

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

March 12, 2009

The President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write to express our concerns regarding an apparel monitoring program included in the Explanatory Statement accompanying Division B of the Omnibus Appropriations Act of 2009. Specifically, the Explanatory Statement includes a provision stating that the Department of Commerce's International Trade Administration (ITA) is expected to undertake apparel import monitoring with respect to imports from China and Vietnam to determine whether those countries are dumping products in the U.S. market. The Explanatory Statement also urges the ITA to pursue textile safeguard actions pursuant to China's World Trade Organization (WTO) Accession Agreement and with respect to bilateral quotas on non-WTO members.

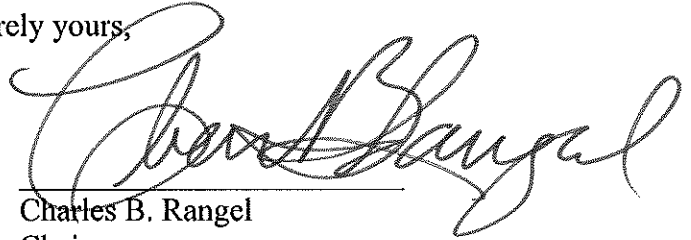
We agree that U.S. trade laws must be vigorously enforced. But the Vietnam import monitoring program requested in the Explanatory Statement is unnecessary, and the China import monitoring program is duplicative, as substantially similar apparel monitoring programs are either pending or have recently concluded. In October 2008, the U.S. International Trade Commission (ITC) began monitoring apparel imports from China, and this program is ongoing. Moreover, between 2006 and 2008, the Department of Commerce (DOC) monitored textile and apparel imports from Vietnam to determine whether there was enough evidence for DOC to self-initiate an antidumping investigation. DOC issued three reports during the course of this monitoring program, and in each case it found insufficient evidence to self-initiate an antidumping investigation. As for the requested textile safeguard actions, the relevant provisions from China's WTO Accession Agreement have expired, and there are no longer any bilateral quotas on non-WTO members.

As the Chairmen and Ranking Members of the Senate Finance and House Ways and Means Committees -- the Congressional committees with sole jurisdiction over international trade matters -- we respectfully request that ITA refrain from implementing the import monitoring program mentioned in the Explanatory Statement, as this monitoring program would be duplicative and unnecessary for the reasons set forth above. We also ask that ITA refrain from taking the textile safeguard enforcement actions mentioned in the Explanatory Statement, as those textile safeguards have expired. We urge ITA instead to expend its resources on fulfilling its many other important enforcement priorities.

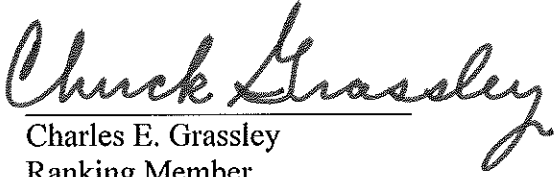
Sincerely yours,



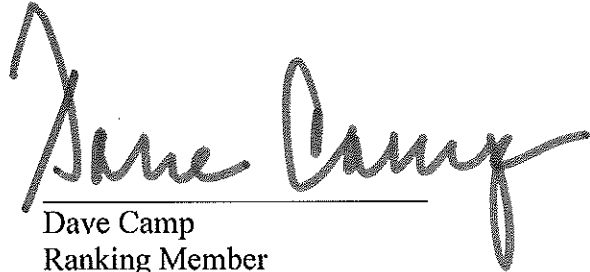
Max Baucus
Chairman
Committee on Finance



Charles B. Rangel
Chairman
Committee on Ways and Means



Charles E. Grassley
Ranking Member
Committee on Finance



Dave Camp
Ranking Member
Committee on Ways and Means