



**One Hundred Eleventh Congress
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20515**

**Statement for Chairman Bennie Thompson Expressing Support for the Kissell
Amendment**

First, I want to thank the Representative from North Carolina, Mr. Kissell for his amendment. The original Berry Amendment covering procurement for the United States Military has ensured that U.S. troops wore military uniforms made from U.S. textiles and manufactured by U.S. factories since the beginning of World War II.

As we know, things have changed dramatically since 1941. Since 2003, the Department of Homeland Security has also been working hard to provide our citizens with added security both at home and abroad. With over 100,000 uniformed employees, I believe that it is imperative that Berry Amendment be extended to include uniform and textile purchases at the Department of Homeland Security and offer my overwhelming support for this amendment.

Recent press reports have shown, there are numerous questions of security and safety related to the current procurement process for these items. From the case of Customs and Border Protection uniforms and badges being manufactured in Mexico, to the most recent case of Transportation Security Officers reporting allergic reactions to the formaldehyde used in the production of their new uniforms, we can see the added benefit to not only the U.S. textile and manufacturing industry, but in ensuring that these uniformed employees, receive the quality that they deserve. I, like others, am deeply concerned that we could have people crossing the border illegally wearing CBP or TSA uniforms manufactured in foreign countries.

Chairman, as you know, manufacturing as a whole has been on a steady decline. My own state of Mississippi, much like many others, such as North Carolina, have been negatively impacted by the increase in overseas production of goods. I believe that this legislation is not only about security and safety, but also a way to help those communities that rely on the textile and manufacturing industry.

While the amendment by Mr. Kissell, is a great step to ensuring that all DHS uniforms and textile purchases are made with U.S. components and in U.S. factories, I also believe that it should also be ultimately made permanent during the 111th Congress through the DHS Authorization process.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my support for this important amendment and I encourage all of my colleagues to support this amendment.