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For Immediate Release

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Study Finds U.S. Workers Contribute Substantially to U.S. Apparel Imports

Apparel coalition to educate lawmakers on U.S. job creation linked to apparel imports

Washington, D.C. - The Trans-Pacific Partnership Apparel Coalition welcomed new data included in a report released today that showcases the substantial contribution that millions of American workers make to apparel manufactured overseas. The report, [*Analyzing the Value Chain for Apparel Designed in the United States and Manufactured Overseas*](#), examines where and how American workers contribute to the value and global production of apparel.

The report, authored by trade economist Susan Hester, Ph.D, found that on average, 70.3 percent of final retail price of studied apparel is created by workers in the United States. Specifically, the global value chain for apparel relies on a full range of highly-skilled and highly-compensated American workers in blue-collar and white-collar jobs that contribute to the design, development, production, importation, distribution and sale of apparel in the United States.

Excerpts from the [report](#):

“American consumers and policymakers tend to look at the finished apparel product and put it into one of two categories: imported or made in the United States. But the reality is that GVCs [global value chains] have made the simplistic judgment usually outdated and inaccurate.”

“Using proprietary data to document the dollars associated with each stage of the global value chain for apparel, this study found that the U.S. value added exceeded 70% for the 20 product-company garments studied.”

“[T]ariffs routinely applied to apparel imports result in higher prices for consumers. It is quite possible that removing these tariffs under a trade agreement would lower prices to consumers and thus increase demand and therefore jobs and profits all along the apparel global value chain including in the United States. Efforts to support these global strategies by American apparel companies will contribute to their success and growth, and these will in turn lead to a more competitive marketplace for apparel consumers and new high-quality U.S. jobs throughout the global value chain.”

The report, which studied a variety of apparel categories and companies, reinforces findings in another recent study evaluating the global value chain associated with the iPod, as well as a new value chain statistical database that was recently launched jointly by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and the World Trade Organization.

Leaders of the Trans-Pacific Partnership Apparel Coalition weighed in on the report.

Kevin M. Burke, President and CEO, American Apparel & Footwear Association

“When we get dressed each day, we wear U.S. jobs. This new study offers valuable insight into the U.S. apparel industry’s positive economic impact on U.S. workers and the U.S. economy. It also sheds new light on the need for robust trade policies to move our industry forward in a 21st century competitive global marketplace.”

Frank Hugelmeyer, President and CEO, Outdoor Industry Association

“The outdoor industry produces some of the innovative apparel products in the world and supports more than six million American jobs. This study confirms what our recreation economy research indicates — that the overwhelming majority of outdoor apparel products’ value is found here in the United States and benefits American businesses, communities and families.”

Julia K. Hughes, President, United States Association of Importers of Textiles & Apparel

“Our members, the leading American brands and retailers, rely on imports to offer the best quality products at the right price to American consumers. As the study shows, these imports not only enable consumers to afford high-quality apparel products, but also create high-quality jobs in the United States.”

Sandy Kennedy, President, Retail Industry Leaders Association

“Using sound data, the report demonstrates what American retailers have long known to be true— apparel imports are responsible for millions of quality white-collar and blue-collar U.S. jobs across the economic spectrum. The isolationist perspective that is the underpinning of U.S. apparel trade policy is outdated and counterproductive. To be successful, U.S. trade policy should bolster, not inhibit, global value chains and the American jobs they create.”

Matt Shay, President & CEO, National Retail Federation

“This study shatters several widespread myths about imports and trade. Labels identifying clothing or any other product as made outside the U.S. are largely meaningless. Regardless of where the factory might be located, these products support a huge number of good blue-collar and white-collar American jobs in retail and many other industries, and they allow U.S. companies to be competitive in the global marketplace.”

About the TPP Apparel Coalition

The TPP Apparel Coalition supports the negotiation of a 21st Century TPP agreement that generates new trade and investment opportunities for the benefit of workers, businesses, and families. These opportunities include buying and selling goods and services, sustaining and growing well-paying U.S jobs, and providing high added value for the U.S. and TPP economies. www.tppapparelcoalition.org.

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