

Wall Street Journal, Feb. 24, 2011

Some Trade Adjustment Programs Are Very Productive

Regarding your editorial "Free Trade Foul-Ups" (Feb. 9) and the statement that "TAA is turning into one more open-ended entitlement": There needs to be a clarification. I am on the board of directors of the Northwest Trade Adjustment Assistance Center. We provide trade adjustment assistance to companies that have been injured by imports.

Because trade adjustment assistance works at the micro level helping the company to develop a strategic plan to adjust to import competition, we have been able to save 80% of the companies that have entered the program since 1984. The cost to the U.S. taxpayer has been only \$16 million.

Saving the company means saving the jobs that go with that company. That is real bang for the buck.

The U.S. government

spends hundreds of millions of dollars to retrain workers, but only \$16 million to help companies adjust to import competition. Maybe that is one of the reasons for the job problems in the U.S.

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