



March 29, 2006

The Honorable Francis J. Harvey
Secretary of the United States Army
The Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301
By FAX 703-697-8036

Dear Secretary Harvey:

On behalf of over 500 members of the defense industrial base responsible for supplying every clothing and textile (C&T) sewn product to every United States soldier, we are writing to inform you that our industry is in a state of crisis. The products we provide satisfy the American Soldiers' most basic needs: socks, under garments, uniforms, hats, gloves, boots, wet weather gear, cold weather gear, chemical protective gear, utility bags, sleeping systems, parachutes, and tents. The industrial base is in danger of losing the ability to meet your needs both in peace and war. We desperately need your assistance.

The principal cause is unexpected reductions in procurements for the war effort, and, much more importantly, the manner in which these reductions have occurred. These issues have been exacerbated by an apparent lack of cooperation, collaboration, and coordination between the government agencies. Those agencies are responsible for the development, procurement, sustainment and modernization of the Army's sewn products. This conflict and lack of communication have caused tremendous confusion within the industry, stretched limited resources to their breaking point, and made fact-based production planning nearly impossible. Although we have met with two of these agencies independently, we have had no luck in bringing them together for a meeting to reach conclusions and a decision.

Accordingly, **we request your immediate assistance in facilitating a joint meeting between industry representatives and each of the governmental organizations involved in the life cycle management of Army C&T (sewn) products.** We believe those organizations, at a minimum, to be the Army Material Command, TACOM (Life Cycle Management Command), the Program Executive Office for Soldier Systems, Natick Soldier Center, the TACOM Integrated Logistics Support Center, the Army G4, and the Defense Logistics Agency (Defense Supply Center Philadelphia). We hope such a meeting will provide a means of addressing the most urgent problems facing our industry, result in a clarification of roles and responsibilities, and establish a systemic forum for synchronizing business processes across the entire government-industry team.

The Army has done a tremendous job of providing our soldiers with the clothing and textile equipment they need to fight and win the current war. We as an industry are very proud of the role we have played in this effort. However, we need to advise you that unless we collectively act together to resolve conflicts, and also receive clear and definitive guidance from you as to the future, we fear that the industrial C&T base that you

have relied upon in the past will be dissolved; the net effect is that your ability to supply and outfit the Soldier for the future will be severely compromised.

Mr. Secretary, make no mistake the current situation is extremely critical. We stand ready to meet with you and your staff to work for the immediate resolution of issues. The result will be a properly supplied American Soldier ready to fight and win America's future combat actions; and, also very importantly, the preservation of American jobs that support the Soldier through their taxes.

Very respectfully,



Kevin M. Burke
President & CEO

American Apparel and Footwear Association



Karl Spilhaus
President

National Textile Association



Cliff Schmucker
President

Parachute Industry Association

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