

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1904

April 19, 2013

President Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

One of your top priorities put forth in your State of the Union address is making America a magnet for new jobs and manufacturing. You identified Caterpillar and Ford Motor Company as American job creators, and you announced that Apple will soon be manufacturing Mac computers in the United States.

We share your goal of encouraging manufacturers to create jobs here in America. We hope you will add domestic footwear manufacturers to this list of companies that are creating new American manufacturing jobs and would agree with us that they should not face unnecessary barriers in doing so. We can increase American footwear manufacturing jobs at no cost to the federal government simply by your directing the Department of Defense (DoD) to align its athletic footwear procurement policies to those it has already adopted for other footwear, such as combat boots, service shoes, and other uniform items.

Let us give you some background on this issue. Since October 2012, the Defense Logistics Agency has awarded more than \$36 million in domestic footwear manufacturing contracts to companies such as Altama Footwear, Capps Shoe Company, Rocky Brands, and Wolverine for combat boots and men's and women's shoes. In contrast, the Army, Navy, and Air Force provide cash vouchers to new recruits to purchase athletic footwear, without any preference for domestically manufactured products. Given that DoD purchases American-made combat boots, service shoes, and nearly every other uniform type in bulk for initial entry recruits, the DoD should also purchase athletic footwear made here in the United States for our troops.

We expect DoD officials will soon visit one of the premier domestic athletic shoe manufacturers to see first-hand that the domestic capacity exists to produce high-quality athletic shoes at a cost comparable to what we are already allocating to our service members for such footwear. We are sure they will be impressed by the skill and workmanship of our domestic footwear manufacturers. American workers can meet the footwear requirements of nearly all our service members if you simply give them this opportunity. We urge you to insist that the



footwear worn by our troops is top quality and made in America in keeping with the intent of the law known as the "Berry Amendment."

Thank you for your attention to this request, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Susan M. Collins
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Jack Reed
United States Senator



Lindsey Graham
United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Roy Blunt
United States Senator



John Boozman
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



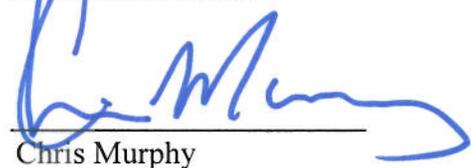
Kelly Ayotte
United States Senator


Angus S. King
United States Senator


Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator


William M. Cowan
United States Senator


Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator


Chris Murphy
United States Senator