of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2155(g)(2)). If a submitter believes that information or advice is confidential, s/he must clearly designate the information or advice as confidential and mark it as “SUBMITTED IN CONFIDENCE” at the top and bottom of the cover page and each succeeding page, and provide a non-confidential summary of the information or advice.

Pursuant to section 127(e) of the URAA (19 U.S.C. 3537(e)), USTR will maintain

a docket on this dispute settlement proceeding, docket number USTR-2018-0016, accessible to the public at www.regulations.gov. The public file will include non-confidential public comments USTR receives regarding the dispute. If a dispute settlement panel is convened, or in the event of an appeal from a panel, USTR will make the U.S. submissions and any non-confidential summaries of submissions received from other participants in the dispute publicly available at www.ustr.gov. If a dispute settlement panel is convened, or in the event of an appeal from a panel, the report of the panel, and, if applicable, the report of the Appellate Body, will also be available on the website of the World Trade Organization, at www.wto.org.

Juan Millan,

Assistant United States Trade Representative for Monitoring and Enforcement,
Office of the U.S. Trade Representative.

[FR Doc. 2018-11776 Filed: 5/31/2018 8:45 am; Publication Date: 6/1/2018]