

**Perry, William**

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**From:** Ways & Means Republicans <pressfromways&means@mail.house.gov>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 09, 2015 12:30 PM  
**To:** Perry, William  
**Subject:** Hatch, Brady, Wyden Announce Deal on Bipartisan Customs Legislation

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## Hatch, Brady, Wyden Announce Deal on Bipartisan Customs Legislation

*Bicameral Conference Report Streamlines U.S. Customs System; Curbs Abuse of U.S. Trade Laws*



December 9, 2015 - PRESS RELEASE

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WASHINGTON – Senate Finance Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch (R-Utah), House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Kevin Brady (R-Texas), and Senate Finance Committee Ranking Member Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) today announced a final agreement has been reached by the Senate and House conference committee on H.R. 644, the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015.

The bipartisan, bicameral trade [legislation](#) authorizes U.S. Customs and Border Protection and puts in place effective tools to strengthen trade enforcement at the border and facilitate the efficient movement of legitimate trade and travel.

“After productive negotiations, we were able to produce a strong, bipartisan bill that will help modernize the nation’s customs system and ensure it is ready to meet the challenges of the 21st century global economy,” **said Hatch, who also serves as Chair of the conference committee.** “Strong enforcement is a key element in our trade arsenal and thanks to this legislation the Administration will have a number of new tools to hold America’s trading partners accountable. Even more, this measure promotes legitimate trade facilitation and works to preserve one of America’s most important economic assets: intellectual property, helping to prevent counterfeit and illicit goods from entering our nation. We’ve put together a good package, and I look forward to working with my colleagues to get this report across the finish line and signed into law this year.”

“Expanding trade is key to our pro-growth agenda for America,” **said Brady, who also serves as Vice Chair of the conference committee.** “Our bipartisan agreement turns the page on impractical, outdated customs and border policies that have hurt American workers and job creators for decades. By replacing inefficiency with innovation, this bill will make it easier for Americans to compete and win in marketplaces around the world. In addition, strong enforcement provisions will also level the playing field and help ensure that other countries follow the same rules. This conference report fulfills our commitment to members of Congress during the discussion of TPA to make sure the President enforces trade agreements, not just negotiates them. This agreement is only one of many pro-growth steps we’ll take in the months ahead to help all Americans prosper and succeed.”

“This enforcement package is about jobs,” **said Wyden.** “Too often, our laws and enforcement policies have proven too slow or too weak to stop the trade cheats before jobs are lost. The Leveling the Playing Field Act Congress passed earlier this year helped ensure that workers and businesses harmed by unfair trade have faster access to relief. This conference report, which includes the ENFORCE Act, will help ensure that this relief

is effective and that trade cheats cannot evade the consequences of violating our trade laws. The bill we released today represents bipartisan trade enforcement priorities that were years in the making. It takes trade enforcement to a new level to protect workers and businesses in Oregon and around the country. Congress is now on the verge of passing the strongest package of trade enforcement policies in decades.”

**Background:**

Earlier this year, Senators Hatch and Wyden [introduced](#) and reported out bipartisan customs legislation from the Senate Finance Committee. The bill, the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015, went on to pass the Senate in May by a vote of 78 to 20.

On April 21, U.S. Reps. Pat Tiberi (R-Ohio), Kevin Brady (R-Texas) and Charles Boustany (R-La.) introduced customs enforcement legislation, H.R. 1907, which was reported out of the Ways & Means Committee on May 14, as amended. The U.S. House of Representatives acted on the amended customs bill (H.R. 644) on June 12 and cleared the bipartisan measure by a vote of 240 to 190.

The Conference Report for the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015 reconciles the differences between the House and Senate bills, formally authorizes U.S. Customs and Border Protection, facilitates the legitimate trade of goods, and combats violations of U.S. trade laws. Congress is expected to soon vote on the conference report and send it to the President’s desk to be signed into law.

Hatch and Brady served as the Chair and Vice Chair of the customs conference committee, respectively. In addition to Senator Wyden, customs conferees includes: Senators John Cornyn (R-Texas), John Thune (R-S.D.), Johnny Isakson (R-Ga.), Chuck Schumer (R-N.Y.) and Debbie Stabenow (D-Mich.) along with House Ways and Means Committee Ranking Member Sander Levin (D-Mich.) and Committee members Pat Tiberi (R-Ohio), Dave Reichert (R-Wash.) and Linda Sanchez (D-Calif.).

To view a copy of the bill text click [here](#).

A summary of the Conference Report can be found [here](#).

The Joint Explanatory Statement of the Committee of the Conference can be found [here](#).

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