

Individualized Shirts

INDIVIDUALIZED SHIRTS

November 24, 2009

**U.S. Senator Max Baucus
Senate Finance Committee
219 Senate Dirksen Office Building
Washington, DC 20510**

RE: S.2532

Dear Senator Baucus:

Individualized Shirt Co. has 240 skilled artisans who live in or surrounding areas of Perth Amboy, New Jersey making world class men's shirts. Our goal is to insure that our factory will be providing quality employment to New Jersey residents twenty years from today. In order to assure that, we need your help in the passage of S.2532, a bill introduced to extend the existing temporary duty relief for very high end shirting cotton fabrics for men's shirt manufacturers and to strengthen the United States apparel industry.

As a result of our trade agreements beginning with NAFTA, a tremendous disadvantage has been placed on United States manufacturers of high quality cotton mens' and boys' shirts. While foreign makers of such shirts from many countries can import finished shirts into this country duty-free using shirting fabrics from any source, United States manufacturers continue to pay duties on fabric that the United States Congress and government have repeatedly found is no longer made in the U.S. As a result of this unintended duty inversion, the United States shirt manufacturing industry has suffered tremendously. The companies that remain in the United States, like Individualized Shirts, produce world renowned quality products and employ a highly skilled workforce but face duties on fabrics they rely upon while many of their foreign competitors are allowed preferential duty treatment. S.2532 allows us to level the playing field, providing tariff relief and helping strengthen United States manufacturers.

The duty relief program as it currently exists has been very successful in saving many manufacturing jobs in the United States. Failure to extend this bill will cause additional job losses in the manufacturing sector at a critical time in our country's economic climate. Canada has acted to establish and extend duty remission and we

believe the United States should do the same. Please help us follow the lead of our neighbors to the north.

S.2532 will help preserve our precious 240 skilled manufacturing jobs at Individualized Shirts. As you and your fellow members of Congress consider extending other trade programs that provide duty relief to imported shirts, we believe it unfair to expose the domestic manufacturing sector to further potential job erosion.

Thank you for this opportunity to express our thoughts as we look to you for your support in this crucial matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joe Blair', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Joe Blair

CEO Individualized Shirts