

the Republican platform of 1960. Charles Percy ran for Governor in 1964, but he lost that election. In the not-so-proud tradition of Illinois, that Governor then went to jail and Percy became seen as a corruption fighter in our State. Just 2 years after that defeat, Charles Percy was elected by the people of Illinois to represent them in the Senate, defeating Paul Douglas.

During that campaign, his daughter Valerie was murdered in my hometown and his hometown, Kenilworth—one of our town's only murders. It was through this tragedy that we saw so clearly Charles Percy's quiet dignity.

In the Senate, Chuck Percy was first known as a proponent of a foundation to back home ownership for low-income families. He was the toast of this town in the 1960s, described by the *New York Times* as "the hottest political article in the Republican Party." He even led in polls for the 1968 Republican nomination for President.

Senator Percy, though, was at heart an independent who took on corruption in his own State, and especially his own party. He moved the first resolution calling for an independent prosecutor on the Watergate scandal. The *New York Times* reported:

Nixon fumed to his cabinet that he would do all he could to make sure that Mr. Percy, who already voted against two Nixon nominees for the Supreme Court, would never become President.

Senator Percy fought corruption wherever he saw it. In 1977, he took on White House Budget Director Bert Lance for backdating checks to gain tax deductions. Lance later resigned.

Senator Percy was best known for his work as chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee during historic times, when the United States recovered its nerve and stared down the Soviet Union, and it won the Cold War outright.

He was a gentle man, disciplined in swimming every day, and a devout Christian Scientist who read the Bible each evening.

Senator Percy was a strong, honest, and principled man whose integrity remained uncompromised in his nearly 20 years in the Senate. He believed that accountability, checks and balances, and transparency should be the driving forces of government.

We will miss his moderate, fiscally conservative brand of politics. His legacy is one of genteel, thoughtful leadership, and his fight against corruption in Illinois is sorely missed today.

I send my sincere condolences to Senator Percy's wife Loraine and his children, Sharon, Roger, Gail, and Mark, and their spouses—including our colleague Senator ROCKEFELLER—and to the grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and many friends and family who will mark his passing at the funeral on Wednesday.

Senator Percy was one of the best-remembered Illinois Senators. He represents a tradition, in some sense followed by me. As a former volunteer for

his campaign and one who voted for him, we mark his loss today.

I yield the floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXTENDING THE GENERALIZED SYSTEM OF PREFERENCES—MOTION TO PROCEED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 2832, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to the bill (H.R. 2832) to extend the Generalized System of Preferences, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 5:30 p.m. will be divided and controlled between the Senator from Montana, Mr. BAUCUS, and the Senator from Utah, Mr. HATCH, or their designees.

The Senator from Montana is recognized.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I say to my friend from Alabama, I don't plan to take a lot of time—maybe 10 minutes total.

Mr. President, in 1934, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt said:

No country, however rich, can afford the waste of its human resources. Demoralization caused by vast unemployment is our greatest extravagance.

President Roosevelt said these words at a fireside chat nearly 80 years ago. Our economy was slowly on the path of recovery after suffering the worst financial crash in American history. Roosevelt had turned his focus to helping the "permanent army of unemployed" Americans—those Americans who didn't have jobs. His resulting investment in America's human resources put millions of people back to work.

Today, we face a similar situation. After a significant financial crisis, our economy is in tough shape. Our economic recovery is fragile but improving. Housing foreclosures have slowed and investors are looking for new opportunities. We have a long way to go. But 14 million Americans are still looking for work—and that is just unemployed. If you add the underemployed, it is probably closer to 20 million, and maybe more than that. Like President Roosevelt, we must bolster our investment in American human resources because, as in 1934, America's strength is in its people.

When people are denied the opportunity to work, they are denied the dignity that comes with that work—let alone the income, let alone providing for their families. Trade adjustment assistance, or TAA, is the right investment in America's workers. TAA pro-

vides training and income support to thousands of Americans so they can get a good-paying job right here in our own country. TAA helps them earn the dignity that comes from putting in a good day of work.

I worked with my friend, Ways and Means Chairman DAVE CAMP, from Michigan, who is a good man. We worked together on a TAA agreement that improves the efficiency, accessibility, and effectiveness of the program. I highly commend Representative DAVID CAMP. Our staffs have worked very closely over and over to try to find a common agreement for reauthorizing trade adjustment assistance. We worked to scale back the cost of the program, while maintaining the importance of training that helps workers secure good-paying jobs here at home.

The amendment we are offering today is one I made with Chairman CAMP on TAA. It extends coverage to workers in the services sector, which makes up 80 percent of our economy. It wasn't there before, at least not before 2009. Extending this coverage means manufacturing workers, as well as computer programmers and airline maintenance technicians will have equal access to the TAA Program.

It also extends TAA to all workers. Current law does not cover 8 of our top 10 trade partners, including China, Japan, and Korea. Our amendment removes this geographic limitation and expands TAA's benefits to cover trade with all countries.

