



PRESS STATEMENT

NCTO Welcomes Biden Administration's New & Transparent Buy American Waiver Process

November 17, 2021

WASHINGTON—National Council of Textile Organizations (NCTO) President and CEO Kim Glas issued a statement today welcoming the Biden administration's launch of new database and waiver process for government contract solicitations made under the Buy American Act.

National Council of Textile Organizations President and CEO Kim Glas issued the following statement:

The U.S. textile industry sincerely thanks the Biden Administration for developing a transparent waiver process for government procurement under the Buy American Act, which will effectively allow U.S. companies competing for government contracts to review submissions for waivers under the Buy American law.

We also want to acknowledge the incredible work that Celeste Drake, the administration's Made in America Director, has completed on this effort.

This new process will require federal agencies to enter proposed non-availability waivers into a digital portal for review by the Made in America Office (housed within the Office of Management and Budget), before an agency can grant a waiver to foreign entities bidding for a government contract. It will be an extremely helpful tool that will provide transparency to the solicitation process and give U.S. textile companies and the larger public the ability to provide feedback on proposed waivers, as well as completed waivers. (Proposed waivers will be posted and available for review on the MadeInAmerica.gov website. The process for reviewing waivers will be progressively implemented throughout all federal agencies, beginning with smaller government agencies on Jan. 1, 2022.)

The U.S. textile industry has been a staunch, long-term supporter of buy American rules for federal procurement. From the standpoint of U.S. national security, it is essential that America have vibrant manufacturing supply chains that can rapidly and effectively respond to critical demands in times of crisis. Whether it is from a military defense perspective or in relation to a healthcare emergency, such as the current COVID pandemic, the U.S. should never be reliant on offshore sources for vital materials needed to keep our citizens and nation safe.

Buy American rules help incentivize domestic production while stimulating more investment in U.S. manufacturing. But the current law has a waiver mechanism that allows the federal government to purchase goods made by major global competitors in the textile and apparel sector when a mission-critical product is not made in the United States or available at a reasonable cost.

The U.S. textile industry will continue to press for policy changes that close the loopholes that have undermined our U.S. domestic industrial base and its workforce. For example, NCTO welcomed the administration's previous

proposal to increase domestic content rules for federal government purchases under Buy American rules, announced in late July.

Now, the administration's new waiver process and database will provide more transparency in the U.S. government procurement process, which will only stand to benefit U.S. textile companies, who can use the information to better understand potential business opportunities and work to provide American-made products.

We believe it is critical that taxpayer dollars are used to invest in American manufacturing and our workforce. This new process is a positive step in supporting our industries and workers.

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NCTO is a Washington, DC-based trade association that represents domestic textile manufacturers.

- U.S. employment in the textile supply chain was 530,000 in 2020.
- The value of shipments for U.S. textiles and apparel was \$64.4 billion in 2020.
- U.S. exports of fiber, textiles and apparel were \$25.4 billion in 2020.
- Capital expenditures for textiles and apparel production totaled \$2.38 billion in 2019, the last year for which data is available.

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