

United States International Trade Commission

**Certain Textile
Articles:
Travel Goods of Textile
Materials**

Investigation No. 332-480
USITC Publication 3957
October 2007



U.S. International Trade Commission

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study, which covered calendar years 2005 and 2006, found that there is relatively little production of travel goods with an outer surface of textile materials,¹ or of the fabrics from which they are produced, in the United States, as most firms reportedly have moved production offshore, primarily to Asia.

Nine companies reported producing or contracting for the production of such travel goods in the United States during 2005-06. Domestic producers of the subject travel goods either serve niche markets or produce for the U.S. military and government. U.S. shipments of travel goods with an outer surface of textile materials totaled an estimated \$37 million in 2006.²

Between 2005 and 2006, both the quantity of domestic production and the value of domestic shipments of the subject goods declined, primarily reflecting a decline in shipments to commercial markets. While domestic production for the U.S. military and government nearly doubled between 2005 and 2006, it represented less than 5 percent of domestic production of such goods. The limited data available on the total market for the subject travel goods suggest that domestic production accounts for a small share of the total U.S. market for such goods.

Nine firms reported producing or contracting for the production of textile materials,³ or fabrics, for use in travel goods in the United States during 2005-06. U.S. shipments of domestically produced fabrics for use in the subject travel goods totaled an estimated 11.2 million square meters in 2006, up from 9.2 million square meters in 2005. Over 70 percent of the value of shipments of such fabrics was intended for goods produced for the U.S. military and government. It is likely that the shipments data are overstated, because the specific end use of the fabric—particularly that used by the U.S. military and government—is often not known to the fabric producer; thus, the data likely include fabrics intended for use in products that are not included in the scope.

This report draws on industry information received by the Commission from questionnaire responses and interviews with representatives of the travel goods and fabric industries. The Commission used questionnaires to obtain data on these products because there is no published information on domestic production and shipments of travel goods with an outer surface of textile materials or the fabrics used to make such articles. Although the Commission requested and received data for shipments and production by product type and end-use markets, much of the aggregated data collected was not

¹ For the purposes of this study, travel goods with an outer surface of textile materials are defined as trunks, suitcases, and similar containers; briefcases, computer cases, and attaché cases; and travel and sports bags; all fabricated with an outer surface of any textile material of any fiber type. Also included in the definition are both wheeled and non-wheeled backpacks of manmade fiber textile materials. The definition excludes all handbags and articles normally carried in a handbag or wallet, as well as insulated food and beverage bags, musical instrument cases, and occupationally specific bags.

² Data for 2005 are withheld to avoid revealing the individual operations of responding firms.

³ For purposes of this study, textile materials used to make these articles are defined as any U.S.-produced fabrics used in the production of travel goods, including fabrics for the outer surface of the travel goods, lining fabrics, and narrow fabrics used for straps or other purposes.

presented in this report to protect the business confidential information provided by individual firms.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Purpose and Scope

This report provides information and data for calendar years 2005 and 2006 on U.S. production and shipments of travel goods with an outer surface of textile materials and the textile materials used to make such articles. The report was prepared in response to a request from the House Committee on Ways and Means.¹

For purposes of this study, the subject travel goods are defined as trunks, suitcases, and similar containers (hereafter “luggage”); briefcases, computer cases, and attaché cases (“cases”); and travel and sports bags; all are fabricated with an outer surface of any textile materials of any fiber type. The definition includes wheeled and non-wheeled backpacks of manmade fiber textile materials (“backpacks”), but excludes all handbags and articles normally carried in a handbag or wallet, as well as insulated food and beverage bags, musical instrument cases, and occupationally specific bags. The complete definition for the subject travel goods is provided in Box 1-1. The Commission developed this definition after extensive consultations and in cooperation with representatives of the U.S. industry producing or contracting for the production of such items. Travel goods with an outer surface of textile materials are classified along with other travel goods in heading 4202 of the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (HTS).

For purposes of this study, the textile materials used to make these articles are defined as any U.S.-produced fabrics used in the outer surface, the interior lining, or the straps and handles of the subject travel goods. Typically, woven fabrics are used in the production of travel goods of textile materials. Woven fabrics that are not visibly coated, impregnated, or laminated are classified in HTS chapters 50–55. Woven fabrics that are visibly coated, impregnated, or laminated are classified in HTS chapter 59. Narrow woven fabrics (for use as straps) are classified in HTS chapter 58.

