



## PRESS RELEASE

### **Deputy U.S. Trade Representative Sarah Bianchi visits Shawmut Corporation; Participates in New England Textile Industry Roundtable**

February 24, 2022

WASHINGTON – Shawmut Corporation hosted Deputy United States Trade Representative Sarah Bianchi today at the company’s headquarters and state-of-the-art manufacturing facility in West Bridgewater, Mass., as part of the ambassador’s inaugural visit to textile manufacturing facilities in the New England area.

Ambassador Bianchi’s visit comes at a pivotal time for the U.S. textile supply chain, which produced \$64 billion in output in 2020 and employed nearly 530,000 workers. Shawmut Corporation is part of the broader U.S. textile industry that has been at the forefront of a domestic production chain that has collectively manufactured over one billion personal protective equipment (PPE) items during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The ambassador’s visit to Shawmut included a tour of the company’s manufacturing facility and a roundtable discussion highlighting the critical need for policies supporting a domestic supply chain and the innovative nature of the modern textile industry and its important contribution to the U.S. economy. Shawmut, a fourth-generation, family-run global advanced materials and textile manufacturer, is a global leader in automotive textile composites, innovative technical fabrics and custom laminating services, employing more than 700 employees worldwide with 10 global manufacturing plants and seven commercial offices. The company has also contributed greatly to U.S. PPE efforts, investing \$20 million in a new state-of-the-art facility, which can produce up to 180 million NIOSH-approved N95 respirators and other PPE annually and created hundreds of new local jobs.

“We are honored to have hosted Ambassador Bianchi at our West Bridgewater facility on her first domestic industry trade visit,” said Shawmut CEO James Wyner. “The opportunity to discuss with the USTR office the impact of our nation’s global trade policies on the valuable and passionate work our U.S. manufacturing teams provide to their local communities, U.S.-based trade partners and the nation is critical to supporting a robust U.S. supply chain. We are thankful for Ambassador Bianchi’s commitment to understanding the challenges we face on a global scale by her visit and dialogue here today.”

Ambassador Bianchi said, “Today’s tour of Shawmut’s manufacturing facilities and the roundtable discussion with textile industry executives was an invaluable opportunity for me to see innovative U.S. textile manufacturing first-hand, to learn more about the challenges that U.S. textile manufacturing faces, and to explore ways in which the Administration and industry can cooperate to support a worker-centric trade policy.”

During the visit, U.S. textile executives spanning the fiber, yarn, fabric, and finished product textile and apparel industries participated in a roundtable with the ambassador at which they discussed the innovative achievements and competitiveness of the domestic industry and outlined priority issues in Washington, such as the importance of Buy American and Berry Amendment government procurement policies, maintaining strong rules of origins in free trade agreements and the need to address larger systemic trade issues with China.

National Council of Textile Organizations (NCTO) President and CEO Kim Glas said, “We deeply appreciate Ambassador Bianchi’s inaugural visit to New England to meet with U.S. textile executives and engage in substantive discussions centered around policy opportunities that help bolster U.S. manufacturing and the challenges confronting our industry. The U.S. textile industry is an extremely diverse, technically advanced and highly innovative industry that provides much-needed jobs in rural areas across the country. Sound trade policies and enforcement are essential to this manufacturing sector and its workforce.”

Glas continued: “We are grateful to Ambassador Bianchi and the entire U.S. Trade Representative’s (USTR) office, led by Ambassador Katherine Tai, for reaffirming its [support](#) of CAFTA-DR rules and acknowledging the importance of the co-production chain with our Western Hemisphere trade partners. We look forward to working closely with Ambassador Bianchi and the USTR office to advance policies that bolster domestic production by expanding buy American policies and providing incentives for onshoring and nearshoring production, while addressing illegal trade practices that undermine our industry’s competitiveness head on.”

## **About Shawmut Corporation**

Founded in 1916, Shawmut Corporation is a fourth-generation, family-run, global company with locations in North America, Europe, and Asia. Shawmut uses materials innovation to improve people’s lives, employing expertise in fabric formation, coating and laminating to deliver high performance materials and components to the global Automotive, Health & Safety, Military & Protective, and Custom Laminating Solutions markets, and is the largest independent laminator in the U.S. for technical fabrics. Shawmut Corporation is based in West Bridgewater, Mass., and can be found online on [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#) and, [Instagram](#). To learn more, visit [www.shawmutcorporation.com](http://www.shawmutcorporation.com).

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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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