

[FR Doc.05-8905 Filed 4-29-05; 4:15 pm]

BILLING CODE 3510-DS-C

COMMITTEE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TEXTILE AGREEMENTS

Solicitation of Public Comments on Request for Textile and Apparel Safeguard Action on Imports from China

April 28, 2005.

AGENCY: The Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements (the Committee)

ACTION: Solicitation of public comments concerning a request for safeguard action on imports from China of man-made fiber trousers (Category 647/648).

SUMMARY: On April 6, 2005, the Committee received a request from the American Manufacturing Trade Action Coalition, the National Council of Textile Organizations, the National Textile Association, and UNITE HERE requesting that the Committee limit imports from China of man-made fiber trousers (Category 647/648). They request that a textile and apparel safeguard action, as provided for in the Report of the Working Party on the Accession of China to the World Trade Organization (the Accession Agreement), be taken on imports of such man-made fiber trousers. The Committee hereby solicits public comments on this request, in particular with regard to whether imports from China of such man-made fiber trousers are, due to market disruption, threatening to impede the orderly development of trade in this product. Comments must be submitted by June 3, 2005 to the Chairman, Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements, Room 3001A, United States Department of Commerce, 14th and Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20230.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jay Dowling, Office of Textiles and Apparel, U.S. Department of Commerce, (202) 482-4058.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Authority: Section 204 of the Agriculture Act of 1956, as amended; Executive Order 11651, as amended.

BACKGROUND:

The Report of the Working Party on the Accession of China to the World

Trade Organization (Accession Agreement) provides that, if a WTO Member, such as the United States, believes that imports of Chinese origin textile and apparel products are, "due to market disruption, threatening to impede the orderly development of trade in these products", it may request consultations with China with a view to easing or avoiding the disruption. Pursuant to this provision, if the United States requests consultations with China, it must, at the time of the request, provide China with a detailed factual statement showing (1) the existence or threat of market disruption; and (2) the role of products of Chinese origin in that disruption. Beginning on the date that it receives such a request, China must restrict its shipments to the United States to a level no greater than 7.5 percent (6 percent for wool product categories) above the amount entered during the first 12 months of the most recent 14 months preceding the month in which the request was made.

On April 6, 2005, the Committee received a request that an Accession Agreement textile and apparel safeguard action be taken on imports from China of man-made fiber trousers (Category 647/648). The Committee has determined that this request provides the information necessary for the Committee to consider the request in light of the considerations set forth in the Procedures. In this case, the Committee notes that imports from China of man-made fiber trousers (Category 647/648) have increased from 615,356 dozen in the first quarter of 2004 to 2,300,622 dozen in the first quarter of 2005 (includes preliminary data for 2005). The text of the request is reproduced in full below.

The Committee is soliciting public comments on this request, in particular with regard to whether imports from China of such man-made fiber trousers are, due to market disruption, threatening to impede the orderly development of trade in this product.

Comments may be submitted by any interested person. Comments must be received no later than June 3, 2005. Interested persons are invited to submit ten copies of such comments to the Chairman, Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements, Room 3001A, U.S. Department of Commerce, 14th and Constitution Avenue N.W., Washington, DC 20230.

If a comment alleges that there is no market disruption or that the subject imports are not the cause of market disruption, the Committee will closely review any supporting information and documentation, such as information about domestic production or prices of like or directly competitive products. Particular consideration will be given to comments representing the views of actual producers in the United States of a like or directly competitive product.

The Committee will protect any business confidential information that is marked "business confidential" from disclosure to the full extent permitted by law. To the extent that business confidential information is provided, two copies of a non-confidential version must also be provided in which business confidential information is summarized or, if necessary, deleted. Comments received, with the exception of information marked "business confidential", will be available for inspection between Monday - Friday, 8:30 a.m and 5:30 p.m in the Trade Reference and Assistance Center Help Desk, Suite 800M, USA Trade Information Center, Ronald Reagan Building, 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC, (202) 482-3433.

The Committee expects to make a determination within 60 calendar days of the close of the comment period as to whether the United States will request consultations with China. If, however, the Committee is unable to make a determination within 60 calendar days, it will cause to be published a notice in the **Federal Register**, including the date by which it will make a determination. If the Committee makes a negative determination, it will cause this determination and the reasons therefore to be published in the **Federal Register**. If the Committee makes an affirmative determination that imports of Chinese origin man-made fiber trousers are, due to market disruption, threatening to impede the orderly development of trade in these products, the United States will request consultations with China with a view to easing or avoiding such market disruption in accordance with the Accession Agreement and the Committee's procedures.