¹ On October 25, 2006, the House Committee on Ways and Means (Committee) requested that the U.S. International Trade Commission (Commission) prepare a report under section 332(g) of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. 1332(g)) that contains, to the extent possible, data for 2005 and 2006 on the level of U.S. production and shipments of certain travel goods with an outer surface of textile materials and the textile materials used to make such articles. The Committee also asked the Commission to define the products it is covering in the report. The Committee asked the Commission to provide its report no later than 12 months following receipt of the letter (by October 25, 2007). In its letter, the Committee also requested that the Commission provide similar data on U.S. production and shipments of certain performance outerwear pants and jackets and the fabrics used to make such goods. The Commission submitted this first report on July 24, 2007 (USITC publication 3937, available at <http://www.usitc.gov/publications/pub3937.pdf>).

Approach

This report draws on industry information received by the Commission from questionnaire responses and interviews with representatives of the travel goods and fabric industries. The Commission used questionnaires to obtain data for these products because there is no published information on domestic production and shipments of the subject travel goods and fabrics. Travel goods and fabric firms were identified through telephone and in-person interviews with industry associations and company representatives, online research, and questionnaire responses.

Questionnaires were sent to companies that might be producing or contracting with outside firms for the production of the subject travel goods in the United States. In addition to requesting information on domestic production and shipments, the questionnaires asked respondents if they purchased U.S.-produced fabrics for use in domestic or offshore production of travel goods of textile materials. The travel goods questionnaire also asked for contact information for other companies, including suppliers of U.S.-produced fabric, domestic contractors for travel goods of textile materials, and customers (if the firm was manufacturing travel goods on a contract basis for other firms). This information was used to identify potential travel goods manufacturers and fabric producers, who were then mailed questionnaires.

A separate fabric producers' questionnaire was sent to firms that produce fabric and/or contract for the production of fabric in the United States for use in travel goods. The fabric producers' questionnaire requested information and data for domestic production and shipments of any fabrics, including unfinished fabrics, intended for use in travel goods. The fabric producers' questionnaire also asked for customer contact information for U.S. and foreign travel goods manufacturers and for fabric wholesalers or finishers. This information was used to identify additional producers and contractors, who were, in turn, sent questionnaires. Both sets of questionnaires asked respondents to report data separately for domestic commercial shipments, U.S. military and government shipments, and export shipments.

The Commission sent the travel goods questionnaire to 148 firms and received responses from 105 companies (71 percent). Nine respondents replied that they produced or contracted for the production of the subject travel goods domestically during the study period. The other 96 respondents indicated they neither produced travel goods with an outer surface of textile materials in the United States nor contracted for such production with U.S. firms in 2005-06.

The Commission sent the fabric producers' questionnaire to 62 firms that weave, coat or finish, or design and sell fabrics (and contract production). Responses were received from 39 of the companies surveyed (63 percent). Nine respondents indicated that they produced or contracted for the production of fabrics for use in travel goods. The other 30 firms indicated that they did not produce such fabrics during the period under consideration. One additional non-responding firm reportedly ceased operations. Multiple attempts were made to solicit information from non-respondents for both sets of questionnaires.

The data reported for U.S. production and shipments is only that which would not reveal the individual operations of any particular firms. Although the Commission requested and

received data for shipments and production by product type and end-use market, much of the aggregated data collected was not presented in this report to protect the business confidential information provided by individual firms. As an alternative, to the extent possible, the report provides supplemental qualitative information on U.S. production and shipments.

Box 1-1

Definition of Travel Goods With An Outer Surface of Textile Materials

Travel goods with an outer surface of textile materials.—Includes only items with an outer surface of textile materials, as defined below. Excludes all handbags and articles usually contained in a handbag or wallet, insulated food and beverage bags, musical instrument cases, and other items not listed below.

a.) Trunks, suitcases, vanity cases, and similar containers with an outer surface of textile materials.—Articles listed above as reported as part of one of the following subheadings of the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (HTS):¹ 4202.12.40, 4202.12.60, and 4202.12.80 (statistical reporting numbers 4202.12.80.50, 4202.12.80.60, 4202.12.80.70, and 4202.12.80.80).

This category includes products typically described as hard-sided and soft-sided luggage, including matching shoulder bags and vanity cases, as well as rolling duffel bags that contain some internal structure or framing. This category also includes all pieces sold in a luggage set, when the largest piece is a suitcase.

b.) Attaché cases, briefcases, computer cases, and similar containers with an outer surface of textile materials.—Articles listed above as reported as part of HTS subheading: 4202.12.80 (statistical reporting numbers 4202.12.80.10, 4202.12.80.20, 4202.12.80.30, and 4202.12.80.40).

This category includes products typically described as brief cases and computer cases, including backpacks and sleeves specifically designed to carry computers. This category also includes messenger bags that either have only carry handles or are slung over only one shoulder. This category *does not* include occupationally specific bags (e.g., camera bags, bike-messenger bags, etc.).

c.) Travel, sports, and similar bags with an outer surface of textile materials.—Articles listed above as reported as part of one of the following subheadings of the HTS: 4202.92.15, 4202.92.20, and 4202.92.30 (except for manmade-fiber backpacks reported in the HTS under statistical reporting number 4202.92.30.20).

