

News from U.S. Rep. John Spratt (D-SC)
Assistant to the Democratic Leader
Ranking Member, Committee on the Budget
U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C.
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Spratt Criticizes Bush Plan to Lift Tariffs on Textile Imports

WASHINGTON -- U.S. Rep. John Spratt (D-SC) today sharply criticized the Bush Administration for offering this week to lift all tariffs on textile and apparel imports coming from countries in North and South America.

“This proposal by the Bush Administration would deal a stunning blow to the American textile industry and the thousands of Americans it employs,” said Spratt. “If our tariffs on imports from Latin America are removed, the floodgates will be opened to imports.”

Spratt said current tariffs on imports from Latin America range from 12 to 17 percent.

“The United States has the largest trade deficit in our history, and the largest trade deficit in the world. A sizeable share of it comes from the trade deficit in textile and apparel goods. Americans buy some \$60 billion more in textile and clothing goods than foreigners buy from us. Yet the Bush Administration offers to give away even more of our market and more of our textile jobs.” Spratt said.

In 2001, 146,000 U.S. textile jobs were lost, while imports to the U.S. of yarn and fabric from countries like China jumped 20% in 2002.

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