



January 20, 2010

Dear Representative:

As representatives of the domestic textile and apparel sector and its nearly 600,000 workers, we strongly urge you to oppose the U.S.–South Korea Free Trade Agreement (KORUS). In regards to textiles and apparel, the FTA is seriously flawed and will result in the continued outsourcing of valuable textile, apparel and other manufacturing jobs. With our nation struggling through one of the worst economic periods in its history, we believe the current agreement sends the wrong message to our workers and to American voters.

During the past forty years, Korea has developed a sophisticated industrial and apparel fabrics sector and, as a consequence, is the second largest exporter of textile yarns and fabrics to the United States. Although the U.S. textile sector is one of the most efficient and quality-driven producers in the world, the Korean economy presents virtually no export opportunities to Korea for U.S. textile producers. As a measure of this one-way trading relationship, the U.S. trade deficit in textiles and apparel totaled \$708 million in 2009.

As a result, the textile industry asked the Obama Administration to make three fixes to the KORUS agreement in order to ensure that U.S. textile, apparel and fiber jobs were not outsourced to Korea and China. These fixes concerned (a) loopholes in the enforcement portions of the agreement that benefit China, (b) a tariff schedule that gives Korean exporters better terms than U.S. companies and (c) the exclusion of textile components in the agreement's rules-of-origin that advantage non-signatories to the agreement such as China.

These mistakes not only hurt our manufacturing workers but also damage our industry's ability to supply our military with essential goods for our men and women in uniform. In particular, Korea's producers get longer phase-out schedules than U.S. producers on a number of sensitive product lines that include products that are needed by the U.S. military. Damaging surges by Korean producers because of this inequitable arrangement will hurt U.S. companies that the military depends on for a number of important products.

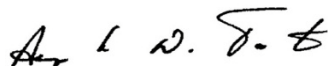
Unfortunately, the Administration chose not to address the concerns of textile workers in your districts, and we are concerned that their jobs are now in jeopardy.

Polls have shown a rising concern by the American voter regarding the outsourcing of American jobs, particularly manufacturing jobs, and the decline of the U.S. as an economic power. Recent Wall Street Journal and Pew polls show voter dissatisfaction regarding badly written trade agreements is at a record high.

An analysis by the Economic Policy Institute estimates that 159,000 good paying American jobs will be destroyed if the KORUS agreement in its present form passes Congress. Of that total, we estimate that between 9,300 and 12,300 jobs will be lost specifically in the U.S. textile and apparel sector as a result of legal KORUS trade. U.S. government figures show that approximately three additional jobs are lost to the U.S. economy for each textile job that is eliminated. In addition, U.S. job losses from illegal Chinese exports are not included and these would be significant. Total U.S. job losses because of the flawed KORUS textile text are expected to be at least 40,000 jobs.

With job creation a central concern in the country, we do not believe that this agreement meets that goal. We continue to urge that the textile portions of the agreement be renegotiated in order to ensure that textile jobs are not imperiled. Until that time, we ask you to stand firm on behalf of textile workers in your district and oppose the Korean FTA when it comes before a vote in Congress.

Sincerely,



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Cass Johnson
President
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