This category includes products typically described as tote bags primarily intended for travel (not otherwise included as part of luggage sets), garment bags, duffel bags (without any internal framing or structure), gym bags, and backpacks of non-manmade fibers (such as cotton). This category does not include tote bags intended to be used as handbags, golf bags, food and beverage bags, tennis racket carrying bags, ski bags, fishing bags, or similar sports-specific bags. This category also does not include camera bags.

d.) Wheeled Backpacks of Manmade Fiber Textile Materials.—Wheeled backpacks of man-made fibers, as reported in the HTS under statistical reporting number 4202.92.30.20 and not otherwise described in any of the other definitions.

e.) Non-wheeled Backpacks of Manmade Fiber Textile Materials.—Non-wheeled backpacks of man-made fibers, as reported in the HTS under statistical reporting number 4202.92.30.20 and not otherwise described in any of the other definitions.

¹ The Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States may be viewed on the Commission's website at http://www.usitc.gov/tata/hts/bychapter/index_old-01032007.htm. The HTS numbers are provided for convenience only; the written description of the products is dispositive.

CHAPTER 2

U.S. Production and Shipments ¹

Travel Goods With an Outer Surface of Textile Materials

Industry Characteristics

The U.S. travel goods market is primarily characterized by soft-sided items made from nylon and polyester fabrics versus the hard-sided cases (particularly with respect to luggage) that were more prevalent in the past. Industry representatives note that because of the popularity of lighter weight, soft-sided travel goods, shipping is less of an issue in sourcing decisions, and labor has become the most significant portion of the total cost of production.² Industry sources note that labor costs can range from 20 to 40 percent of the finished good. Consequently, the majority of U.S. travel goods firms now source their commercial lines from Asian suppliers, mostly China, where labor costs are much lower than those in the United States. Industry sources note that China is the preferred source for offshore production, owing to 1) the removal of U.S. import quotas on textile travel goods in 2002; 2) available low-cost work force and necessary inputs such as fabric and accessories in China and nearby Asian countries; and 3) lower cost, more frequent, and shorter shipping times to the United States compared with other Asian countries. In 2006, China was the leading U.S. supplier of the subject products, accounting for between 80 and 90 percent of imports for each category of the subject travel goods.³

Only a relatively small number of firms maintain production of travel goods with an outer surface of textile materials in the United States.⁴ Some produce under their own labels, while others produce under contract for larger companies. Remaining U.S. textile travel goods producers either serve niche markets or produce for the U.S. military⁵ and government.

¹ Unless otherwise noted, information in this chapter is from U.S. producers responding to the Commission's questionnaires and telephone and in-person interviews conducted throughout the course of the investigation with U.S. producers of travel goods with an outer surface of textile materials and U.S. producers of fabrics for use in travel goods with an outer surface of textile materials.

² According to industry representatives, the sewing and assembly processes for these goods are extremely labor intensive because the sewing is often performed on inside seams, and many accessories (such as zippers, handles, wheels, etc.) must be attached by hand.

³ Based on official statistics of the U.S. Department of Commerce, imports in 2006 of travel goods of textile materials totaled approximately \$2.8 billion (landed duty paid), up approximately 16 percent from 2005. Import data include some products that are not included in the definition of travel goods with an outer surface of textile materials used in this study.

⁴ In written statements to the Commission, associations representing the travel goods industry contend that there is no commercially viable domestic production of travel goods and that existing U.S. producers either serve niche or high-end markets, or manufacture for the U.S. military (see chapter 3). Other industry sources suggest that remaining production in the United States is here for the purposes of quick turnaround, customization, and longstanding personal relationships with domestic producers.

⁵ The Berry Amendment requires that the Department of Defense purchase only U.S.-produced clothing or textile articles and that the fibers, yarns, and fabrics used in such articles be produced in the United States (10 U.S.C. 2533a). For further information on the Berry Amendment, see U.S. Department of Defense, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition Technology and Logistics, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, at <http://www.acq.osd.mil/dpap/paic/berryamendmentfaq.htm>.

Nine firms responding to the Commission's questionnaire reported that they produce and/or contract for the production of the subject travel goods domestically. Six of the nine firms indicated that they produce travel and sports bags, five reported that they produce luggage, four reported that they produce cases, two indicated that they produce wheeled backpacks, and two stated that they produce non-wheeled backpacks. Five of the nine firms reported that they produce more than one category of travel goods with an outer surface of textile materials (i.e., luggage, cases, travel and sports bags, and backpacks). In each of the product categories, production is concentrated among a small number of the responding firms.

