



January 28, 2008

United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

The undersigned industry trade associations and labor union are writing to urge you to support the Kissell Amendment #198 to H.R. 1 that would expand the textile and apparel provisions in Berry Amendment (Berry) to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Applying Berry to DHS would not require any new appropriation, but it would create new U.S. jobs right away because of its U.S. content requirements.

Like other sectors of the economy, the U.S. textile and apparel industry has been battered by a flood of unfairly subsidized imports in recent years. Since December 2000, the United States has run a cumulative \$575 billion trade deficit in textiles and apparel and suffered through the destruction of 587,000 million middle-class American textile and apparel manufacturing jobs. And since the economic downturn began, the industry has lost 60,000 good paying jobs with 44 textile plants closing across the country.

We agree that a major stimulus is urgently needed to put Americans back to work quickly and that this can be accomplished, at least in part, through the targeted purchase of U.S.-produced goods and services. Expanding coverage of the Berry Amendment to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) would do just that by creating badly needed textile and apparel jobs in short order.

The Berry Amendment<sup>1</sup>, originally enacted in a 1941 defense appropriations act, requires the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) and the U.S. Coast Guard within DHS to procure domestically produced or grown items, including food, clothing, fabrics, specialty metals, and hand or measuring tools with 100 percent U.S. content.

If Congress were to apply Berry's textile and apparel provisions to DHS, it would immediately cover the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) within DHS because the TSA is exempt from both the Trade Agreements Act (TAA) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on Government Procurement (GPA). For any expanded Berry provisions to apply elsewhere within DHS, we will be asking the Executive Branch to provide exemptions for those agencies, which include Customs, FEMA and the Immigration Service.

The true value of the proposed stimulus package will be measured by its ability to quickly impact as many U.S. workers, companies, and communities in as positive a manner as possible. This amendment does exactly that – at no additional cost. We urge you to support the Kissell Amendment expanding Berry to DHS. Thank you for your consideration of this very important matter.

Sincerely,

American Manufacturing Trade Action Coalition (AMTAC)  
National Council of Textile Organizations (NCTO)  
National Textile Association (NTA)  
United States Industrial Fabrics Institute (USIFI)  
UNITE HERE (formerly the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees and the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union)  
National Cotton Council  
American Apparel and Footwear Association (AAFA)

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<sup>1</sup> See U.S.C. Title 10 §2533a