Job retraining is the heart of TAA. This training has a proven track record of providing workers the skills they need to secure their next job. We know it works—and it works well—in my State of Montana and across the country.

Al Drebes worked at Plum Creek Lumber Mill in Pablo, MT. In January 2009, Al was laid off. With a young family, he needed to quickly find a new job. But after he spent months sending his resume around, he realized he needed to update his skills.

What did he do? Al signed up for TAA and began training in recreation power equipment repair. Following his classroom training, TAA partnered him with a local employer, S&S Sports, which specializes in all-terrain motor vehicles, jet skis, and other such things that are so important to so many people in our country—and, I might add, they are a lot of fun. Al began on-the-job training with S&S and did such a great job that the company hired him full time. Because of TAA job training, Al now has the security and dignity that comes with a full day's work, and he continues supporting his family.

In addition to providing essential job training, our TAA amendment also helps American workers maintain health insurance for themselves and their families. TAA-eligible workers have access to the health coverage tax credit, which provides a 72.5-percent tax credit subsidy to make health care

more affordable; otherwise, they would not have any health insurance. With nearly 50 million uninsured Americans, this benefit is more important than ever.

Finally, the TAA agreement strengthens programs that help America's small businesses and small farmers. These programs—TAA for Firms and TAA for Farmers—provide targeted, intensive technical assistance to help small businesses and farmers improve their business plans, and they provide seed money to implement those plans.

This bill also provides duty-free access to the U.S. market for imported products from certain developing countries.

The Generalized System of Preferences, otherwise known as GSP, lowers the costs on inputs for American employers across the United States. American manufacturers use GSP imports—imports from developing countries, where the tariffs are reduced so imports can come in more easily—to build cars, produce steel, and manufacture hydropower turbines, for example.

Since GSP expired last year, American companies have paid nearly \$400 million in tariffs on these imports. That is an added cost to American business of \$400 million. By reauthorizing and extending GSP, we ensure that these workers, and workers in 129 countries around the world, have the opportunity to earn the dignity of work.

This amendment, in short, helps save and create American jobs. It helps Americans keep their jobs by providing the low-cost inputs U.S. manufacturers need. It helps Americans who lose their jobs get the skills they need to secure a new job and earn the dignity a solid day of work provides. The amendment is fully offset and doesn't add a dime to our deficit.

This amendment invests in America's human resources, just as President Roosevelt envisioned. It ensures our workers are not demoralized by unemployment and that they are energized by the hope of again standing on their own two feet.

I urge my colleagues to support it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama is recognized.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I thank the chairman for his hard work on this bill. I have supported him so many times in the past and hoped over the last several years as we have discussed my little problem in Haleyville, AL, that maybe some agreement could be reached. But the U.S. Trade Representative, who talks sympathetically and does nothing, and the congressional committee seem to be of the view that any change, even though that is what they are empowered to do, is somehow not possible and we should not make changes in our trade law. So I objected today to going to this bill because I wish to see modest changes made in it.

We are facing job losses in America. As my colleague has said, more than 25 million Americans are unemployed or underemployed. The unemployment rate remains above 9 percent. In Alabama, unemployment is now higher than the national average. A few years ago, we were below the national average.

In times such as these, Congress ought to consider options that create a favorable environment for businesses without adding more to the debt by spending money to try to stimulate the economy. One such measure would be a small change in the generalized system of preferences—the GSP—which the Senate is considering this week.

Some background: The GSP was enacted in 1974 to give developing countries duty-free access to our markets, while still protecting American industries. Importantly, a key concept of the whole plan of GSP was if a product is made in America, that type of good is not allowed duty-free access to GSP. They would not be allowed to be imported duty free if we have an ongoing market. In some instances, we did not have ongoing production, so we allowed poorer countries to import duty free because it didn't lay off American jobs. Importers are not allowed the preference of a lower rate under those circumstances.

Unfortunately, the U.S. Trade Representative concluded otherwise a number of years ago and made an exception, straying from the original, fundamental purpose and principle. And that exception threatens the American sleeping bag textile industry and those industries that support it.

In 1992, the U.S. Trade Representative added sleeping bags to the list of GSP-eligible products in a special effort to support—it appears, at that time—the textile industry in Czechoslovakia. But, apparently, Czechoslovakia never produced a sleeping bag. Apparently, this was a political deal. They wanted to help Czechoslovakia after the fall of the wall.

I can understand that, but do you see what is happening? Some political part of the government worrying about foreign policy decides we don't care too much about American sleeping bags, or whatever, because we want to make friends with this country. So we forego American jobs for foreign jobs as a way to win favor with those countries.

Now, I am not saying that is never good, but I am saying when we do that time and time again we begin to concede too much of American wealth and jobs.