Each of the five product categories is produced domestically for both the commercial and military markets. Six firms indicated that they produce for the U.S. military and government, and three indicated that they produce solely for the commercial market. Of the six firms producing for the U.S. military and government, one indicated that it produced strictly for the U.S. military and government during the study period.

U.S. Production and Shipments

In 2006, U.S. shipments of domestically produced travel goods with an outer surface of textile materials totaled an estimated \$37 million. Although the Commission received data on U.S. production and shipments of travel goods with an outer surface of textile materials for 2005, such data are withheld to avoid disclosing the individual operations of reporting firms. In 2006, luggage accounted for over one-half of the quantity of domestically produced travel goods with an outer surface of textile materials, while travel and sports bags⁶ accounted for approximately 40 percent. Backpacks and cases together accounted for the remainder of U.S. production. Available data on the total market for travel goods with an outer surface of textile materials suggest that domestic production accounts for a small share of the total U.S. market for such goods. The total U.S. market for travel goods with an outer surface of textile materials is estimated at approximately \$3 billion wholesale in 2006.⁷

Both the quantity of domestic production and the value of domestic shipments of the subject goods declined from 2005 to 2006. This primarily reflected a decline in shipments to commercial markets. While domestic production for the U.S. military and government nearly doubled between 2005 and 2006, it represented less than 5 percent of domestic production of such goods.

⁶ As noted in chapter 1, Box 1.1, travel and sports bags differ from luggage in that they do not have an internal frame or structure.

⁷ Wholesale market data are estimated based on retail sales estimates from the Travel Goods Association, "State of the U.S. Travel Goods Market 1992-2006: A Profile of the U.S. Travel Goods Market," <http://www.travel-goods.org/press/release/tgamarket2006.pdf> (accessed Aug. 21, 2007), and likely include some products that are not included in the definition of travel goods with an outer surface of textile materials used in this study.

Fabrics for Use in Travel Goods With an Outer Surface of Textile Materials

Industry Characteristics

Fabrics used in the subject travel goods are sometimes the result of a combined effort of two or more firms, in which one firm may weave the base fabric, while another applies a finish, coating, laminate, or dye. These finishing firms typically will order the woven fabric from other firms, both domestic and foreign, and finish the fabrics in their own facilities. The industry also consists of firms that design and sell fabrics, but purchase the fabrics and have them finished by other firms on a contract basis. A brief description of the fabrics used in travel goods with an outer surface of textile materials is provided in Box 2-1.

Box 2-1 Description of Fabrics Used in Travel Goods with an Outer Surface of Textile Materials

The fabrics used in travel goods with an outer surface of textile materials may be made from any type of fiber, but are typically made from synthetic fibers, such as polyester or nylon. Travel goods manufacturers report that “ballistic” nylon is commonly used in the production of travel goods. “Ballistic” nylon is an industry term for especially thick, tough nylon that was originally developed for military purposes. Fabrics of other types of fibers, including wool and cotton, may also be used for fashion purposes.

Most fabrics used in the production of travel goods are coated, laminated, or bonded. The fabrics used for the outer surface of travel goods may be woven in a variety of different weave patterns, including a plain, basket, rip-stop, waffle, tweed, twill, or jacquard (figured) weave. Rip-stop weave fabric, for example, is a lightweight fabric commonly used in backpacks that provides tear and abrasion resistance as well as a desirable cosmetic look. Webbing, a strong, narrow, closely woven fabric of synthetic fibers, is often used in the straps or handles of travel goods.¹ Broadwoven fabrics may also be used as a component in making straps and handles.

¹ Narrow woven fabrics are defined as fabrics with a width of less than 30 centimeters, although webbing used in travel goods would typically have a width of less than 10 centimeters. By comparison, broadwoven fabrics, which are used for the outer surface or lining of travel goods, typically have a width ranging from 140 to 165 centimeters.

Source: Based on information from industry sources.

Nine firms responding to the Commission’s questionnaire indicated that they produce and/or contract out production of fabrics domestically for use in the subject travel goods. Seven of the nine reporting firms indicated that fabrics for use in the subject travel goods accounted for 6 percent or less of their total fabric production, while one firm indicated that it accounted for 20 percent or more of its total fabric production.⁸ Four firms indicated that they produce for both the commercial and the U.S. military and government markets, while five reported only commercial production.

Domestic production of the subject fabrics is highly concentrated among a small number of the responding firms. Six firms reported producing fabrics for use in the outer surface of travel goods, two reported producing fabrics for use in the lining, and four reported producing fabrics for use in the straps or handles.⁹ The vast majority of reported

⁸ One responding firm did not supply such data on its questionnaire.

