

COMMITTEE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TEXTILE AGREEMENTS

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

August 1, 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 cotton and man-made fiber nightwear (Category 351/651).

SUMMARY: On July 11, 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 cotton and man-made fiber nightwear (Category 351/651). 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 applied on imports of such nightwear. The Committee hereby solicits public comments on this request, in particular with regard to whether imports from China of such nightwear are, due to market disruption, threatening to impede the orderly development of trade in this product. Comments must be submitted by September 2, 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, DC 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 (WTO) 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.

The Committee has published procedures (the Procedures) it follows in considering requests for Accession Agreement textile and apparel safeguard actions (68 FR 27787, May 21, 2003; 68 FR 49440, August 18, 2003), including the information that must be included in such requests in order for the Committee to consider them.

On July 11, 2005, the Committee received a request that an Accession Agreement textile and apparel safeguard action be applied on imports from China of cotton and man-made fiber nightwear (Category 351/651). 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. The text of the request is available at <http://otexa.ita.doc.gov/Safeguard05.htm>.

The Committee is soliciting public comments on this request, in particular with regard to whether imports from China of such nightwear 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 September 2, 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 cotton and man-made fiber nightwear 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.

James C. Leonard III,

Chairman, Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements.

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