So GSP was in effect in 1974 to help those countries, and I don't think it should have been changed. But a few years ago, a Chinese company began to produce sleeping bags and import them into the United States. They are not eligible to be a GSP low-cost, duty-free shipper because they are not a poorer nation that qualifies under the GSP. But they began to import into the United States, and when it became

clear we had a good American company that could compete effectively against them, they realized there was a loophole and that Bangladesh could qualify for this loophole. So they moved their plant over to Bangladesh—at least in name they moved it—and continued to supply the materials to Bangladesh where the sleeping bags are produced and then imported duty free under this loophole that should never have been created because it has put Americans out of work.

So with regard to China, I just have to note it is not a principled free-trade country. They are out aggressively to advance their interest and the interests of their companies and to sell everything they can sell abroad to advance their interests regardless of how many Americans are placed out of work. So I think our leaders have to begin to be sensitive to these practices.

When will we start tough negotiations on behalf of our workers instead of resisting efforts to help our workers be competitive? Instead of standing up and being tough with JEFF SESSIONS, the Senator from Alabama, they need to stand up and be tough with people in Beijing, it seems to me. I believe in free trade. My voting record proves this. I have supported virtually every free-trade agreement. But free trade is not free if we allow ourselves to be exploited, if we hand unfair advantage to other nations.

Haleyville is a small town. It is in the county of Winston—known as the Free State of Winston. Winston County claims and, I think, in effect did secede from Alabama when Alabama seceded from the Union. There are people in Winston County named Ulysses right now, after Grant. It is a remarkable county. It is an hour and a half from Birmingham, the closest center. It is very rural—15,000, 20,000, 25,000 people.

Also, Marion County is in the same area, and they have high unemployment—about 12 percent unemployment in that area. These 100 or so jobs are important.

I went there a few months ago. The local high school band played, and they welcomed me. All the employees were there. They pleaded with me to do what I could to help them save their jobs, and I promised to do so. But I am afraid we are in a mood, and the bill is moving, and we will just move it through and people will forget those people back home in Haleyville. But I am not forgetting them.

I believe they have a legitimate request to make of their government to adhere to the true principles of GSP—that they don't get to import textiles into the United States if there is a domestic manufacturer that would be adversely affected. They can import, but they have to pay the 9-percent tariff that other countries pay on textiles.

So I am afraid what is happening in Haleyville, sadly, is a symbol of our broken system. This trade loophole contradicts GSP principles. I believe it is indefensible. It is a benefit to China

paid for directly by American workers. It just is. This company in Alabama pays taxes, obeys the regulations, plays by the rules, and they ask for nothing more than a fair shake. But how do our laws reward them? Out of the blue, they find they have competition from a foreign import. So we give Bangladesh the ability to skip all the taxes other importers pay, and primarily to the benefit of a Chinese company so they can undersell the plant in Alabama.

What happened to the President's pledge of just last week when he said he wanted to make sure more products are stamped with three words: "Made in America?" The GSP is supposed to exclude benefits to American-made textiles and import-sensitive products. Yet through a loophole and a ruling by the USTR, sleeping bags are not even considered a textile. If sleeping bags are not a textile, what are they? They are not food, they are not a water pump, they are not a piece of machinery, they are not a bench. They are made of fabric and fibers. They are clearly a textile. For this reason, some sections of the United States Code—including the Berry amendment—designates sleeping bags as textiles explicitly. It makes no sense for the government to recognize sleeping bags as textiles under some sections but not others. So all I am proposing is to bring uniformity to the law and following the intent of the GSP as initially passed.

The fast-growing exports from Bangladesh are threatening American sleeping bags throughout the United States. It is an industry that has grown throughout the United States. Exxel Outdoors—really a California company—employs nearly 100 people in a county with unemployment at 12 percent. But already Exxel has seen a 20-percent decrease in its sales. If the appropriate changes are not made, this factory will close and 100 American workers in Alabama will lose their jobs, and others around the country will lose their jobs.

Let me tell you a little more about Exxel. They came under new ownership in 2000. The new owner had planned to close the factory and send the jobs to Mexico to try to build a plant in Mexico. Instead, he realized the competitiveness of being in Alabama at this plant. He met and liked the people in Haleyville. They surprised him. He thought he would try it, he would give it a shot. He brought jobs back from Mexico and China. Since then they have prospered, creating quality sleeping bags right here in the United States.

Exxel uses suppliers in New York State, New Jersey, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Mississippi. This is how a manufacturing system works in a country such as the United States. It has ripple effects far beyond what some people might think.

I met one of the great industrialists in Germany recently who is investing

in Alabama. He told me we have to have a Renaissance in manufacturing in the industrialized first world, and he was very sincere about this. He is a highly intelligent, accomplished man.

As you can see from this map, this little plant in Alabama is supporting people in Mississippi; Cullman, AL; Atlanta, GA; Volunteer Thread in Nashville; Wiggy's in Clinton, TN. They make sleeping bags. I have a letter from them saying their business will be threatened too. Martex Fiber in Spartanburg; Consolidated Fibers in Charlotte; Royal Slide in New Jersey; Polartec in Lawrence, MA; Pennsylvania, New York, Vermont, Colorado, and California. So these things have ramifications.