⁹ The fabric reported to be used in the straps and handles consisted of both webbing and broadwoven fabrics.

production consisted of fabrics used in the outer surface of travel goods. These fabrics were mostly woven synthetic fabrics, finished with a coating or laminate to make them water repellent.

U.S. Production and Shipments

U.S. shipments of all types of domestically produced fabrics intended for use in travel goods with an outer surface of textile materials increased by an estimated 22 percent, from approximately 9.2 million square meters in 2005 to about 11.2 million square meters in 2006.¹⁰ The increase was accounted for by growth in both U.S. shipments to commercial markets and to the U.S. military and government. Export shipments declined considerably between 2005 and 2006. The value of shipments to the U.S. military and government accounted for over two-thirds of the total value of shipments in 2005 and 2006.

The quantity of domestic production of the subject goods increased by 13 percent from 2005 to 2006, with one firm accounting for most of the increase. Four of the respondents reported that their production declined during the period.

¹⁰ It is likely that the shipments data are overstated because the specific end use of the fabric is often not known to the fabric producer; thus, the data likely include some fabrics intended for use in products that do not fall under the definitions used in this study, particularly for use in articles for the U.S. military and government.

CHAPTER 3

Positions of Interested Parties

This chapter summarizes the written statements of interested parties submitted to the Commission in connection with Investigation No. 332-480, *Certain Textile Articles: Travel Goods of Textile Materials*.

The Travel Goods Association¹

The Travel Goods Association (TGA) stated that it is a national trade association of manufacturers, distributors, and retailers of luggage, leather goods, business and travel accessories, business and computer cases, handbags and other products for people who travel, including travel goods of textile materials. The TGA asserted that there is little commercially viable U.S. production of textile travel goods and that the manufacturing that does exist is little affected by imports.

The TGA estimated that over 2 billion pieces, or \$20 billion worth, of all types of travel goods were sold in the United States in 2006. It estimated that over 80 percent of all travel goods sold in the United States in 2006 were textile travel goods. The TGA further estimated that imports supply more than 95 percent of the U.S. market. It contended that the current limited U.S. production of textile travel goods serves either niche or high-end markets or is for the U.S. military. It stated that such products are relatively insulated from imports or receive protection from foreign competition under U.S. law; therefore, such production does not depend on high import duties to remain viable. The TGA estimated that the U.S. government collected \$600 million in duties on U.S. imports of textile travel goods in 2006 which, after mark-ups, cost U.S. consumers \$1.5 billion.

The TGA stated that many textile travel goods use the most advanced fabrics available in the world to provide such features as durability, protection from water, and stain resistance, and that some travel goods use state-of-the-art fabrics to allow for insulation or lightweight portability. It indicated that for other travel goods, the construction of the frame and/or the use of other hardware, such as wheels, are key selling points and comprise a much higher value than the fabrics. The TGA stated that travel goods of textile materials are all classified together in the U.S. Harmonized Tariff Schedule (HTS) and are subject to some of the highest duties in the U.S. tariff code, regardless of the type of textiles used or the value of the textile materials embodied in the travel good.

The TGA contended that the U.S. textile industry is not interested in protecting travel goods fabric manufacturing. It stated that the U.S. textile industry did not request quotas for travel goods of textile materials in the 2003 U.S.-Vietnam Bilateral Textile Agreement, nor did it request quotas for the U.S.-China 2005 textile agreement. In addition, it pointed out that the United States-Korea Free Trade Agreement would allow all textile travel goods

¹ Michele Marini Pittenger, President, Travel Goods Association, written submission to the Commission, July 10, 2007.

to enter duty-free immediately under a liberal cut and sew rule of origin, unlike other textile provisions of the agreement.

The Apparel & Footwear Association²

The American Apparel & Footwear Association (AAFA) stated that it is the national trade association of the apparel and footwear industries and that many of its member companies design, manufacture, and market textile travel goods. The AAFA's submission reiterated the main points of TGA's submission summarized above. Additionally, after surveying its member companies, the AAFA concluded that there is limited commercially viable production of textile travel goods in the United States and such production is little affected by imports.

The Outdoor Industry Association³

The Outdoor Industry Association (OIA) stated that it is the national trade association for companies involved in the active outdoor recreation business. The OIA submitted comments to the Commission on behalf of its members, including firms that manufacture, import, distribute, retail, and/or supply fabrics for travel goods of textile materials. After surveying its member companies, the OIA indicated that it cannot identify any outdoor recreation company producing travel goods of textile materials in commercially viable volumes. It further noted that for the two-year period 2005-06, sales of travel goods of textile materials sold through outdoor-specific retailers totaled nearly 10 million pieces worth \$625 million. The OIA pointed out that the entire travel goods market is much larger and is one of the largest segments of outdoor industry sales.

