



## PRESS RELEASE

### **NCTO Member Auburn Manufacturing Hosts Deputy Assistant Secretary Jennifer Knight, Highlights Main Manufacturers & U.S. Textile Industry's Competitiveness**

May 17, 2023

WASHINGTON – Today, National Council of Textile Organizations (NCTO) member Auburn Manufacturing Inc.(AMI) – an industry leader in the manufacture of advanced textiles for extreme-heat environments—hosted Jennifer Knight, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Textiles, Consumer Goods, Materials Industries, Critical Minerals and Metals with the U.S. Department of Commerce's International Trade Administration, at the company's state-of-the art manufacturing facility in Auburn, Maine.

A Maine textile manufacturer with over four decades of experience, AMI is a leading producer of fire-and heat-resistant materials, manufacturing the most advanced products to meet U.S. safety standards. AMI textiles are used as protection from extreme high heat in mining, shipbuilding, steelmaking and other critical industries. The company also manufactures end-use products, including a patented, modular removable insulation kit.

During the visit and tour of AMI's facilities, AMI CEO Kathie Leonard highlighted the company's important textile innovations and vitally important products that help fuel the Maine economy and contribute to the broader U.S. textile and apparel industry which produced \$65.8 billion in output in 2021 and employed 538,000 workers.

Leonard also discussed policy priorities that have far-reaching implications for AMI, Maine manufacturers and the entire U.S. textile industry. She outlined the importance of policies directed at holding China accountable for unfair trade practices and the dumping of products on the U.S. market. Leonard also emphasized the importance of maintaining a domestic textile and apparel supply chain, enforcing "Buy American" policies in government procurement, and closing a legal loophole in U.S. trade law that continues to undermine American manufacturing and give China an advantage. Earlier this year, AMI once again [spurred federal action against China](#), with the Commerce Department [officially scrutinizing](#) Chinese exports of silica fabric to the U.S. market.

“We were honored to host Deputy Secretary Jennifer Knight at our Auburn plant,” said Leonard. “It gave us an opportunity to not only showcase AMI’s incredibly advanced technologies, innovation and dedicated workforce but to also discuss firsthand trade policies that impact our daily operations. AMI and this entire industry have weathered severe challenges over the past three years, due to the pandemic, and ongoing pressure from China’s unfair trade practices, but we remain resilient. We appreciated the opportunity to showcase how AMI and the industry can prosper with this kind of collaboration with trade officials like Ms. Knight and the federal government as a whole.”

“SMEs [small and medium-sized enterprises] are the backbone of the U.S. economy and it was my privilege to visit AMI, a state-of-the-art woman-owned U.S. manufacturer which employs 50 and exports its products to more than 30 countries,” said Deputy Assistant Secretary Knight. “ITA’s mission directly supports the strength and resilience of our domestic textile industry by strengthening the global competitiveness of American companies through exports and safeguarding both U.S. industry and workers against unfair trade practices through the rigorous enforcement of trade laws and agreements.”

AMI, an industry leader in the manufacture of advanced textiles for extreme-heat environments, is certified as a Women’s Business Enterprise, operating in two manufacturing facilities located in both Mechanic Falls and Auburn, Maine, and employing over 50 people.

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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 538,067 in 2022.
- The value of shipments for U.S. textiles and apparel was \$65.8 billion in 2022.
- U.S. exports of fiber, textiles and apparel were \$34 billion in 2022.
- Capital expenditures for textiles and apparel production totaled \$2.27 billion in 2021, the last year for which data is available.

To schedule an interview with AMI, please contact Luka Ladan at [Luka.Ladan@ZenicaPR.com](mailto:Luka.Ladan@ZenicaPR.com) or (617) 932-9120. For more information, please visit [AuburnMFG.com](http://AuburnMFG.com).

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