



**For Immediate Release**

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## **AAFA Urges Swift Approval of PNTR for Vietnam**

**ARLINGTON, VA - June 13, 2006 - American Apparel & Footwear Association (AAFA) President and CEO Kevin M. Burke** today welcomed the introduction of legislation approving Permanent Normal Trading Relations (PNTR) for Vietnam, a key step in that country's effort to join the World Trade Organization (WTO).

"We urge Congress to swiftly approve normalization of trading relations with Vietnam so we can move forward with an important agreement that will ultimately benefit America's apparel, footwear and textile industries and, ultimately, the U.S. consumer," Burke said.

Under the new U.S./Vietnam agreement signed on May 31, the Vietnamese government will eliminate all prohibited subsidies currently provided to its apparel and textile industry as well as lower tariffs and remove non-tariff barriers to all U.S. products and services entering the Vietnamese market. In turn, the United States agreed to remove all quotas on US imports of Vietnamese apparel and textiles.

Burke noted that Vietnam now must reach agreement with the entire WTO membership and that the U.S. Congress must approve PNTR status before Vietnam can join the WTO.

"We believe the new agreement with Vietnam is fair and balanced in its approach to U.S.-made and U.S.-branded apparel, footwear and textiles," Burke said. "It is essential for Congress to move swiftly on this legislation so this agreement can move forward for the benefit of our entire industry."

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*The American Apparel & Footwear Association (AAFA) is the national trade association representing apparel, footwear and other sewn products companies, and their suppliers which compete in the global market. AAFA's mission is to promote and enhance its members' competitiveness, productivity and profitability in the global market by minimizing regulatory, commercial, political, and trade restraints.*