The OIA stated that the travel goods of textile materials designed, produced, and sold by its member companies are unique and innovative products designed to withstand the rigors of outdoor activity. The OIA indicated that such products incorporate advanced technologies and use specialty inputs and fabrics. The OIA further stated that the majority of firms capable of producing such travel goods and their inputs are located in Asia; therefore, manufacturing is concentrated in that region. The OIA indicated that the textile travel goods produced by its members are made from advanced fabrics that bear little resemblance to mass market travel goods.

The OIA stated that despite the differences in the textiles used to manufacture the travel goods, or the relative value of the textile materials compared with other components of the travel good, all travel goods of textile materials are classified together in the HTS and are subject to relatively high import duties--on average, 17.6 percent. The OIA contended that the high duty rates stymie product innovation, limit the product styles member companies can produce, and result in added costs for U.S. consumers.

² Kevin M. Burke, President and CEO, American Apparel & Footwear Association, written submission to the Commission, July 10, 2007.

³ Frank Hugelmeyer, President and CEO, Outdoor Industry Association, written submission to the Commission, July 10, 2007.

APPENDIX A
Request Letter From the House Committee
on Ways and Means

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515

DOCKET NUMBER
2508
Office of the Secretary Int'l Trade Commission

October 24, 2006

The Honorable Daniel R. Pearson
Chairman
U.S. International Trade Commission
500 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20436

2006 OCT 25 AM 10:18

Dear Mr. Chairman:

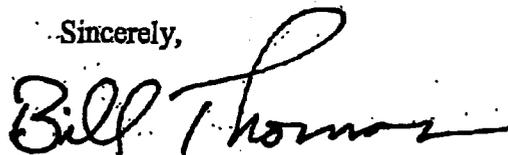
The Ways and Means Committee is interested in information related to the competitiveness of the domestic industry producing certain performance outerwear pants, performance jackets, and travel goods of textile materials. Accordingly, on behalf of the Ways and Means Committee, I am writing to request that the U.S. International Trade Commission conduct an investigation under section 332(g) of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. 1332(g)) to provide information to the Committee related to these domestic industries. Specifically, to the extent possible, the investigation should provide data for 2005 and 2006 on the level of U.S. production and shipments of the following:

- certain performance outerwear pants and jackets and the fabrics used to make such pants and jackets; and,
- certain travel goods with an outer surface of textile materials and the textile materials used to make such goods.

The Commission should submit two separate reports under this investigation, and should, within the above descriptions, define the products that it is covering in each report. The first report, covering certain performance outerwear pants and jackets and fabrics used to make such pants and jackets, should be submitted as soon as possible, but no later than 9 months following receipt of this letter. The second report, covering the travel goods and textile materials to make such goods, should be submitted no later than 12 months following the receipt of this letter.

The Commission's assistance in this matter is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,



Bill Thomas
Chairman

APPENDIX B
***Federal Register* Notice**

480, Certain Textile Articles: Travel Goods of Textile Materials, for that purpose, the details of which are provided in separate notice.

Written Submissions

No public hearing is planned. However, interested parties are invited to submit written statements concerning the matters to be addressed by the Commission in its report on this investigation. Submissions should be addressed to the Secretary, United States International Trade Commission, 500 E Street SW., Washington, DC 20436. To be assured of consideration by the Commission, written statements should be submitted to the Commission at the earliest practical date but no later than 5:15 p.m. on April 30, 2007. All written submissions must conform with the provisions of section 201.8 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure (19 CFR 201.8). Section 201.8 requires that a signed original (or copy so designated) and fourteen (14) copies of each document be filed. In the event that confidential treatment of the document is requested, at least four (4) additional copies must be filed, in which the confidential business information must be deleted (see the following paragraph for further information regarding confidential business information). The Commission's rules do not authorize filing submissions with the Secretary by facsimile or electronic means, except to the extent permitted by section 201.8 of the rules (see Handbook for Electronic Filing Procedures, ftp://ftp.usitc.gov/pub/reports/electronic_filing_handbook.pdf). Persons with questions regarding electronic filing should contact the Secretary at 202-205-2000 or edis@usitc.gov.

Any submissions that contain confidential business information must also conform with the requirements of section 201.6 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure (19 CFR 201.6). Section 201.6 of the rules requires that the cover of the document and the individual pages be clearly marked as to whether they are the "confidential" or "nonconfidential" version, and that the confidential business information be clearly identified by means of brackets. All written submissions, except for confidential business information, will be made available in the Office of the Secretary to the Commission for inspection by interested parties.

The Committee has indicated that it intends to make the Commission's report available to the public in its entirety, and has asked that the

Commission not include any confidential business information in the report it sends to the Committee. Any confidential business information received by the Commission in this investigation and used in preparing this report will not be published in a manner that would reveal the operations of the firm supplying the information.

