

Wool fabric tariffs are already in the process of being reduced, and as such there is no need for these additional, unilateral cuts. In 1995 the WTO/Uruguay Round instituted a phased 30% tariff reduction and import quota elimination for the same products covered by S. 218.

Based on the trade laws and tariffs in place as a result of the Uruguay Round/WTO and the NAFTA, hundreds of millions of dollars in investments were made by the domestic wool fabric industry to try to help ensure their survival. Changing the rules of the game now by making additional, unforeseen tariff cuts will undermine the integrity of these trade rules/agreements and destroy these investments.

In preparation for the new WTO Round, the U.S. is participating in multilateral trade talks this year. Rather than sanctioning additional, unilateral U.S. tariff cuts, Congress should instead instruct the Administration to focus on improving foreign market access for U.S. produced wool fabric and other textile products during these talks. We believe that even those in Congress who may favor tariff cuts, would understand that doing so outside the WTO negotiating context is not in the best interests of the United States, since there would be no possibility of using these or any other cuts as a bargaining tool to get trade concession in return.

These proposed cuts would have an extremely severe impact on the approximately 90,000 U.S. workers whose livelihoods are directly tied to the production of wool textiles.

The unilateral giveaway of U.S. wool fabric tariffs mandated under S. 218 comes at a time when imports are already at record levels. Adding to the current import crisis in this sector is the fact that many Asian suppliers are exporting these fabrics well below 1997 prices as a result of the economic crisis in that region.

The flood of low cost imports has forced U.S. companies to lay-off over 1,600 wool yarn and fabric workers in January 1999, alone. This is the continuation of a devastating trend whereby nearly one-third of all U.S. wool yarn and fabric jobs have been lost in recent years. Certainly, passage of S. 218 will result in the loss of thousands of additional jobs.

U.S. woolgrowers produce fine wools that go into the fabrics covered by S. 218. U.S. wool, top, yarn, & fabric manufacturers are the only customers U.S. woolgrowers have; virtually no wool is exported. Due to surging wool textile and apparel imports, U.S. wool fiber sales and prices have been extremely depressed. Wool fabric tariff cuts will leave woolgrowers with an even more diminished customer base for their wool fiber, at a time when the lamb meat portion of their business is also being severely harmed by increased lamb meat imports.

For these reasons, we believe that you should oppose S. 218. Specifically, we encourage you to block the inclusion of this legislation as part of any trade bill or other legislation that your committee may approve in the 106th Congress. Thank you for your consideration of our views on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Larry E. Craig; Mike Enzi; Olympia Snowe; Mike Crapo; Ben Nighthorse Campbell; John Warner; Chuck Robb; Fritz Hollings; Susan Collins; Conrad Burns; Max Baucus; Craig Thomas; Pete V. Domenici; Joe Lieberman; Richard Shelby; Robert F. Bennett; Strom Thurmond; Jesse Helms; John Edwards; Tim Johnson; Jeff Bingaman; John H. Chafee; Jeff Sessions.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Monday, November 8, 1999, the Federal debt stood at \$5,660,688,811,424.68 (Five trillion, six hundred sixty billion, six hundred eighty-eight million, eight hundred eleven thousand, four hundred twenty-four dollars and sixty-eight cents).

Five years ago, November 8, 1994, the Federal debt stood at \$4,724,109,000,000 (Four trillion, seven hundred twenty-four billion, one hundred nine million).

Ten years ago, November 8, 1989, the Federal debt stood at \$2,895,742,000,000 (Two trillion, eight hundred ninety-five billion, seven hundred forty-two million).

Fifteen years ago, November 8, 1984, the Federal debt stood at \$1,616,564,000,000 (One trillion, six hundred sixteen billion, five hundred sixty-four million).

Twenty-five years ago, November 8, 1974, the Federal debt stood at \$478,873,000,000 (Four hundred seventy-eight billion, eight hundred seventy-three million) which reflects a debt increase of more than \$5 trillion—\$5,181,815,811,424.68 (Five trillion, one hundred eighty-one billion, eight hundred fifteen million, eight hundred eleven thousand, four hundred twenty-four dollars and sixty-eight cents) during the past 25 years.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry two withdrawal and nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:22 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 359. An act to clarify the intent of Congress in Public Law 93-632 to require the Secretary of Agriculture to continue to provide for the maintenance and operation of 18 concrete dams and weirs that were located in the Emigrant Wilderness at the time the wilderness area was designated in that Public Law.

H.R. 1832. An act to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to increase the Federal minimum wage.

H.R. 2307. An act to designate the building of the United States Postal Service located at 5 Cedar Street in Hopkinton, Massachusetts, as the "Thomas J. Brown Post Office Building."

H.R. 2904. An act to amend the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 to reauthorize funding for the Office of Government Ethics.

H.R. 3002. An act to provide for the continued preparation of certain useful reports concerning public lands, Native Americans, fisheries, wildlife, insular areas, and other natural resources-related matters, and to repeal provisions of law regarding terminated reporting requirements concerning such matters.

H.R. 3077. An act to amend the Act that authorized construction of the San Luis Unit of the Central Valley Project, California, to facilitate water transfers in the Central Valley Project.

H.R. 3189. An act to designate the United States post office located at 14071 Peyton Drive in Chino Hills, California, as the "Joseph Iletto Post Office."

The message also announced that the House disagrees to the amendments of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2116) to amend title 38, United States Code, to establish a program of extended care services for veterans and to make other improvements in health care programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and agrees to the conference asked by the Senate on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon; and appoints Mr. STUMP, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. QUINN, Mr. STEARNS, Mr. EVANS, Ms. BROWN of Florida, and Mr. DOYLE, as managers of the conference on the part of the House.

At 2:15 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House agrees to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2280) to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide a cost-of-living adjustment in rates of compensation paid for service connected disabilities, to enhance the compensation, memorial affairs, and housing programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs, to improve retirement authorities applicable to judges of the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, and for other purposes, with amendments, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following joint resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.J. Res. 76. Joint resolution waiving certain enrollment requirements for the remainder of the first session of the One Hundred Sixth Congress with respect to any bill or joint resolution making general appropriations or continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2000.

At 5:12 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House agrees to the report of the committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 1555) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2000 for intelligence and intelligence-related activities of the United States Government, the Community Management Account, and the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System, and for other purposes.