



**UNITED STATES  
ASSOCIATION OF  
IMPORTERS OF  
TEXTILES AND  
APPAREL**

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September 29, 2006  
For Immediate Release

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**Importers Condemn Secret Deal Administration Deal With Dole and Graham**

U.S. importers and retailers today condemned a secretly reached agreement between the Bush Administration and Senators Elizabeth Dole (R-NC) and Lindsay Graham (R-SC), which creates a threat of antidumping duties on apparel imports from Vietnam in exchange for their lifting a hold on a bill. "The Administration has pulled the rug out from under Vietnam, but this is much bigger than Vietnam," charged Laura E. Jones, executive director of the U.S. Association of Importers of Textiles and Apparel.

"A terrible precedent has been set. This could now happen to any other country and any other industry. If it could happen with permanent normal trade relations for Vietnam, a bill for which there was overwhelming support in both houses of Congress, anyone can be held hostage to some special interest. The Administration did not need to pay this outrageous price to lift a hold," Jones said.

"After Vietnam agreed to do more than any other country to get into the WTO, the Administration and the Senators have created a process that robs Vietnam and importers and retailers of the one benefit Vietnam had paid a high price to obtain and what is absolutely essential to our business: certainty," said Jones.

Senators Dole and Graham had imposed on a hold on legislation to recognize Vietnam as a member of the World Trade Organization, complaining that the textile industry needed more protection against Vietnam. The U.S. textile industry, which produces yarns and fabrics, does not have the right to file a petition alleging that clothing is being dumped or otherwise unfairly traded. But, charged Jones, with the Administration agreeing to create a monitoring system and possibly self-initiate dumping cases, "the textile industry has been handed an end-run around the rules."

For those U.S. industries counting on selling goods and services in Vietnam once it becomes a member of the WTO, Jones issued a warning: "If Vietnam is not shipping apparel, its number one export to the U.S. market, and if thousands of workers there are thrown out of work, it's clear Vietnam is not going to be able to afford our agricultural products and insurance. Everyone loses here. It is truly a sad day for American politics, for business, and for a country that negotiated in good faith to join the world trading system."

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