Indeed, recently, by chance, I was talking to a person with deep experience in the textile industry, and he told me they are becoming more competitive. He says we are actually gaining back jobs from abroad. That is exactly what was happening here. This man gambled. He bet on the United States. He didn't know they would figure out a way to go to Bangladesh and undercut him.

So this carve-out created for Czechoslovakia, discovered and used by a Chinese company, is creating jobs abroad and not in the United States. So the proposed fix I have suggested is not some sort of corporate welfare. It would not lower taxes for any business. Indeed, it would ensure we collect a little tariff duty on products coming in from Bangladesh. They can ship them in, but they have to pay the normal tariff of 9 percent on imported textiles. It would not add one cent to the deficit of the United States. It would give no loan guarantees, no subsidies, no hand-outs. The fix simply declares sleeping bags are what they are—textiles—and subject to the rules of textiles under GSP. Really, it would ensure Exxel and other companies in the United States have the same competitive position they had before this plant was moved to Bangladesh.

Some are calling this an earmark. I don't believe that is true or fair to say. Earmarks give direct financial benefit to an entity through tax benefits or government grants. This is not a grant. It does not eliminate tariffs so Exxel will pay less taxes. It doesn't give a direct benefit to Exxel. It does not cost the United States one cent. It eliminates an unfair earmark that already allows a Chinese-run company to purchase raw materials worldwide, manufacture sleeping bags at a Bangladesh factory, and then import them into the United States duty free.

I repeat: I am trying to strip an earmark. I am trying to actually strip an earmark for China from the bill that is before us. I am asking that we uphold the values and rules we have put into law. I don't know how this was changed after Congress passed it in 1974, stating if you import textiles you have to pay a tariff unless there is no domestic manufacturer of that textile against

whom you are competing. How that got changed, I am not sure.

So I ask that we eliminate the special benefit that has been provided to this country and this one textile.

Exxel is just one company that is currently being hammered by this unfair loophole. They are indeed in financial threat. They were supplying 30 percent of the sleeping bags in the United States. They saw a decline of 20 percent already in that product.

Mr. President, I will offer for the RECORD letters written by other businesses in support of Exxel's efforts.

Stein Fibers of Charlotte says:

Exxel Outdoors has been a solid customer of Stein Fibers, Ltd for many years. We supply synthetic fiberfill for sleeping bags made at their Haleyville, Alabama factory.

Wiggy's Inc. says:

Bangladesh recently entered the U.S. market and supplied over 700,000 sleeping bags last year.

Wiggy's makes sleeping bags in Grand Junction, CO. They have copied their Senators, and they ask that we support my effort.

Rusken corrugated containers in Cullman, AL, supplies the shipping packages for these products as they are shipped.

Dunlap Industries in Chattanooga, TN, says they are one of the largest suppliers of thread in the United States, and Exxel is a customer of theirs.

Smurfit-Stone Container Corporation in Tupelo, MS, is also a supplier of Exxel.

Royal Slide Sales Company, Inc., of Garfield, NJ, says:

As Royal Slide provides sleeping bag carry cases to Exxel's Haleyville, Alabama factory, the resulting decrease in their business from this surge in duty-free importation of synthetic fill sleeping bags is directly leading to a decrease in our business.

Their support reform.

Martex Fiber says:

We are a major supplier of fiberfill to Exxel Outdoors. We have been proud to watch one of the last—

Listen to this—

We have been proud to watch one of the last remaining American sleeping bag factories keep going steadily, even as virtually all its competitors moved their facilities to other countries.

They go on to say that Exxel is entitled to relief.

Consolidated Fibers of Charlotte, NC, says:

The impact on our company will be great if the Exxel Outdoors factory is forced out of business by these foreign imports without duty. We supply a great deal of fiberfill to Exxel on an ongoing basis.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that these letters be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

STEIN FIBERS, LTD.,

Charlotte, NC, February 5, 2010.

Re Comments—Exxel Outdoors petition, GSP, sleeping bags, HTSUS #9404 30.80, Docket #USTR-2010-0004.

SECRETARY, UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION: Exxel Outdoors has been

a solid customer of Stein Fibers, LTD for many years. We supply synthetic fiberfill for the sleeping bags made at their Haleyville, Alabama factory.

We are writing in support of withdrawing from GSP, the sleeping bags coming in duty free to the United States under HTSUS 9404.30.80. With duty free status, the importers of these bags are taking away significant business from Exxel Outdoor, which in turn will hurt our business.

If these sleeping bags continue to get duty free treatment under GSP, before long Exxel's factory will be forced to close down. In 2009 Exxel Outdoor accounted for \$407,985.80 of our revenue, which would be of significant loss to our company.

If you would like to discuss this with me, please contact me at your convenience.

Sincerely,

RANDY LAYMAN,
Stein Fibers, LTD.

WIGGY'S INC.,

Grand Junction, CO, May 24, 2011.

