



### **US: MJSA Supports Status Change of Indian Jewelry**

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MJSA, the [United States](#) trade association dedicated to professional excellence in jewelry making and design, said in a press releases posted on its website, that it supports the US government's recent determination to remove duty-free, preferential treatment on gold rope and gold mixed link necklaces from [India](#).

According to the statement, the decision was made during the Obama Administration's annual review of the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) program.

MJSA had previously advocated for the removal of duty-free status for these two categories of [Indian jewelry imports](#), in hearings held by the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR).

The United States Congress created the GSP Program as part of the Trade Act of 1974, to help developing countries expand their economies by allowing certain goods to be imported to the United States duty-free.

Once a country's imports for a specific product rise above a pre-determined competitive-need ceiling, however, they are no longer eligible for duty-free status, unless the President grants a competitive-need-limitation (CNL) waiver. India has received such waivers in the past.

This year, after assessing which products should continue to benefit from duty-free treatment under GSP, President Obama determined that five products from three beneficiary countries were sufficiently competitive in the United States to end duty-free treatment, including the two categories of necklaces from India.

"Duty-free Indian imports of rope chain and mixed link necklaces climbed dramatically from 2006 through 2009, exceeding the competitive need limitations of the GSP," said David W. Cochran, President and CEO of MJSA. "The competition from these duty-free imports placed a severe burden on US-based suppliers, who are

already coping with a massive economic downturn."

The overall growth of lower-priced imports has helped to put the entire US jewelry industry under great strain in the past decade, Cochran added. MJSA has advocated that any country that no longer qualifies for GSP status should no longer receive duty-free treatment.

"While the US jewelry manufacturing industry does not want to fall back on protectionist measures, it also does not want to see competitors receive an unfair cost advantage," he added. "The elimination of India's duty-free status for mixed link and rope chain helps to rectify this situation, and puts US and Indian companies on a more even playing field."

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