D. Michael Hutchinson,

*Acting Chairman, Committee for the
Implementation of Textile Agreements.*

BILLING CODE 3510-DS-S

April, 6, 2005

James Leonard
Chairman, Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements
Room H3100
U.S. Department of Commerce
14th and Constitution Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Mr. Leonard:

The American Manufacturing Trade Action Coalition (AMTAC), National Council of Textile Organizations (NCTO), National Textile Association (NTA), and UNITE HERE! request that the Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements (CITA) take the necessary actions to impose a safeguard on U.S. imports from China of man-made fiber men's and boys' trousers, breeches and shorts, and women's and girls' slacks, breeches, and shorts (herein referred to as man-made fiber trousers), classified within Category 647/648 of the U.S. Textile and Apparel Category System. This request is made pursuant to the guidelines issued by CITA (68 F.R. 27788, May 21, 2003).

The parties submitting this request are trade associations and unions which are representative of either domestic producers of products like or directly competitive with man-made fiber trousers contained in Category 647/648 or of domestic producers of components used in the production of products that are like or directly competitive with those contained in Category 647/648.

For your background information, descriptions of each organization are as follows:

AMTAC is a not-for-profit manufacturing trade association established for the purpose of preserving and creating American manufacturing jobs through the establishment of trade policy and other measures necessary for the U.S. manufacturing sector to stabilize and grow. Its members are involved in a wide variety of manufacturing, including textiles, throughout the United States. AMTAC's office is in Washington, D.C.
www.amtacdc.org

NCTO is a not-for-profit trade association established to represent the entire spectrum of the United States textile sector, from fibers to yarns to fabrics to finished products, as well as suppliers in the textile machinery, chemical and other such sectors which have a stake in the prosperity and survival of the U.S. textile sector. Its headquarters are in Washington, D.C., and it also maintains an office in Gastonia, NC. www.ncto.org

NTA is a not-for-profit trade association of companies who knit or weave fabrics in the United States, dye, print or otherwise finish fabrics in the United States, or supply fibers, yarns, or other services to the American textile industry. NTA's office is in Boston, MA.
www.nationaltextile.org

UNITE HERE! was formed by a merger in 2004 of UNITE (formerly the Union of Needletrades, Textiles and Industrial Employees) and HERE (Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union). The union UNITE HERE represents more than 440,000 active members and more than 400,000 retirees throughout North America. UNITE HERE's headquarters are in New York, NY. www.unitehere.org

It is the strong view of the petitioners that the surge in 1st Quarter 2005 imports from China of man-made fiber trousers compounded with the long-term decline in U.S. production of these products constitutes market disruption under § 11.242 of the Report of the Working Party on the Accession of China to the World Trade Organization (WTO). This rise in imports and corresponding long-term decline in domestic production has produced a steady downward trend in the domestic market share for these products according to the I/P Book published by the Office of Textiles and Apparel, International Trade Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce (OTEXA).

In recent years, U.S. apparel production has declined in virtually all of the major cotton and man-made fiber categories. The Petitioners assert that this decline has been the direct result of increasing imports far surpassing the growth of the U.S. market for these products. With the January 1, 2005 removal of quotas on all WTO members, imports are rising across the board, and the surge in 1st Quarter 2005 imports from China is disrupting the U.S. market.

CITA is well aware of the circumstances following the integration of certain categories on January 1, 2002 in which China registered enormous increases and quickly moved to dominate trade. Following the same track, U.S. imports of man-made fiber trousers from China skyrocketed 269 percent in the 1st Quarter of 2005. China was the fifth largest producer supplier behind Mexico, Indonesia, Taiwan and Guatemala with 4.6 percent share of the U.S. import market for calendar year 2004. For the year-ending March 2005, Chinese market share rose to 7.3 percent, with China in third place. Looking at the 1st Quarter 2005 alone, China shot up to the number one supplier with a 14.2 percent share, followed by Mexico with 12.8 percent, Indonesia with 10.7 percent, and Bangladesh with a 6 percent share of total imports.

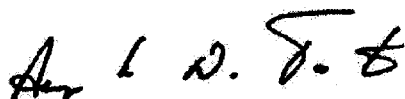
Sharp price reductions are likely a major element in the sudden surge of Chinese imports with the removal of quotas and corresponding quotas costs. A review of recent price data indicates that China's January 2005 prices for man-made fiber trousers averaged \$69/dozen. This average unit value is 26.9 percent below the price last January of \$94.05/dozen and 31 percent below the calendar year 2004 average price of \$100/dozen. As with the surging import numbers, the large and instantaneous price drops China demonstrated so far in 2005 again follow the pattern established in 2002 with the removal of certain items from quota. In those categories integrated in 2002, China dropped its prices by an average of 58 percent.