Hon. RON KIRK,

U.S. Trade Representative, Executive Office of the President, Washington, DC.

DEAR AMBASSADOR KIRK: I understand that the Administration will decide soon on the petition filed by Exxel Outdoors (USTR-2010-0017) and determine if sleeping bags should be duty-free under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP), assuming that Congress re-authorizes that program. I am writing to urge you to recommend that imports of sleeping bags from all countries remain subject to the normal U.S. duty-rate of 9 percent. If non-down sleeping bags from low-wage countries like Bangladesh are duty-free, it will pose a great threat to the remaining U.S. sleeping bag producers such as Wiggy's.

Until recently China was the only meaningful foreign competitor in the U.S. sleeping bag market. Imports from China are, and always have been subject to the normal duty rate for sleeping bags. This has enabled some U.S. manufacturers such as Wiggy's to remain competitive with foreign suppliers. However, Bangladesh recently entered the U.S. market and supplied over 700,000 sleeping bags last year.

With rising costs in China and other global dynamics, Bangladesh is the world's low-cost manufacturer of textile products such as sleeping bags. Manufacturers in Bangladesh are ramping up production of sleeping bags and will continue to do so, just as they are with other textile products. There is little doubt that over the next few years Bangladesh will take a sizable share of the U.S. market presently filled by China. The only remaining question is: Will Bangladesh also capture the market share presently serviced by the U.S. manufacturers? The answer to that question will be determined by the decision you are about to make the petition filed by Exxel Outdoors.

U.S. manufacturers can compete if the trade laws are fair and equitable. It is grossly unfair that Bangladesh can import fabrics, fiber fill and other materials duty-free from China, assemble them into sleeping bags, and export the finished product duty-free to the U.S., even though the vast majority of those sleeping bag inputs are products of China. Conversely, U.S. manufacturers must pay duty on any of the components we import to produce sleeping bags.

I trust you will recognize this injustice, and agree that GSP is not supposed to harm or threaten U.S. manufacturing. Please grant Exxel Outdoors' request to remove non-down sleeping bags from GSP.

Sincerely,

JERRY WIGUTOW,
President.

RUSKEN PACKAGING, INC.,

Cullman, AL, February 3, 2010.

Re Docket # USTR-2010-0004, Exxel Outdoors Petition on Sleeping Bags, HTSUS # 9404.30.80.

SECRETARY, UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION: Rusken Packaging has enjoyed a long time relationship with Exxel Outdoors, supplying them with shipping cartons for their sleeping bags. Exxel is a stellar example of the quality work ethic that we have here in Alabama.

We wholeheartedly support Exxel in their petition to withdraw synthetic-filled sleeping bags from the GSP. We believe this creates unfair competition for Exxel's American-made product This Is not only harming Exxel, it is hurting the American companies that Exxel sources from, such as Rusken Packaging.

For the good of many American businesses, please remove these sleeping bags from the GSP.

If you would like anything additional from me, I will be glad to make myself available to you.

Warm regards,

JOHN GIATINNA,
Rusken Packaging, Inc.

FEBRUARY 10, 2010.

Re Docket USTR-2010-0004—Exxel Outdoors Petition on GSP, HTSUS # 9404.30.80.

SECRETARY, UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION: As one of the largest suppliers of thread in the United States, U.S. Thread is in strong favor of the petition to remove synthetic fill sleeping bags from the GSP—the same type of bags that are cut and sewn at the Exxel Outdoors factory in Alabama.

This special duty-free treatment for sleeping bag imports from other countries could very well force Exxel to shut down their Alabama factory. This would negatively impact U.S. Thread's business to a great extent, and many communities throughout the Southeast United States.

We can ill afford to lose a significant customer like Exxel Outdoors. The loss of Exxel Outdoors would devastate the community of Graysville, TN by adding to already astronomical unemployment rate in this area. We have been supplying Exxel Outdoors with all of their sewing thread for many years, and if Exxel were forced to close their doors due to, what we believe, would be an extremely unfair trade agreement, an already economically depressed area would experience the loss of an additional 200 jobs, and a revenue loss to U.S. Thread of \$500,000 per year.

U.S. Thread has already lost far too many textile and apparel customers to foreign competition. Evidence of this is the fact that in 2000 our active employee number was 80. In 2010, that number has been reduced to just 25. We can factually attribute this directly to foreign, absurdly low cost labor, arid back room trade deals.

Thank you for this opportunity to express our support on this important matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or would like further comment.

ROBBIE OWENS,
DIRECTOR OF SALES AND MARKETING,
U.S. Thread/Dunlap Industries, Inc.

SMURFIT-STONE

CONTAINER CORPORATION,
Tupelo, MS, February 5, 2010.

Re Docket—USTR-2010-0004, Exxel Outdoors Petition, HTSUS #9404.30.80.

SECRETARY, UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION: Smurfit-Stone Container Corporation strongly supports the petition by Exxel Outdoors to remove synthetic-filled

sleeping bags from the list of duty-free imports in the GSP.

