

UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION
Washington, DC 20436

MEMORANDUM TO THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ON PROPOSED TARIFF LEGISLATION ¹

[Date approved: January 14, 2000]²

Bill No.: H.R. 2197; 106th Congress

Introduced by: Mr. SHAYS

Similar and/or related³ bills: None

Summary of the bill:⁴

The bill would suspend the general rate of duty⁵ on--

Slide fasteners fitted with polished edge chain scoops of base metal

Effective: The 15th day after the date of enactment.

Through: December 31, 2002.

Retroactive effect: None.

– THE PROPONENT AND THE IMPORTED PRODUCT –

The proponent firm/organization(s)

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location contacted</u>	<u>Date Contacted</u>	<u>Written Response (Y/N)</u> ⁶
RiRi USA	New York, N.Y.	09/09/99	Y
RiRi (foreign production):	Mendrisio, Switzerland Milano, Italy		N

¹ International trade analyst: Michelle Vaca-Senecal (202-205-3356); attorney: Jan Summers (202-205-2605).

² Access to an electronic copy of this memorandum is available at <http://www.usitc.gov/billrpts.htm>. Access to a paper copy is available at the Commission's Law Library (202-205-3287) or at the Commission's Main Library (202-205-2630).

³ "Similar bills" are bills in the other House, in the current Congress, which address, at least in part, the substance of this bill. "Related bills" are bills in the **same** House, in the current Congress, but which are either earlier (or later) in time than the bill which is the subject of this memorandum.

⁴ The product nomenclature is as set forth in the bill. See technical comments for differences in recommended nomenclature.

⁵ See appendix A for definitions of tariff and trade agreement terms.

⁶ Written responses are included in appendix C.

Ghurka (U.S. firm, purchases from RiRi USA)	Norwalk, Ct.	09/09/99	Y
Dooney & Bourke (U.S. firm, purchases from RiRi USA)	Norwalk, Ct.	09/09/99	Y

Location of the proponent’s U.S. facility (if different from above): n/a

The imported product

Description and uses of the imported product:

Slide fasteners (zippers) consist of tape made from textile material onto which teeth are attached; the teeth of the zipper comprise individual “scoops” made of metal or plastic material. These teeth are stamped or die-cast onto the tape, or comprise continuous filament coils of plastic materials that are sewn onto the interior edges of the tape. Zipper tape with the teeth attached is called “chain.” Zippers also have sliders, as well as top and bottom stops. Sliders consist of bodies (sometimes with a locking mechanism) and pulls. Pulling the slider up will engage the teeth of the zipper and close an opening in a garment, bag, or other article, while pulling the slider in the opposite direction will unlock the teeth.

The subject zippers are described as having polished-edge chain scoops of base metal. The chain scoops on these slide fasteners are made of tombac, the highest grade brass alloy. The scoops are washed, sanded, polished, finished, and electroplated, and are then applied individually to the tape. According to RiRi USA, the company that provides the imported zippers, the latter come in a variety of finishes including sterling silver, gold, copper, and titanium. The tape used in these slide fasteners is 100 percent woven polyester, and the teeth are from natural zinc. The sliders are zinc and are die cast in one piece, then polished, bonderized, or electroplated. The pulls are made from stainless steel.⁷ Polished-edge zippers are reportedly of high quality and are more expensive to manufacture than other metal zippers. They are mainly used in quality fine leather handbags and wallets, and in a variety of leather accessories.

Country of origin of the imported product: Switzerland, Italy, and Japan.

– EFFECT ON CUSTOMS REVENUE –

[Note: This section is divided in two parts. The first part addresses the effect on customs revenue based on the duty rate for the HTS number(s) set out in the bill. The second part addresses the effect on customs revenue based on the duty rate for the HTS number recommended by the Commission (where a different number has been recommended). Five year estimates are given for permanent amendments to the HTS. If the indicated duty rate is subject to “staging” during the five-year period, the rate for each period will be stated separately.]

⁷ Physical description provided from written submission by RiRi USA, appendix C.

HTS Number in the Bill

Estimated value of dutiable imports during the duration of the duty suspension:

<u>First year</u>	<u>Second year</u>	<u>Third year</u>
\$983,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,019,000

HTS (8-digit) No. used in the bill: 9607.11.00

General rate of duty⁸ (AVE) currently in effect for this HTS No.: 10 percent ad valorem (not scheduled for further reduction)

Calculated customs revenue loss (based on rate for the HTS number in the bill):

<u>First year</u>	<u>Second year</u>	<u>Third year</u>
\$98,300	\$100,000	\$101,900

HTS Number Recommended by the Commission⁹

Estimated value of dutiable imports during the duration of the duty suspension:

<u>First year</u>	<u>Second year</u>	<u>Third year</u>
n/a	n/a	n/a

HTS (8-digit) No. recommended by the Commission (where different): None.

