



**April 25, 2016**

The Honorable Mac Thornberry,  
Chairman  
House Armed Services Committee  
2216 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Adam Smith,  
Ranking Member  
House Armed Services Committee  
2216 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Thornberry and Ranking Member Smith:

We are writing to advise you of our very strong support for the *Stepping Up for American Workers and Troops Act (HR 4935)*. It is our hope that this legislation can be included as part of the FY 2017 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

As a continued and staunch supporter of the Berry Amendment, AAFA firmly believes that athletic footwear always has been, and continues to be, an item that falls fully within the Berry Amendment procurement requirements.

We have long disagreed with the policy that has allowed athletic footwear for certain services to be furnished to U.S. troops outside the Berry Amendment. Singling out certain types of footwear for procurement outside the Berry Amendment creates a damaging precedent that undermines these important protections altogether.

HR 4935 will close this loophole, supporting U.S. footwear manufacturing jobs, while providing U.S. troops with Berry Amendment-compliant athletic footwear. We urge you to include this measure as part of the NDAA this year.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration of this important request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Rick Helfenbein'.

Rick Helfenbein  
President and CEO

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