



UNITED STATES  
ASSOCIATION OF  
IMPORTERS OF  
TEXTILES AND  
APPAREL

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July 26, 2010

Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
Room C102, 1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20230

Re: Comments in Response to International Trade Administration, Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee Request for Public Comment To Inform Development of National Export Initiative Plan, Docket No. 100624279-0279-01

To Whom It May Concern:

The United States Association of Importers of Textiles and Apparel (“USA-ITA”), on behalf of its member companies, respectfully submits the following comments in response to the International Trade Administration’s Request for Public Comment on the National Export Initiative Plan published in the Federal Register on June 30, 2010, as identified by the above referenced docket number. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments as the Administration works to develop the National Export Initiative (NEI).

USA-ITA represents a broad cross-section of retailers and apparel producers that import and sell textiles and apparel, from large, nationally-recognized brands to smaller companies. We strongly support the President’s goal to double U.S. exports in five years. If this goal is met by a concrete and aggressive plan to reduce foreign trade barriers, our companies, our employees, and the American consumer will benefit from new job opportunities and enhanced access to a more affordable and diverse supply of goods.

USA-ITA members do not only import apparel into the United States. Our member companies manage supply chains that span the globe, providing our companies with hands-on familiarity with market access barriers -- a familiarity that, perhaps, purely domestic manufacturers lack. We are acutely aware of the need to aggressively challenge foreign trade barriers, both to boost U.S. exports and to facilitate global trade generally.

As the Administration endeavors to facilitate global trade in textiles and apparel, USA-ITA would encourage the Administration to engage with all textile and apparel industry stakeholders and to bring stakeholders together to address issues of common concern. The retail, apparel, and textile industries often disagree on trade policy, but we perhaps can work together on important issues such

as the harmonization and rationalization of Customs regimes and the reduction of peak tariffs and non-tariff barriers in key export markets.

In the short term, USA-ITA would also urge the Administration to follow through on its commitment to bring already-negotiated trade agreements with Korea, Colombia, and Panama to a vote. Colombia and Panama already enjoy unilateral, duty-free access to the U.S. market, and the International Trade Commission has found that passage of the Korea agreement would reduce the U.S. trade deficit. Any serious commitment to boost U.S. exports simply must include enactment of the Korea, Colombia, and Panama trade promotion agreements. Tens of millions of consumers in these countries await the opportunity to purchase American-branded goods, if we will only afford them the opportunity.

Finally, passage of pending trade agreements must be coupled with a real commitment to conclude the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade negotiations. Our TPP partners offer a significant potential market and offer attractive sourcing opportunities in support of jobs here in the United States.

USA-ITA appreciates your consideration of the foregoing comments. Should you have any questions or require clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julia K. Hughes". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Julia Hughes  
President  
USA-ITA