

May 9, 2025

The Honorable Scott Bessent
Secretary
U.S. Department of Treasury
Washington, D.C.

Dear Secretary Bessent:

As key leaders in South Carolina's dynamic and resilient textile industry, we write to express our concerns regarding recent remarks you delivered at the White House about the state of our sector, its importance to national security and economic security, and its status as an outdated and diminished industry. We respectfully request a meeting at your earliest convenience to share firsthand how the American textile industry – especially here in South Carolina – continues to be a vital contributor to our national and economic security and industrial growth and development.

While hearing your comments was disappointing, the sentiment you expressed is understandable. It is a common misconception that we no longer have an American textile industry, the result of decades of headlines about the offshoring of apparel assembly jobs in response to unfair predatory global competition. Rather than offshore, however, the U.S. textile industry adapted, innovated, and embraced advanced manufacturing technologies. Today, South Carolina is home to some of the most sophisticated textile operations in the world because of these investments.

The U.S. textile industry is the second largest exporter in the world and supports more than \$64 billion in domestic shipments (fibers, yarns and fabrics) and employs 471,000 workers including cotton farmers in 17 states. We export much of this product to our free trade agreement regions, especially within USMCA and CAFTA-DR. These export markets provide the foundation to ensure we have the critical and warm domestic industrial capacity to meet the national security needs of the military.

The Berry Amendment (10 U.S. Code § 4862) requires that all textile-based goods purchased by our armed forces—including dress and combat uniforms, ballistic armor, sheets and towels, and other mission critical gear—be produced here in the U.S. from U.S. materials. As a result, the U.S. textile industry produces over 8,000 different products for the American warfighter. Without this strategically important industry, our armed forces would potentially be reliant on foreign adversaries for mission-essential materials, creating a significant national security threat. The U.S. textile industry also answered the call during the COVID-19 crisis by building domestic PPE supply chains to support our military and front-line workers. We are proud to be part of our nation's defense procurement supply chain and are honored to produce the gear and equipment that clothes and protects our men and women in uniform.

With nearly 15,000 workers, South Carolina is home to the third largest concentration of textile workers in the country and supports thousands more jobs across rural communities where good paying manufacturing jobs are hard to find and even harder to replace once lost. Each of these jobs

sustains families, local and regional economies, and a workforce committed to fair trade policies that grow and expand our industrial strength.

We are grateful for the Trump Administration's commitment to reshoring industrial jobs and enforcing trade policies that support American workers. With the right policies, this is not only achievable but could be one of the biggest success stories for this Administration. The U.S. textile industry stands ready to play a leading role in this effort, and we look forward to confirming a time to meet with you to discuss how we can work together to strengthen this strategic sector.

Sincerely,

Chuck Hall, President & CEO – Barnet

Daniel Baxley – Baxley & Baxley Farms

Diego Paullier, CEO – Chargeurs Wool (USA) Inc.

David McGehee, President – Columbia Flag & Sign Company, LLC

James McKinnon, CEO – Cotswold Industries / Central Textiles

Rusty Darby – F Guy Darby & Son

Don Bockoven, CEO – Darling Fibers

Jeff Pritchett, Global CEO – Elevate Textiles, A&E, Burlington and Safety Components

Larry Severini, Owner/President – Embroidery Solutions Manufacturing LLC

Marc Doyon, VP of Commodities, Customs and Trade – Gildan

C.G. 'Leib' Oehmig IV, President & CEO – Glen Raven, Inc.

James C. Self, III, President & CEO – Greenwood Mills

Cameron Hamrick, President – Hamrick Mills

Norman Chapman, President CEO – Inman Mills

Robert Lachow – JB Martin Company

James Johnson – K&J Enterprises

Justin Ferdinand, President & CEO – KENTWOOL

Gary Romanstine, Director of Sales – Marzoli

Allen Jacoby, EVP and President, Textile Division – Milliken & Company

W. H. (Bill) Rogers, President & COO, Mount Vernon Mills

John Freeman, Director of Sales – Nan Ya Plastics Corporation, America

David Poston, President – Palmetto Synthetics

Anderson Warlick, Chairman & CEO – Parkdale, Inc.

Dan Russian, President & CEO – Sage Automotive Interiors

Marvin Smith, CEO – Shuford Yarns

John W. Simon, President – Signet Mills

Alex Heiman, President – Standard Textile Co., Inc.

Per Olofsson, CEO - Symtech

Hardy Sullivan, Managing Director – Thies US, LLC

Scott Liberman, CEO & President – Valley Forge Flag

William Bull – WH Bull Farms