The duty-free importing of these sleeping bags is giving foreign countries an unjustifiable price advantage over Exxel's product, hurting their sales.

As a result, Smurfit-Stone directly loses business from Exxel. We supply Exxel Outdoors with hundreds of thousands shipping cartons per year, but this will continue to significantly decrease as the duty-free foreign imports continue.

In the event Exxel were to close its facilities in Alabama, the impact to Smurfit-Stone Container Corporation would be a loss of approximately \$500,000 in packaging revenue, which would in turn affect more than 200 Mississippi workers.

We greatly appreciate this opportunity to share our views with you. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you would like anything further from us.

With thanks,

DANNY KENNEDY,
Smurfit Stone Container Corporation.

ROYAL SLIDE SALES CO., INC.,

Garfield, NJ, February 5, 2010.

Re Docket #—USTR-2010-0004, Petition regarding GSP treatment of HTSUS #9404.30.80.

SECRETARY, UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION: Royal Slide Sales Company respectfully agrees with the petition of Exxel Outdoors, requesting that you withdraw certain sleeping bags from the GSP list of products.

As Royal Slide provides sleeping bag carry cases to Exxel's Haleyville, Alabama factory, the resulting decrease in their business from this surge in duty-free importation of synthetic fill sleeping bags, is directly leading to a decrease in our business.

We do not object to imports generally. To the contrary, Royal Slide imports many of our products. But when imports of a finished product directly threaten a U.S. manufacturer, at minimum imports should be assessed the normal duty-rate.

The duty-free imports are giving them what we see as a large, unjustified price advantage over Exxel, and we request that you rule to remove the imports from the GSP.

Should I be able to assist you further with your inquiry into this issue with any additional information, please to not hesitate to contact me at the number or email provided below.

Sincerely,

LEW NEUMAN,
Royal Slide Sales Company.

MARTEX FIBER,
February 4, 2010.

Re Exxel Outdoors GSP Petition on HTSUS 9404.30.80, Docket # USTR-2010-0004.

SECRETARY, UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION: Martex Fiber Southern Corporation is submitting this letter to urge that you remove the synthetic-filled sleeping bags from GSP, as Exxel Outdoors' petition requests.

We are a major supplier of fiberfill to Exxel Outdoors. We have been proud to watch one of the last remaining American sleeping bag factories keep going steadily, even as virtually all its competitors moved their facilities to other countries.

As importers are now bringing in duty-free sleeping bags, this is taking away Exxel's ability to compete in its industry. As Exxel Outdoors loses this business, so does Martex Fiber.

The U.S. textile industry has already suffered enough. Given the low wages and other advantages companies operating in foreign countries have, it is only fair that importers of sleeping bags pay the normal duty rate of 9%.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like any additional from me on this.

Very best,

JIMMY JARRETT,
*President, Martex Fiber Southern
Corporation.*

CONSOLIDATED FIBERS,

Charlotte, NC, February 5, 2010.

Re Docket USTR-2010-0004, Petition by Exxel Outdoors On Sleeping Bags HTSUS #9404.30.80.

SECRETARY, UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION: We at Consolidated Fibers support without hesitation, the petition by Exxel Outdoors to remove synthetic fiberfill sleeping bags (HTSUS #9404 30.80) from the GSP duty-free treatment.

The impact on our company will be great if the Exxel Outdoors factory is forced out of business by these foreign imports without duty. We supply a great deal of fiberfill to Exxel on an ongoing basis.

The closure of this factory would weigh negatively on our revenues and our staff.

America cannot afford to lose any more good jobs because of a duty-free advantage given to products from another country. Especially in the Exxel's area of the country where the unemployment rate is nearing 18%.

I will be happy to make myself available to you for discussion, or to answer any questions you may have. My contact information is provided below. Thank you.

Best Regards,

BOB KUNIK,
Owner, Consolidated Fibers.

Mr. SESSIONS. Companies in North Carolina, New Jersey, Tennessee, Colorado, and Mississippi are asking for help on this matter.

I support the GSP. I believe in trade. I will continue to support it. But I only ask that when we have a problem, either the USTR or the Congress listen to somebody and fix it every now and then, not just consider we have a big train here and we are not going to stop to listen to anybody with a suggestion for improvement. A small change will prevent an unfair benefit from accruing to a Chinese company and will prevent more Americans from losing their jobs. This will ensure that trade is free and principled and plentiful.

Senator BAUCUS and I have talked about this, and he has looked at me sadly and listened patiently. But we are down at the licklog, and no relief has been obtained, and that is why I am here today.

I thank the Chair.

I yield the floor, and I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING SENATOR CHARLES PERCY

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I would like to share a few thoughts on the passing of Senator Chuck Percy.

