



PRESS RELEASE

U.S. Textile Executives Highlight Industry's Importance; Underscore Challenges & Policy Priorities During Visit by USTR's Chief Textiles and Apparel Negotiator

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WASHINGTON, DC – Several National Council of Textile Organizations (NCTO) member companies hosted the newly named U.S. Trade Representative's (USTR) Chief Textiles and Apparel Negotiator Katherine White at their North Carolina facilities Tuesday and Wednesday as industry leaders provided insights into their state-of-the-art manufacturing facilities and the impact of trade policies on this vital domestic supply chain and local communities.

During White's inaugural visit to a key hub of American textile manufacturing, U.S. textile executives spanning the fiber, yarn, fabric and finished product textile and apparel industry demonstrated the industry's innovations and advances in U.S. manufacturing and illustrated the industry's important contribution to the U.S. economy.

White's visit comes at a pivotal time for the U.S. textile supply chain, which produced \$64.8 billion in output in 2023 and employed more than 500,000 workers. The industry is a key contributor to our national defense and supplies over 8,000 products a year to the U.S. military as well as critical PPE items for national health and safety.

However, the industry is facing severe economic headwinds due to a multitude of economic factors, supercharged predatory trade practices by foreign competitors and insufficient enforcement of trade laws and free trade agreements.

Textile leaders helped provide context about the state of the industry and highlighted the opportunities and challenges confronting it. In total, White visited six U.S. textile plants, including American & Efird, Parkdale Mills/U.S. Cotton, TSG Finishing, Shuford Yarns, Schneider Mills, and Unifi.

White also participated in an industry roundtable at Gaston College Textile Technology Center, at which executives discussed the competitiveness of the domestic industry and outlined urgent priority issues in Washington.

The industry continued to press for: increasing Section 301 China tariffs on finished textile and apparel imports; closing the de minimis loophole; expanding the Western Hemisphere co-production chain and maintaining the yarn forward rule of origin, stepped up customs enforcement of textile and free trade agreement enforcement and penalties, and ways to support domestic supply chains through Buy American and Berry Amendment policies that help to onshore production, spur investment, maintain the safety and security of U.S. armed forces and generate new jobs.

“I want to thank NCTO President and CEO Kim Glas and NCTO member companies for hosting USTR in North Carolina for a tour of domestic textile manufacturing facilities. During the visit we heard from textile industry leaders about the challenges they face in their day-to-day operations and opportunities to enhance the competitiveness and resilience of the textiles sector. President Biden and Ambassador Tai are committed to advancing trade policies that level the playing field for American workers and industries, so they can compete in today’s global economy.”

NCTO President and CEO Kim Glas said, “We want to sincerely thank Katie, who is taking on the role as chief textiles and apparel negotiator at a critical time for this industry. We appreciate her first visit in the new role is to see and meet with our industry first-hand. The U.S. textile industry is one of the most dynamic, innovative industries in the U.S. economy and our co-production chain with our Western Hemisphere trade partners is essential. Trade policies are critical to this manufacturing sector and workforce.”

“Predatory trade practices employed by China and other countries are harming the domestic textile supply chain and our Western Hemisphere trade partners, and our industry is calling for urgent action by our government to address them head on. We are in an urgent economic situation where these serious issues the industry is facing need to be resolved immediately. We believe USTR’s development of supply chain resilience policies is a strong step in the right direction for helping secure the U.S. textile supply chain into the future. We look forward to working closely with Katie and Ambassador Katherine Tai to advance policies that bolster our domestic production,” Glas added.

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NCTO is a Washington, DC-based trade association that represents domestic textile manufacturers.

- U.S. employment in the textile supply chain was 501,755 in 2023.
- The value of shipments for U.S. textiles and apparel was \$64.8 billion in 2023.
- U.S. exports of fiber, textiles and apparel were \$29.7 billion in 2023.
- Capital expenditures for textiles and apparel production totaled \$2.27 billion in 2021, the last year for which data is available.