In sum, surging low-priced imports from China are clearly disrupting the U.S. market in Category 647/648. The language on safeguards in the U.S./China Protocol of Accession is based on language in the Multi-Fiber Agreement (MFA) and the WTO's Agreement on

Textiles and Clothing (ATC). Both of those international agreements contained language providing for immediate action in the event of highly unusual and critical circumstances. We believe that current circumstances are such and that prompt action is necessary irrespective of the timelines in the CITA procedures.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,



Auggie Tantillo
Executive Director
AMTAC



Cass Johnson
President
NCTO



Karl Spilhaus
President
NTA



Bruce Raynor
General President
UNITE HERE

Table 1: U.S. Production, Imports, and Domestic Market Share for Man-Made Fiber Men's and Boys' Trousers, Breeches and Shorts, and Women's and Girls' Slacks, Breeches, and Shorts (Category 647/648) 1999-2003 and YTD and YE June 2003 and 2004

| Time Period | U.S. Production (Thousand Dozen) | U.S. Imports | Imports From U.S. Domestic China | Market Share (Percent) | Import Market Share (Percent) | China Market Share (Percent) |
|-------------|-------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1999 | 19,444 | 44,144 | 2,921 | 30.58 | 69.42 | 4.59 |
| 2000 | 18,502 | 54,285 | 2,808 | 25.42 | 74.58 | 3.86 |
| 2001 | 18,345 | 56,801 | 2,334 | 24.41 | 75.59 | 3.11 |
| 2002 | 15,751 | 57,775 | 3,366 | 21.42 | 78.58 | 4.58 |
| 2003 | 14,740 | 60,036 | 3,220 | 19.71 | 80.29 | 4.31 |
| YTD 6/03 | 6,522 | 30,622 | 1846 | 17.56 | 82.44 | 4.97 |
| YTD 6/04 | 4,693 | 30,607 | 1219 | 13.29 | 86.71 | 3.45 |
| YE 6/03 | 15,231 | 61,675 | 3,220 | 19.80 | 80.20 | 4.19 |
| YE 6/04 | 12,912 | 60,021 | 2,852 | 17.70 | 82.30 | 3.91 |

Source: U.S. Imports, Production, Markets, Import Production Ratios and Domestic Market Shares for Textile and Apparel Product Categories (OTEXA/ITA/U.S. Department of Commerce)

Table 2: U.S. Imports of Man-Made Fiber Men's and Boys' Trousers, Breeches and Shorts, and Women's and Girls' Slacks, Breeches, and Shorts (Category 647/648) 1999-2004, YTD and YE January 2004 and 2005, and YTD and YE March 2004 and 2005 from the World and China: Quantity (Dozen), Percent Change, and China's Percent Share of the World

Time Period U.S. Imports-Category 647/648 from:

| | World: | | China: | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| | Quantity (Dozen) | Percent Change | Quantity (Dozen) | Percent Change | Percent Share |
| 1999 | 44,144,234 | -- | 2,921,265 | -- | 6.6 |
| 2000 | 54,284,976 | 23.0 | 2,807,559 | -3.9 | 5.2 |
| 2001 | 56,801,191 | 4.6 | 2,334,161 | -16.9 | 4.1 |
| 2002 | 57,774,906 | 1.7 | 3,366,038 | 44.2 | 5.8 |
| 2003 | 60,030,570 | 3.9 | 3,219,753 | -4.3 | 5.4 |
| 2004 | 61,507,331 | 2.5 | 2,851,512 | -11.4 | 4.6 |
| YTD 1/04 | 4,953,044 | -- | 236,054 | -- | 4.8 |
| YTD 1/05 | 4,773,801 | -3.6 | 562,814 | 138.4 | 11.8 |
| YE 1/04 | 59,729,730 | -- | 2,993,703 | -- | 5.0 |
| YE 1/05 | 61,328,088 | 2.7 | 3,178,272 | 6.2 | 5.2 |
| 1 st Q/04 | 15,434,153 | -- | 615,356 | -- | 4.0 |
| 1 st Q/05(p) | 16,002,561 | 3.7 | 2,271,661 | 269.2 | 14.2 |
| YE 3/04 | 59,737,677 | -- | 2,787,882 | -- | 4.7 |
| YE 3/05(p) | 62,075,739 | 3.9 | 4,507,817 | 61.7 | 7.3 |

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Office of Textiles and Apparel

[FR Doc.05-8906 Filed 4-29-05; 4:15 pm]

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**Office of the Secretary****Meeting of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC)****AGENCY:** Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: This notice sets forth the schedules and summary for the forthcoming meetings of the BRAC. The purposes of these meetings are to receive testimony from the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), or their representatives; the Department of the Air Force; the Department of the Navy; the Department of the Army; and the Department of Defense's Joint Cross Service Groups on the recommendations and methodology regarding the closure and realignment of military installations. The Commission Chairman, Anthony J. Principi, will chair the hearings.