Among other things he did in his remarkable life—successful in business and politics—he had a connection to Mobile, AL, my hometown. I believe he

was born in Pensacola, FL, and was connected to Thomas Hord Herndon, who was a Congressman from Alabama and resided in Mobile and was well known. I am a distant descendent of Congressman Herndon, and I can always remember, as a young person, particularly my great-aunts talking about him. They followed his career, and I began to follow his career. Maybe it was a factor in my becoming a Republican at a time in Alabama when most were not. He was successful and young and vibrant and created a great image for public service, and it filtered down to this young guy in rural Alabama in a positive way.

So I would just say, Senator ROCKEFELLER, we have lost a great American. He had a tremendously successful career in business and politics. He was a man of integrity and drive and commitment and good spirit. I think we are wise in this body to pause a moment and to be appreciative and to remember people who serve their country in that fashion.

My sympathies are with the Percy family and the Rockefeller family.

I yield the floor.

• Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I ask the RECORD to reflect that if I would have been present for today's vote, I would have voted to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to H.R. 2832, to extend the Generalized System of Preferences.

I would like to express my continued support for the extension of the Generalized System of Preferences, GSP. As the GSP expired on December 31, 2010, I am quite happy to see the Senate finally poised to take up this much overdue extension of this valuable trade program.

I am also hopeful that this process will finally lead to quick consideration of our pending trade agreements with Colombia, Panama, and South Korea.

These agreements are long past due. Unfortunately, they have been delayed because the President has made it clear that his most important trade priority is to spend more money on a domestic worker retraining program of dubious effectiveness. He has also made it clear that, unless Congress accedes to his demands, he will never submit these job creating trade agreements to Congress. It is a travesty that the President cares more about spending money than creating jobs.

Yet now that we have this trade vehicle on the floor, I am hopeful we can find a way to allow a full and fair debate on TAA—and in doing so, finally remove what we hope is the last obstacle in front of these three free trade agreements.

The GSP bill itself is important to our economy. The 2-year extension of GSP will provide greater certainty for both U.S. businesses and developing country exporters who are able to utilize the benefits of the program. The program has secured strong bipartisan support for over three decades, and I only expect this trend to continue.

The GSP allows for nonreciprocal, duty-free tariff treatment of certain products from designated developing countries. In fact, some of the top GSP beneficiary developing countries in 2010 were Angola, Indonesia, Equatorial Guinea, South Africa, the Philippines, and Turkey. In order to be designated as a beneficiary country, nations must adhere to an extensive criteria list. In turn, GSP is not only a trade program, but can also be seen as one of our effective foreign policy tools.

For starters, beneficiary countries must protect intellectual property rights, recognize workers' rights, commit to the elimination of child labor, and prevent the seizure of property belonging to U.S. citizens or businesses.

GSP continues to promote trade, rather than aid, to nations that are advancing their economic development; it has worked to stimulate U.S. exports in these markets; and encourages the elimination of trade barriers in developing countries.

What does this mean for the United States? This means our Nation not only has an opportunity to assist developing countries to promote economic growth in their nations, but we also have an opportunity for our American businesses to thrive, while lowering costs for American consumers. Across our Nation, U.S. manufacturers and importers benefit by receiving goods and raw materials at a lower cost. According to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, approximately three-quarters of U.S. imports that rely on the GSP program, use raw materials, parts and components, or machinery and equipment, to manufacture goods in the U.S. for domestic consumption or for export.

So, although the GSP program was initially created to assist with economic growth in the developing world, it now provides great assistance to our businesses here in the United States.

In 2010 the United States imported \$23 billion in GSP-eligible goods from 129 countries around the world. This includes 4,800 eligible products. And, according to the Office of the United States Trade Representative, GSP saved American importers \$682 million in duties in 2010. These numbers cannot be overlooked—they represent millions of dollars in savings for our manufacturers, retailers, farmers and families. GSP is particularly helpful for our small businesses. The savings on duties by these small businesses allows them to compete with larger companies.

During these uncertain and challenging economic times, we must give our businesses the necessary tools to compete not only in the global market, but also here at home. Unfortunately, the 9 months that the program has not been operational has negatively affected the competitiveness of thousands of American businesses that rely on duty-exemptions. For these companies, GSP is an integral component of their business model.

In fact, according to the Coalition for GSP, from December 31, 2010, when the

GSP program expired, U.S. companies have paid an additional \$1.8 million a day in new duties. To date, this amounts to nearly \$480 million in unnecessary additional costs for companies. Businesses in every state in the Nation have been affected by the expiration of GSP and have a vested interest in the renewal of the program.

For example, in my State of Utah—the only State in the country to import Indonesian steam and vapor turbine parts—tariffs have exceeded \$235,000 for these goods in the months following the expiration of GSP. Components such as mountings for buildings imported from Thailand, cost Utah businesses an additional \$178,000 in tariffs through July of this year. And the total amount of Utah imports of GSP-eligible goods from January until July 2011 exceeded \$26.2 million, of which an additional \$1.1 million in unnecessary import taxes were paid.

