

Testimony of Steve Bosarge, Chief Operations Officer
Bosarge Boats Inc.
Before the United States International Trade Commission
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Good morning. My name is Steve Bosarge. I am a third generation fishermen. In 1976, I purchased my first shrimp boat after high school and have been in the industry ever since. I now own Bosarge Boats and operate 4 Gulf shrimp trawlers out of Pascagoula, Mississippi. I am also a Commissioner, appointed by Governor Barbour, with the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, and serve on various federal and state fisheries panels.

Shrimping has enabled me to enjoy a pretty good life. I've put my three girls through college: one has finished a PhD program in pharmacy, another is in medical school training to be a dentist, and my oldest earned an MBA. She has put that MBA to good use by joining the family business after years in the financial sector, and is now in charge of business development and marketing for Bosarge Boats.

I want to talk about what it means to be a shrimper today. First, landing high quality shrimp and taking care of the product is how I've succeeded in this business. Finding the right types of nets, controlling the length of our tows, making sure that the shrimp brought on board is handled and cleaned well, and assuring our counts and weights are accurate – these are essential to how we operate. This focus on quality allowed me to survive the flood of cheap imports that took place before the duties, and has allowed us to expand after the trade relief – we added a ninety-five foot boat to our fleet in 2006.

We've paid just as much attention to making our operations more efficient. As fuel costs have increased, we have experimented with everything that might minimize our fuel usage, such as switching to steel V shaped doors and utilizing different types of webbing for our nets. One

of the most successful fuel conservation tools has come from the installation of fuel flow meters on our boats. These meters allow our captains to maximize fuel efficiency. The next generation of fuel efficiency will be to switch our vessels over to operate on Liquefied Natural Gas. This would require a large investment if we decide to move in that direction, but it would make a vast difference.

But being efficient and producing high quality shrimp is not enough to guarantee our continued success. Bosarge Boats has developed a web-site for the company that provides information on all of the other services we now provide to supplement what we receive from the fishery. Our boats handle research work for universities, provide services to various marine-based industries, and perform endangered species relocations.

We remain, first and foremost, a shrimp fishing business, and that is where my heart is. By stopping the rapid decline in shrimp prices, the duties have relieved pressure on our business and allowed us to work on securing our future. We have been able to invest back in our business and diversify, largely because of the stability that the trade relief provided. Success has been the product of hard work, and future success will depend on us working just as hard. For a business like mine, the tariffs remain as important today as they were six years ago, and I urge you to keep them in place. Thank you.