

“MAKE IT IN MAINE” AGENDA

Promote “Made in the U.S.A.” products

Military Footwear: According to the Berry Amendment, the Department of Defense (DOD) cannot procure clothing items unless they are produced in the United States. Congress first established this domestic preference for DOD procurement in 1941, and for decades the military branches complied by issuing American-made uniforms, including athletic footwear, for our troops. In recent years, however, DOD has circumvented this policy by issuing cash allowances to soldiers for their own purchase of training shoes. To correct this, Mike introduced the “American Shoes for American Servicemembers Act” to clarify what is already in current law: that the Berry Amendment covers footwear. This commonsense legislation makes congressional intent explicit and ensures that all components of our troops’ uniforms, including their physical training uniforms, are made in the U.S.A. Maine companies that still make footwear in our state will benefit from this bill passing.

Footwear Tariffs: Mike has led the charge in Congress to maintain footwear tariffs in the Trans-Pacific Partnership, an agreement that includes Vietnam and eight other countries. Even with our footwear tariffs, Vietnam is the world’s second largest footwear exporter to the U.S. This is largely because Vietnam has a history of currency manipulation and a strong presence of state-owned enterprises in their country, including in the footwear sector, which make it impossible for U.S. manufacturers to compete on a level playing field. Mike arranged a meeting between USTR Ron Kirk, the lead U.S. trade negotiator, and New Balance workers when they travelled to Washington, D.C. to support preserving the tariffs. Kirk, as a result of an invitation by Michaud, will be visiting the New Balance factory in Skowhegan in the next few weeks to see firsthand why tariffs are so important and what these footwear jobs mean to Maine communities.

Buy America Improvements: Mike is working on a bill that would tighten loopholes that allow the Department of Transportation (DOT) to issue long-term waivers from Buy America requirements. Some of these waivers have been on the books since the 1980s and have not been recently reviewed to see if there’s an American company that can supply the products. Mike’s bill would require DOT to reevaluate these waivers by seeking public comment from U.S. manufacturers to determine if the products covered can be found in the U.S. The bill would also increase DOT outreach to U.S. companies to let them know about the potential opportunity should they choose to make the needed goods here at home. By reviewing these waivers, Mike’s bill would make sure taxpayer dollars are spent on American companies whenever possible.

Improve Trade Enforcement

China Currency Manipulation: Mike is continuing to press for action to combat China’s currency manipulation. He introduced a bipartisan bill that would crack down on China’s action and is now working on new legislation that would require an objective analysis of China’s exchange rate. Year after year the U.S. Treasury Department fails to label China a currency manipulator. It’s time there was another review of Beijing’s undervalued currency and its impact on American companies. Mike’s bill would ensure that Congress receives an independent assessment of China’s currency manipulation to guide their legislative efforts to address it.

Trans-Pacific Partnership: Mike is fighting to include provisions in the Trans-Pacific Partnership that will protect U.S. companies from currency manipulation and state-owned enterprises in China and Vietnam. Mike has sent multiple letters and met with numerous members of the Administration to explain why these provisions are needed and how they will help American companies compete on a more level playing field.

Russia WTO Membership: Mike introduced the “Russian World Trade Organization (WTO) Commitments Verification Act,” which would increase the reporting and transparency requirements of Russia’s membership in the WTO. China has not fulfilled the promises it made upon joining the WTO in 2001, and American businesses have suffered as a result. Mike’s bill would require the U.S. Trade Representative to identify all of Russia’s commitments,

provide status updates on these commitments, and indicate whether or not they have taken action to increase compliance. This legislation will help Congress monitor Russia's WTO membership and ensure that Moscow plays by the rules.

Taxes

IRS Regulations: Mike introduced the "IRS Rulemaking Fairness Act," a bipartisan bill that would require the IRS to analyze the effect of new tax regulations on small businesses and manufactures. It would add the IRS to the list of agencies required to certify that a proposed rule will not have a significant impact on small businesses.

On-shoring Tax Credit: Mike also supported the "Bring Jobs Home Act," which would provide a 20 percent tax credit that U.S. businesses can use against their overall tax liability for costs associated with moving a production line, trade, or business located outside the country, back to the United States. The legislation also closes loopholes for shipping jobs overseas by disallowing the deduction companies can currently take for the costs associated with outsourcing. Especially at a time when our economy is still recovering, we need to encourage businesses to move their operations back home. This legislation would incentivize them to do so.

Improving Trade Remedies

GPX Case: Mike led the effort urging House leaders to consider legislation preserving the Commerce Department's ability to impose duties on illegally subsidized goods from nonmarket economies like China and Vietnam. A recent court case found that U.S. statute did not explicitly allow Commerce to impose both anti-dumping duties and countervailing duties on goods from nonmarket economies. Without legislation, this court case would have overturned the duties already in place. Thankfully, this legislation passed Congress and was signed into law. As a result, the duties applied to Chinese and Indonesia coated paper imports remained in place and continue to level the playing field for Maine's paper companies. Some mills in Maine were even able to hire workers back as a result of these duties.

Accessibility: Mike is currently working on legislation to enhance the accessibility of trade remedies to medium and small businesses throughout the country. Right now it is too costly and too complicated for Maine's small manufacturers to pursue action in response to trade violations that make it harder for them to compete. Mike's legislative solution will help small and medium enterprises access the same tools used by large companies to address trade violations from their foreign competitors.

Increase Exports

Export-Import Bank: Mike led a bipartisan effort to pass a law reauthorizing the Export-Import Bank before it hit its lending limit. The bank provides export financing to American companies to help them ship their products overseas. Since 2007 more than \$250 million of export sales by Maine companies have been supported by the bank's financing. In addition to reauthorizing the bank, Mike wants to increase the number of Maine businesses that take advantage of its services.

Address Workforce Needs

Job Fair: One of the challenges Mike heard most on last year's manufacturing tour was the need to find skilled workers. The manufacturing survey he conducted last year also indicated that Maine manufacturers would like to hire veterans. In response, Mike hosted a manufacturing and veterans job fair in Bangor in May to try to connect veterans with potential employers. Some of the veterans that attended the event said it was the best job fair they had been to because they could have in-depth conversations with hiring companies. Mike plans to host more of these events around the state as a way to address the workforce needs of Maine manufacturers and the unemployment rate of our veterans.