General information concerning the Commission may also be obtained at <http://www.usitc.gov>. The public record for this investigation may be viewed on the Commission's electronic docket (EDIS) <http://www.usitc.gov/secretary/edis.htm>. Hearing impaired individuals may obtain information on this matter by contacting the Commission's TDD terminal on 202-205-1810. Persons with mobility impairments who will need special assistance in gaining access to the Commission should contact the Office of the Secretary at 202-205-2000.

By order of the Commission.

Issued: November 16, 2006.

Marilyn R. Abbott,

Secretary to the Commission.

[FR Doc. E6-19763 Filed 11-21-06; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7020-02-P

INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION

[Investigation No. 332-480]

Certain Textile Articles: Travel Goods of Textile Materials

AGENCY: International Trade Commission.

ACTION: Institution of investigation and request for public comments.

DATES: *Effective Date:* November 16, 2006.

SUMMARY: Following receipt on October 25, 2006 of a request from the House Committee on Ways and Means, the Commission instituted investigation No. 332-480, Certain Textile Articles: Travel Goods of Textile Materials, under section 332(g) of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. 1332(g)).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Kimberlie Freund, Co-Project Leader, Office of Industries (202-708-5402; kimberlie.freund@usitc.gov) or Heidi Colby-Oizumi, Co-Project Leader, Office of Industries (202-205-3391; heidi.colby@usitc.gov). For information on legal aspects, contact William Gearhart of the Office of the General Counsel (202-205-3091; william.gearhart@usitc.gov). The media should contact Margaret O'Laughlin, Office of External Relations (202-205-1819; margaret.olaughlin@usitc.gov).

Background: In its letter, the Committee on Ways and Means, U.S. House of Representatives asked the U.S. International Trade Commission to conduct an investigation under section 332(g) of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. 1332(g)) and provide a report that contains, to the extent possible, data for 2005 and 2006 on the level of U.S. production and shipments of certain travel goods with an outer surface of textile materials and the textile materials used to make such goods. The Committee also asked the Commission to define the products that it is covering in the report. The Committee asked the Commission to provide its report no later than 12 months following receipt of the letter (by October 25, 2007).

In its letter the Committee also requested that the Commission provide similar data on U.S. production and shipments of certain high-performance outerwear pants and jackets and the fabrics used to make such goods, and that the Commission submit that report no later than 9 months following receipt of the letter (by July 25, 2007). The Commission has instituted investigation No. 332-479, Certain Textile Articles: Performance Outerwear, for that purpose, the details of which are provided in a separate notice.

Written Submissions: No public hearing is planned. However, interested parties are invited to submit written statements concerning the matters to be addressed by the Commission in its report on this investigation. Submissions should be addressed to the Secretary, United States International Trade Commission, 500 E Street SW., Washington, DC 20436. To be assured of consideration by the Commission, written statements should be submitted to the Commission at the earliest practical date but no later than 5:15 p.m. on June 30, 2007. All written submissions must conform with the provisions of section 201.8 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure (19 C.F.R. 201.8). Section 201.8 requires that a signed original (or copy so designated) and fourteen (14) copies of each document be filed. In the event that confidential treatment of the document is requested, at least four (4) additional copies must be filed, in which the confidential business information must be deleted (see the following paragraph for further information regarding confidential business information). The Commission's rules do not authorize filing submissions with the Secretary by facsimile or electronic means, except to the extent permitted by section 201.8 of the rules (see Handbook for Electronic Filing Procedures, <ftp://ftp.usitc.gov/>

pub/reports/electronic_filing_handbook.pdf). Persons with questions regarding electronic filing should contact the Secretary (202-205-2000 or edis@usitc.gov).

Any submissions that contain confidential business information must also conform with the requirements of section 201.6 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure (19 CFR 201.6). Section 201.6 of the rules requires that the cover of the document and the individual pages be clearly marked as to whether they are the "confidential" or "nonconfidential" version, and that the confidential business information be clearly identified by means of brackets. All written submissions, except for confidential business information, will be made available in the Office of the Secretary to the Commission for inspection by interested parties.

The Committee has indicated that it intends to make the Commission's report available to the public in its entirety, and has asked that the Commission not include any confidential business information in the report it sends to the Committee. Any confidential business information received by the Commission in this investigation and used in preparing this report will not be published in a manner that would reveal the operations of the firm supplying the information.

General information concerning the Commission may also be obtained at <http://www.usitc.gov>. The public record for this investigation may be viewed on the Commission's electronic docket (EDIS) <http://www.usitc.gov/secretary/edis.htm>. Hearing impaired individuals may obtain information on this matter by contacting the Commission's TDD terminal on 202-205-1810. Persons with mobility impairments who will need special assistance in gaining access to the Commission should contact the Office of the Secretary at 202-205-2000.

