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7020-02

INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION

[Investigation No. 332-503]

Earned Import Allowance Program: Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the Program

for Certain Apparel from the Dominican Republic, Ninth Annual Review

AGENCY: United States International Trade Commission.

ACTION: Notice of opportunity to provide written comments in connection with the Commission's ninth annual review.

SUMMARY: The U.S. International Trade Commission (Commission) has announced its schedule, including deadlines for filing written submissions, in connection with preparing a report on its ninth annual review in investigation No. 332-503, *Earned Import Allowance Program: Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the Program for Certain Apparel from the Dominican Republic, Ninth Annual Review*.

DATES:

April 30, 2018: Deadline for filing written submissions.

August 3, 2018: Transmittal of ninth report to House Committee on Ways and Means and Senate Committee on Finance.

ADDRESSES: All Commission offices, including the Commission's hearing rooms, are located in the United States International Trade Commission Building, 500 E Street SW, Washington, DC. All written submissions, including statements, and briefs, should be addressed to the Secretary, United States International Trade Commission, 500 E Street SW, Washington, DC 20436. The public file for this investigation may be viewed on the Commission's electronic docket (EDIS) at <http://edis.usitc.gov>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Project Leader Mary Roop (202-708-2277 or *mary.roop@usitc.gov*) for information specific to this investigation. For information on the legal aspects of this investigation, contact William Gearhart of the Commission's Office of the General Counsel (202-205-3091 or *william.gearhart@usitc.gov*). The media should contact Margaret O'Laughlin, Office of External Relations (202-205-1819 or *margaret.olauthlin@usitc.gov*). Hearing-impaired individuals may obtain information on this matter by contacting the Commission's TDD terminal at 202-205-1810. General information concerning the Commission may also be obtained by accessing its website (*http://www.usitc.gov*). 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.

BACKGROUND: Section 404 of the Dominican Republic-Central America-United States Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act (DR-CAFTA Act) (19 U.S.C. 4112) required the Secretary of Commerce to establish an Earned Import Allowance Program (EIAP) and directed the Commission to conduct annual reviews of the program to evaluate its effectiveness and make recommendations for improvements. Section 404 of the DR-CAFTA Act authorizes certain apparel articles wholly assembled in an eligible country to enter the United States free of duty if accompanied by a certificate that shows evidence of the purchase of certain U.S. fabric. The term "eligible country" is defined to mean the Dominican Republic. More specifically, the program allows producers (in the Dominican Republic) that purchase a certain quantity of qualifying U.S. fabric to produce certain cotton bottoms in the Dominican Republic to receive a credit that can be used to ship a certain quantity of eligible apparel using third-country fabrics from the Dominican Republic to the United States free of duty.

Section 404(d) directs the Commission to conduct an annual review of the program to evaluate the effectiveness of the program and make recommendations for improvements. The Commission is required to submit its reports containing the results of its reviews to the House Committee on Ways and Means and the Senate Committee on Finance. Copies of the Commission's prior reports are available on

the Commission's website at www.usitc.gov, including the eighth annual report, which was published on September 28, 2017 (ITC Publication 4730). The Commission expects to submit its report on its ninth annual review by August 3, 2018.

The Commission instituted this investigation pursuant to section 332(g) of the Tariff Act of 1930 to facilitate docketing of submissions and also to facilitate public access to Commission records through the Commission's EDIS electronic records system. The Commission published notice of institution of this investigation in the Federal Register on April 29, 2009 (47 FR 19592), and published notice of the Commission's invitation to submit information in connection with the eighth annual report in the Federal Register on May 1, 2017 (82 FR 20375).

WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS: Interested parties are invited to file written submissions concerning this ninth annual review. All written submissions should be addressed to the Secretary, and all such submissions should be received no later than 5:15 pm, April 30, 2018. All written submissions must conform to the provisions of section 201.8 of the *Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure* (19 C.F.R. 201.8). Section 201.8 and the Commission's Handbook on Filing Procedures require that interested parties file documents electronically on or before the filing deadline and submit eight (8) true paper copies by 12:00 p.m. eastern time on the next business day. If confidential treatment of a document is requested, interested parties must file, at the same time as the eight paper copies, at least four (4) additional true paper copies in which the confidential information must be deleted (see the following paragraphs for further information regarding confidential business information). Persons with questions regarding electronic filing should contact the Office of the Secretary, Docket Services Division (202-205-1802).

CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS INFORMATION. Any submissions that contain confidential business information must also conform to the requirements of section 201.6 of the Commission's *Rules of Practice and Procedure* (19 C.F.R. 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 "non-

confidential" version, and that the confidential business information is clearly identified by means of brackets. All written submissions, except for confidential business information, will be made available for inspection by interested parties.

The Commission will not include any confidential business information in the report that it sends to the Committees or makes available to the public. However, all information, including confidential business information, submitted in this investigation may be disclosed to and used: (i) by the Commission, its employees and offices, and contract personnel (a) for developing or maintaining the records of this or a related proceeding, or (b) in internal investigations, audits, reviews, and evaluations relating to the programs, personnel, and operations of the Commission including under 5 U.S.C. Appendix 3; or (ii) by U.S. government employees and contract personnel for cybersecurity purposes. The Commission will not otherwise disclose any confidential business information in a manner that would reveal the operations of the firm supplying the information.

SUMMARY OF WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS: The Commission intends to publish a summary of the written submissions of interested persons in an appendix to its report. Persons wishing to have a summary of their position included in the appendix should include a summary with their written submission. The summary may not exceed 500 words, should be in MSWord format or a format that can be easily converted to MSWord, and should not include any confidential business information. The summary will be published as provided if it meets these requirements and is germane to the subject matter of the investigation. In the appendix the Commission will identify the name of the organization furnishing the summary, and will include a link to the Commission's Electronic Document Information System (EDIS) where the full written submission can be found.

By order of the Commission.

Issued: February 27, 2018.

**Lisa R. Barton,
Secretary to the Commission.**

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