

May 9, 2018

The Honorable Mac Thornberry
Chairman
House Armed Services Committee
2216 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Adam Smith
Ranking Member
House Armed Services Committee
2216 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Thornberry and Ranking Member Smith,

We are writing to advise you of our very strong opposition to a proposed amendment to the Fiscal Year 2019 National Defense Authorization Act that would weaken the Berry Amendment (10 USC 2533a), a law prohibiting the Department of Defense from procuring certain products, including textiles, clothing and footwear unless those goods are made with U.S. content and labor.

We are aware of an amendment that attempts to remove zippers, buttons, snaps, and other non-textile components from important Berry Amendment protections.

The Berry Amendment has been a staple of defense procurement for decades. During that time, Berry has covered clothing and shoes, and all components thereof, supporting tens of thousands of jobs in an integrated, domestic textile, apparel, and footwear manufacturing industry.

If such language were to become law, it would come at the expense of U.S. manufacturing jobs in U.S. factories that produce these components for the U.S. military, and would erode important protections that currently support this entire industrial base. Further, suddenly changing the rules now to exempt some components would create confusion and create unnecessary compliance burdens and costs for the contracting community.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration of this important request.

Sincerely,

1. AFL-CIO
2. Alliance for American Manufacturing (AAM)
3. American Apparel & Footwear Association (AAFA)
4. American Sheep Industry Association
5. Coalition for a Prosperous America
6. Georgia Association of Manufacturers
7. Industrial Fabrics Association International (IFAI) Military Division
8. Leather Industries of America
9. Narrow Fabrics Institute (NFI)
10. National Cotton Council (NCC)

11. National Council of Textile Organizations (NCTO)
12. R-CALF USA (Ranchers-Cattlemen Action Legal Fund United Stockgrowers of America)
13. Rubber and Plastic Footwear Manufacturers Association (RPFMA)
14. SEAMS, the National Association of the Sewn Products Industry
15. Specialty Steel Industry of North America
16. Steel Manufacturers Association
17. Tooling, Manufacturing & Technologies Association (TMTA)
18. U.S. Industrial Fabrics Institute (USIFI)
19. United Steelworkers (USW)
20. Warrior Protection & Readiness Coalition (WPRC)