

November 23, 2009



NEVER STOP EXPLORING™

The Honorable Max Baucus  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on Finance  
215 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Grassley  
Ranking Member  
Senate Committee on Finance  
215 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

**The North Face**  
2013 Farallon Drive  
San Leandro, CA 94577  
voice 510.618.3500  
fax 510.618.3531  
www.thenorthface.com

a division of VF Outdoor, Inc.

**Re:** S. 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530 and 2531 (Cantwell), Bills to extend and modify the temporary suspension of duty on women's and men's footwear, valued over \$23/pair, with a coated or laminated textile fabric.

Dear Chairman Baucus and Ranking Member Grassley:

On behalf of The North Face, a division of VF Outdoor, Inc., we write to you in support of S. 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530 and 2531 bills to extend and modify a previously enacted miscellaneous tariff bill (MTB) related to certain outdoor performance footwear. As the U.S. economy continues to recover, we believe enactment of these tariff bills will bolster that recovery by creating new jobs in our industry and opportunities for investment in innovation.

The American outdoor industry is comprised of more than 4,000 manufacturers and retailers, from large multibrand companies to single store front retailers. Each year, our industry generates \$289 billion in sales and supports 6.5 million jobs. The North Face, founded in 1968, designs and offers technically advanced outdoor apparel, footwear and equipment for not only accomplished mountaineers, endurance runners and snowsports athletes, but also for the week-end hiker, daily trail runner, resort skier and outdoor families. We are headquartered in San Leandro, California with 41 owned retail stores from California to New York. We employ over 1400 employees from technical designers to warehouse operations to associates in our retail stores. Our products are sold by retailers in your States of Iowa and Montana like REI, The Sports Authority, Bob Ward & Sons, Scheels, Cabela's and Active Endeavors.

These bills are an extension of legislation enacted through the 2006 MTB process. Like the original MTB, these extension bills are non-controversial and were developed in consultation with the remaining manufacturers of footwear products in the United States and their trade association(s). The duty suspensions enacted in 2006 have been tremendously beneficial for the manufacturers of eligible performance outdoor footwear, their retailers and vendors and ultimately, the consumer. In fact, passage of the original duty suspension on these products allowed The North Face and many other companies to expand and diversify product offerings to consumers, resulting in jobs creation and increased innovation and competition, all to the benefit of the American economy.

Besides the benefits to footwear designers and manufacturers outlined above, American companies that supply the inputs, coatings and other technical features for outdoor performance footwear also realized benefits from the current duty suspension associated with these bills. This extension will continue to support the jobs they sustain and aid in their continued growth, investment and innovation.

We respectfully ask that S. 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530 and 2531 be added to the MTB package and that the package be passed prior to the end of the year.

Thank you and we appreciate your time and consideration.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rafferty Jackson".

Rafferty Jackson  
Vice President and General Counsel