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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
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HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

CONSERVATION, RESEARCH,
AND BIOTECHNOLOGY;
GENERAL FARM COMMODITIES,
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COMMODITY MARKETS, DIGITAL ASSETS,
AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

RANKING MEMBER
TECHNOLOGY MODERNIZATION

April 15, 2026

The Honorable Mike Rogers
Chairman
House Armed Services Committee
2216 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Adam Smith
Ranking Member
House Armed Services Committee
2216 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Chairman Rogers and Ranking Member Smith,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony before the House Armed Services Committee as part of the Fiscal Year 2027 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) Member Day.

I am here today to advocate for a bipartisan initiative that directly impacts the safety of our service members, securing our nation's defense supply chains, and the resilience of American manufacturing.

Crafted in partnership with House Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Bost and Congressman Jared Golden, this provision has two primary objectives. First, it directs the Department of Defense to ensure the Army issues regulations requiring all boots to be Berry Amendment-compliant. Our troops deserve the best quality military equipment and uniforms to support the rigors of training and deployment. Second, this provision strengthens our domestic industrial base by requiring that these boots be American-made and American-sourced.

Over the past several years, we have seen a concerning influx of poorly made, non-Berry-compliant, and foreign-sourced footwear available to the United States Army. Army Regulation 670-1 was designed to ensure that garments and equipment worn by our soldiers meet rigorous performance and quality standards, and to make sure equipment could withstand severe conditions.

However, over time, the market for Army soldier footwear has been taken over by foreign manufacturers, to the point where much of the Army footwear we see today meet the appearance standards of AR-670-1 design but do not meet the performance or quality standards. This means current Army uniform regulations allow soldiers to purchase foreign-made combat boots that pose a significant safety threat to them and their fellow soldiers.

In crafting this language, we have worked with stakeholders and members of both the House and Senate Armed Services Committees to ensure seamless implementation. A two-year on-ramp ensures domestic manufacturers have time to optimize their operational capacity to meet demand. The language also includes an exemption for servicemembers who have been deployed overseas in a combat zone. These provisions will ensure that both domestic manufacturers and our armed services are able to successfully navigate this transition with as few obstacles as possible for both Department leadership and our servicemen and women.

In addition to safety, this is also a critical matter of national security. Relying on a strategic competitor like China for a key component of our defense supply chain has the serious and troubling potential to hinder our military readiness and warfighting capabilities. Recent global conflicts, particularly in the Middle East, have underscored the fragility of international logistics.

I want to thank the members of the House Armed Services Committee, Chairman Rogers, and Ranking Member Smith for including this language in the House passed versions of the Fiscal Year 2025 and Fiscal Year 2026 NDAs. While I was disappointed that this language did not reach the President's desk in previous years, I was encouraged by the strong bipartisan support it received in our chamber.

Finally, I want to thank Congressmen Bost and Golden for their partnership on this important provision, and I ask that the Committee support its inclusion and passage in this year's National Defense Authorization Act.

Thank you again for the opportunity to submit testimony, and I look forward to working with you on these important issues.

Sincerely,



Nikki Budzinski
Member of Congress