



WARRIOR PROTECTION &  
READINESS COALITION



american apparel &  
footwear association

May 12, 2016

The Honorable John McCain  
Chairman  
Committee on Armed Services  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jack Reed  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Armed Services  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman McCain and Ranking Member Reed:

On behalf of the Warrior Protection and Readiness Coalition (WPRC) and the American Apparel and Footwear Association (AAFA,) we are writing to express strong support for Congressional action to ensure that U.S.-made personal protective equipment (PPE) and organizational clothing and individual equipment (OCIE) are utilized to the greatest extent possible when outfitting foreign militaries. The Foreign Military Sales (FMS) program continues to be a top priority of our organizations, especially for Afghan National Army (ANA) and National Police Procurement.

The WPRC is the unified voice of advocacy for the individual and unit level equipment needs of our Armed Forces. Our members include top U.S. manufacturers who build the body armor, ballistic helmets, eye protection, camouflage textiles, dress uniforms, and combat footwear for our armed forces and strongest allies. WPRC members are committed to ensuring that our service members and FMS partners are provided with superior products built by a robust American industrial base now and in the future.

AAFA is the trusted public policy voice of the apparel and footwear industry, its management and shareholders, its four million U.S. workers, and its contribution of \$361 billion in annual retail sales.

Already this year the House Armed Services Committee has taken steps to streamline the FMS process. In the FY2017 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) report, the House Armed Services Committee (HASC) has directed the Comptroller General of the United States to submit a report that “further evaluates the performance of the Department of Defense in the FMS process.” We encourage the Senate Armed Services Committee to support this request and ensure that procurement processes for direct commercial sales of PPE and OCIE to foreign nations require domestically made products if purchased with American tax dollars.

Our organizations also support requested report language that reiterates Congressional support for common sense solutions to FMS procurements. The language request states:

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*“It is the sense of Congress that the Secretary of Defense should ensure that the procurement of personal protective equipment and organizational clothing and individual equipment for foreign military through the Foreign Military Sales program will be provided in compliance with USC, Title 10, Section 2533a.”*

The WPRC and AAFA support this Sense of Congress language that ensures that domestic products are procured through the FMS program purchased with appropriated funds. We are aware that there may exist additional FMS opportunities in the near future beyond the Afghan National Security Force (ANSF.)

As you begin consideration of the FY2017 National Defense Authorization Act, we request your support to ensure that US-made PPE and OCIE products are considered and utilized to the greatest extent possible. This ensures that allied foreign militaries are provided with high-quality equipment while supporting the domestic industrial base.

Thank you for your consideration. I commend you and your committee for your leadership.

Sincerely,



David Costello

Executive Director  
Warrior Protection and Readiness Coalition



Stephen Lamar  
Executive Vice President  
American Apparel & Footwear Association