I have heard from Utah manufacturing companies, like Black Diamond Equipment, which is headquartered in Salt Lake City and employs more than 475 people worldwide. That company develops, manufactures and distributes a broad range of products including those used for mountain climbing, camping, and skiing. As of June 2010, they incurred more than \$40,000 in tariffs for goods imported from the Philippines—goods that otherwise would have been covered under GSP.

If GSP is not renewed, Black Diamond is projected to pay over \$100,000 in unnecessary tariffs by the end of the year. As if that was not enough, because of these duties, Black Diamond is faced with reduced sales, competitiveness issues, and a limited hiring ability for their Utah office. To help companies like Black Diamond succeed, we must act now to renew GSP.

I have shared just a few examples of the additional costs incurred by businesses in my State, and unfortunately, there are many other similar scenarios across the Nation due to the expiration of GSP.

These Utah companies and other businesses around the country are left with difficult decisions about downsizing, hiring freezes, and employee layoffs—this at a time when our economy needs more than ever to be adding jobs. We must lift this additional burden on our small businesses, manufacturers, and farmers, by renewing GSP today, and making sure we provide retroactive application.

I urge my colleagues to come together and extend the Generalized System of Preferences until July 31, 2013, and provide the much-needed retroactive benefits to our U.S. companies.●

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the

Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 166, H.R. 2832, an act to extend the Generalized System of Preferences, and for other purposes.

Harry Reid, Max Baucus, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Mark Udall, Debbie Stabenow, Jeff Bingaman, Daniel K. Inouye, Maria Cantwell, Patty Murray, Richard Blumenthal, Michael F. Bennet, Patrick J. Leahy, Tom Harkin, Barbara Boxer, Kent Conrad, Sherrod Brown, Carl Levin.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the motion to proceed to H.R. 2832, an act to extend the Generalized System of Preferences, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant editor of the Daily Digest called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), and the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) are necessarily absent.

Mr. KYL. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL), and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) would have voted “yea.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 84, nays 8, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 139 Leg.]

YEAS—84

Akaka	Enzi	Merkley
Alexander	Feinstein	Mikulski
Ayotte	Franken	Moran
Barrasso	Gillibrand	Murkowski
Baucus	Graham	Murray
Begich	Grassley	Nelson (NE)
Bennet	Hagan	Nelson (FL)
Bingaman	Harkin	Portman
Blumenthal	Heller	Pryor
Blunt	Hoeven	Reed
Boozman	Hutchison	Reid
Boxer	Inouye	Roberts
Brown (MA)	Isakson	Rockefeller
Brown (OH)	Johanns	Rubio
Cantwell	Johnson (SD)	Sanders
Cardin	Johnson (WI)	Schumer
Carper	Kerry	Shaheen
Casey	Kirk	Snowe
Chambliss	Klobuchar	Tester
Coats	Kohl	Thune
Cochran	Landrieu	Toomey
Collins	Lautenberg	Udall (CO)
Conrad	Leahy	Udall (NM)
Cooms	Levin	Warner
Corker	Lieberman	Webb
Cornyn	Lugar	Whitehouse
Crapo	Manchin	Wicker
Durbin	McConnell	Wyden

NAYS—8

Coburn	Lee	Shelby
DeMint	McCain	Vitter
Kyl	Sessions	

NOT VOTING—8

Burr	McCaskill	Risch
Hatch	Menendez	Stabenow
Inhofe	Paul	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The yeas are 84, the nays are 8. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. REED). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant Daily Digest editor proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING SERGEANT JOE SZCZERBA

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I rise today to honor a hero. I rise to remember the sacrifice of a man I am proud to have known. I rise to remember SGT Joe Szczerba of the New Castle County Police who was killed in the line of duty just this past Thursday night.

Sergeant Szczerba and several other officers responded to a disorderly conduct call in New Castle, DE, just before midnight. The officers arrived on the scene and set up a perimeter. Sergeant Szczerba spotted the suspect and gave chase. A seasoned officer, Sergeant Szczerba attempted to subdue the man, and in a very tough fight that ensued he was stabbed.

The suspect continued to resist arrest. Although seriously wounded, Sergeant Szczerba worked with three other officers to take the suspect into custody. Only then did he acknowledge his injury. Officers on the scene performed CPR until county paramedics arrived, but it was not enough. Sergeant Szczerba did not make it.

When I was county executive for New Castle County for 6 years, after a particularly long or difficult day, as I was heading home, I would flip on the police scanner in my car and listen to the chatter, to the calls from dispatch and the officers responding. I was always mindful in those hours that here I was heading home to my family and safety and here were our officers heading out on patrol into a dark and uncertain night.

My phone rang at 5 a.m. this past Friday morning, and it was my friend, Chief Mike McGowan, the county's police chief—his voice weighted down with grief. It was the worst news I have ever received in public life.

New Castle County had only lost one previous officer in a line-of-duty death when CPL Paul Sweeney was in a traffic accident nearly 40 years ago in 1972, but never had an officer been murdered in the line of duty. Each year, as county executive, when I attended our annual police memorial, we would quietly pray that we would never know this day.