



PRESS RELEASE

U.S. Textile Executives Raise Concern Over Department of Veterans Affairs' Lack of Compliance with Legislation Mandating the Purchase of American-Made PPE

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – The National Council of Textile Organizations (NCTO) and member companies issued a statement today, sounding the alarm over the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) lack of compliance to date with legislation mandating the purchase of domestically-produced PPE.

NCTO President and CEO Kim Glas commended the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs' (HVAC) Subcommittee on Oversight & Investigations for holding a [hearing](#) on "VA Procurement: Made in America."

The Make PPE in America Act, which took effect in February 2022, requires that all PPE purchased by the Departments of Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, and VA be made by manufacturers in the United States using domestic components.

"I applaud the Subcommittee on Oversight & Investigations for scrutinizing the VA's compliance with the Make PPE in America Act. It is alarming that this key federal agency has not yet complied with the underlying provisions of the law or provided a demand signal for the procurement of more American-made PPE. That inaction has left the vital domestic textile and apparel supply chain—the very industry that retooled production lines to produce desperately needed PPE during the pandemic—with idled capacity, financial losses and closures," Glas said.

"The VA and all federal agencies need to fully implement this law immediately. It is critical to the viability of the domestic PPE supply chain and to our nation's long-term health and national security. Without the commitment, our manufacturers will be forced to shutter operations and the PPE domestic supply chain will disappear, leaving our country overly reliant once again on unreliable imports from China and other foreign suppliers," Glas added.

Norman Chapman, president and CEO of **Inman Mills**, a South Carolina-based yarn manufacturer and weaver, said: "The Department of Veterans Affairs' lack of compliance with the Make PPE in America Act to date has essentially cast aside proven American-made goods in favor of cheap foreign goods from an unreliable and often unfriendly supply chain, costing our company and others millions of dollars, and disincentivizing future calls to rush in to help."

“We invested in the expansion of PPE production at our facilities based on the promise of a consistent domestic market due to the passing of the Make PPE in America Act,” said Marisa Fumei-South, chief operating officer at **Two One Two New York**. “That promise, however, has not been upheld, as the Department of Veterans Affairs has failed to issue contracts and make wide scale purchases of domestically produced PPE, as required by the Make PPE in America Act. The failure to comply with key elements of this legislation has had a significant financial impact on our business, in favor of cheap foreign goods from unreliable supply chains – as the COVID pandemic exposed.”

“We were able to boast over 1 million yards of elastic per week during the peak of the pandemic demand from our humble factory,” said Adolfo Solorzano Z., general manager of **American Elastic & Tape**, a Florida based textile producer. “During that time, we proved that we could create American jobs, produce at competitive prices, and pay a decent wage. However, the struggle now lies when our clients are still sitting on inventory that is not circulating because organizations like the VA are not complying with simple requirements in the Make PPE in America Act. Without consistent demand, jobs are lost, shifts are cut, profits are diminished and the path for Asian dependence is laid forth once again for another generation.”

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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.

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