Dates and Times

Monday, May 16, 2005, 1:30 p.m.–4:30 p.m., Secretary of Defense, Chairman, JCS

Tuesday, May 17, 2005, 9:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m., Department of the Air Force

Tuesday, May 17, 2005, 1:30 p.m.–4:30 p.m., Department of the Navy

Wednesday, May 18, 2005, 9:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m., Department of the Army

Wednesday, May 18, 2005, 1:30 p.m.–4:30 p.m., Defense Joint Cross Service Groups

Thursday, May 19, 2005, 9:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m., Defense Joint Cross Service Groups

ADDRESSES: Senate Russell Building, Room 418, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Contact Mr. Charles Battaglia, Executive Director, BRAC Commission, 2521 South Clark St., Suite 600, Arlington VA 22202, telephone 703-699-2952

Dated: April 29, 2005.

L.M. Bynum,

Alternate OSD Federal Register, Liaison Officer, Department of Defense.

[FR Doc. 05-8850 Filed 5-3-05; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 5001-06-M

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**Office of the Secretary****Notice; Meeting of the Independent Review Panel To Study the Relationships Between Military Department General Counsels and Judge Advocates General—Open Meeting**

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), Public Law 96-463, notice is hereby given that the Independent Review Panel To Study the Relationships between Military Department General Counsels and Judge Advocates General will hold an open meeting at the Hilton Crystal City, 2399 Jefferson Davis Highway, Arlington, Virginia 22202, on May 18–19, 2005, from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Purpose: The Panel will meet on May 18–19, 2005, from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., in order to hear testimony from current and former senior Defense Department officials concerning the relationships between the legal elements of their respective Military Departments. These sessions will be open to the public, subject to the availability of space. During these initial sessions, the public will not have the opportunity to address the Panel orally, but will be afforded the opportunity at subsequent sessions. In keeping with the spirit of FACA, the Panel welcomes written comments concerning its work from the public at any time. Interested citizens are encouraged to attend the sessions.

DATES: May 18–19, 2005: 8:30 a.m.–11:30 a.m. and 1 p.m.–4 p.m.

Location: Hilton Crystal City, 2399 Jefferson Davis Highway, Arlington, Virginia 22202.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Any member of the public wishing further information concerning this meeting or wishing to submit written comments may contact: Mr. James R. Schwenk, Designated Federal Official, Department of Defense Office of the General Counsel, 1600 Defense Pentagon, Arlington, Virginia 20301-1600. Telephone: (703) 697-9343. Fax: (703) 693-7616. schwenkj@dodgc.osd.mil.

Interested persons may submit a written statement for consideration by the Panel at any time prior to June 10, 2005.

Dated: April 29, 2005.

L.M. Bynum,

Alternate OSD Federal Register Liaison Officer, Department of Defense.

[FR Doc. 05-8849 Filed 5-3-05; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 5001-06-M

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**Office of Vocational and Adult Education, Department of Education; Notice of Proposed Changes to Requirements**

SUMMARY: The Assistant Secretary for Vocational and Adult Education proposes to change certain requirements governing the Community Technology Centers (CTC) program that were established in 2004 and used for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2004 CTC competition. Specifically, the Assistant Secretary proposes to remove the following two requirements: (1) Novice and non-novice applicants in CTC competitions must be ranked and funded separately, and (2) at least 75 percent of the funds must be set aside for non-novice applicants and up to 25 percent of the funds must be set aside for novice applicants. The Assistant Secretary intends to make awards in FY 2005 from the list of unfunded applicants from the FY 2004 CTC competition.

DATES: We must receive your comments on or before June 3, 2005.

ADDRESSES: Address all comments about these proposed changes to the requirements to Inas El-Sabban, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 11055, Potomac Center Plaza, Washington, DC 20202-7100. If you prefer to send your comments through the Internet, use the following address: inas.el-sabban@ed.gov.

You must include the phrase "CTC Comments" in the subject line of your electronic message.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Inas El-Sabban. Telephone: (202) 245-7736.

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), you may call the Federal Relay Service (FRS) at 1-800-877-8339.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain this document in an alternative format (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) on request to the contact person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Invitation To Comment**

We invite you to submit comments regarding these proposed changes to the requirements that we established for the FY 2004 CTC competition. These changes will apply only to the awards we will make in FY 2005 based on the list of unfunded applications from the FY 2004 competition.

We invite you to assist us in complying with the specific