By order of the Commission.

Issued: November 16, 2006.

Marilyn R. Abbott,

Secretary to the Commission.

[FR Doc. E6-19765 Filed 11-21-06; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7020-02-P

INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION

[USITC SE-06-058]

Sunshine Act Meeting Notice

AGENCY HOLDING THE MEETING: United States International Trade Commission.

TIME AND DATE: December 4, 2006 at 2 p.m.

PLACE: Room 101, 500 E Street, SW., Washington, DC 20436, Telephone: (202) 205-2000.

STATUS: Open to the public.

MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED:

1. Agenda for future meetings: none.
 2. Minutes.
 3. Ratification List.
 4. Inv. Nos. 731-TA-678, 679, 681, and 682 (Second Review)(Stainless Steel Bar from Brazil, India, Japan, and Spain)—briefing and vote. (The Commission is currently scheduled to transmit its determination and Commissioners' opinions to the Secretary of Commerce on or before December 15, 2006.)
 5. Outstanding action jackets: none.
- In accordance with Commission policy, subject matter listed above, not disposed of at the scheduled meeting, may be carried over to the agenda of the following meeting.

Issued: November 20, 2006.

By order of the Commission.

Marilyn R. Abbott,

Secretary to the Commission.

[FR Doc. 06-9375 Filed 11-20-06; 12:03 pm]

BILLING CODE 7020-02-P

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Notice of Filing of Proposed Stipulation by the United States To Resolve Certain Alleged Violations of a Clean Air Act Consent Decree With Alcoa, Inc.

Notice is hereby given that on November 15, 2006, the United States filed with the United States District Court for the Western District of Texas, in Cast No. A-03-CA-222-SS, a motion for judicial approval of a stipulation that it has entered into with Defendant Alcoa Inc. ("Alcoa") and Intervenor-Defendant TXU Sandow Development Company LP ("TXU Sandow") to resolve certain alleged violations of the Consent Decree in this action. The specific alleged violations addressed by the stipulation relate to Alcoa's failure to commence construction of one or more new units (the "Replacement Sandow Units") to replace the three existing electricity generating units (the "Existing Sandow Units") at Alcoa's Rockdale, Texas, facility by April 25, 2005; and Alcoa's anticipated failure to commence operation of the new replacement units by April 25, 2007. The relief provided by the stipulation is set forth in a proposed order ("Stipulated Order") that the United States tendered with its

motion. This Stipulated Order provides for, among other things:

- Payment of \$859,000 in stipulated penalties as part of the resolution of Alcoa's anticipated failure to commence timely operation of the Replacement Sandow Units by April 25, 2007;
- Shutdown of the three Existing Sandow Units by December 31, 2006, roughly four months earlier than required by the consent decree;
- A commitment by Alcoa and TXU Sandow to commence operation of the Replacement Sandow Unit with full emission controls by no later than August 31, 2009;
- A commitment by Alcoa and TXU Sandow to achieve an emission rate for NO_x at the Replacement Sandow Unit that is 20% lower than the rate currently provided for in the Consent Decree; and
- A commitment by TXU Sandow to install selective catalytic reduction system ("SCR") to eliminate most of the remaining NO_x emissions from Sandow Unit 4—a unit not previously addressed by the consent decree.

The Stipulated Order also provides for the addition of TXU Sandow as a party to the Consent Decree, jointly and severally liable with Alcoa for the obligations pertaining to the Replacement Sandow Unit, and solely liable for the obligations pertaining to the SCR at Sandow Unit 4.

The Department of Justice will receive for a period of twenty (20) days from the date of this publication comments relating to the proposed Stipulated Order. Comments should be addressed to the Assistant Attorney General, Environment and Natural Resources Division, P.O. Box 7611, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC 20044-7611, and should refer to *United States v. Alcoa Inc., D.J. Ref. No. 90-5-2-1-07723/1*.

The United States' Motion for Approval of Stipulation to Resolve Certain Alleged Violations of Consent Decree, including the proposed Stipulated Order, may be examined at the Office of the United States Attorney, Western District of Texas, 816 Congress Avenue, Suite 1000, Austin, Texas 78701, and at U.S. EPA Region VI, 1445 Ross Avenue, Dallas, TX 75202-2733. During the public comment period, the Motion and Stipulated Order may also be examined on the following Department of Justice Web site, http://www.usdoj.gov/enrd/Consent_Decrees.html. In addition, a copy of the proposed Stipulated Order may also be obtained by faxing or e-mailing a request to Tonia Fleetwood (tonia.fleetwood@usdoj.gov), fax no. (202) 514-0097, phone confirmation number (202) 514-1547. In requesting a