General rate of duty¹⁰ (AVE) currently in effect for this HTS No.: n/a

Calculated customs revenue loss (based on rate for the Commission's HTS number):

<u>First year</u>	<u>Second year</u>	<u>Third year</u>
n/a	n/a	n/a

⁸ See appendix B for column 1-special and column 2 duty rates.

⁹ If a different HTS number is recommended, see technical comments.

¹⁰ See appendix B for column 1-special and column 2 duty rates.

– CONTACTS WITH OTHER FIRMS/ORGANIZATIONS –

Following is a list of contacts by the Commission in connection with this memorandum with firms or organizations **other than** the proponents.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Date Contacted</u>	<u>Written Response (Y/N)</u> ¹¹
YKK (USA)	Marietta, Georgia	09/15/99	Y
<i>U.S. companies supplied by RiRi USA:</i>			
YEHOLE	New York, NY	09/23/99	Y
Mulholland Brothers	San Francisco, CA	09/23/99	Y
Rick Burrell.& Assoc.	Loganville, CA	09/23/99	Y
Material Source	Portland, OR	09/23/99	Y
Fasten*ation	Newbury Park, CA	09/23/99	Y
White Mountain Stitching Co.	Littleton, NH	09/23/99	Y
Bogner	Newport, VT.	09/23/99	Y
Milwaukee Motorcycle Clothing Co.	Scottsdale, AZ	09/23/99	Y
M. Miller	Boston, MA.	09/23/99	Y

– THE DOMESTIC INDUSTRY –

*[Note: This section is divided in two parts. The first part lists written submissions received by the Commission which assert that **the imported product itself** is produced in the United States and freely offered for sale under standard commercial terms. The second part lists written submissions received by the Commission which assert that (1) the imported product will be produced in the United States in the future; or (2) another product which **may compete** with the imported product is (or will be) produced in the United States and freely offered for sale under standard commercial terms. All submissions received by the Commission prior to approval of this report will be included in appendix D. The Commission cannot, in the context of this memorandum, make any statement concerning the validity of these claims.]*

Statements concerning current U.S. production

<u>Name of Product</u>	<u>Name of Firm</u>	<u>Location of U.S. Production Facility</u>	<u>Date Received</u>
n/a			

Statements concerning “future” or “competitive” U.S. production

<u>Name of Product</u>	<u>Name of Firm</u>	<u>Location of U.S. Production Facility</u>	<u>Date Received</u>
Polished-edge slide fasteners	YKK (USA)	Macon, Georgia	09/15/99 09/24/99

¹¹ Written responses are included in appendix D.

– TECHNICAL COMMENTS –

Recommended changes to the nomenclature in the bill:

It is suggested that a hyphen be inserted before “edge” so that the compound word can appear as “polished-edge”.

Recommended changes to any C.A.S. numbers in the bill (if given): None.

Recommended changes to any Color Index names in the bill (if given): None.

Basis for recommended changes to the HTS number used in the bill: n/a

Other technical comments (if any):

The National Import Specialist (NIS) at the U.S. Customs Service responsible for apparel fasteners indicated that the proposed tariff provision would be very difficult (if not impossible) to administer.¹² The NIS noted that there is little visual difference between a genuine polished-edge zipper and a metal zipper that has had a buffing wheel applied to its teeth for a polishing effect. The NIS expressed concern that the difficulty in distinguishing between polished-edge and other metal zippers would invite importers of other zippers to claim the duty suspension (which could involve customs fraud and affect conditions of competition). The NIS indicated that substantial added time and costs would be anticipated for the U.S. Customs Service to differentiate polished-edge slide fasteners from other metal zippers.

¹² Ms. Alice Masterson, National Import Specialist, U.S. Customs Service, Sept. 24, 1999.

APPENDIX A

TARIFF AND TRADE AGREEMENT TERMS

In the **Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States** (HTS), chapters 1 through 97 cover all goods in trade and incorporate in the tariff nomenclature the internationally adopted Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System through the 6-digit level of product description. Subordinate 8-digit product subdivisions, either enacted by Congress or proclaimed by the President, allow more narrowly applicable duty rates; 10-digit administrative statistical reporting numbers provide data of national interest. Chapters 98 and 99 contain special U.S. classifications and temporary rate provisions, respectively. The HTS replaced the **Tariff Schedules of the United States** (TSUS) effective January 1, 1989.

Duty rates in the **general** subcolumn of HTS column 1 are most-favored-nation (now referred to as normal trade relations) rates, many of which have been eliminated or are being reduced as concessions resulting from the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations. Column 1-general duty rates apply to all countries except those listed in HTS general note 3(b) (Afghanistan, Cuba, Laos, North Korea, and Vietnam), which are subject to the statutory rates set forth in **column 2**. Specified goods from designated general-rate countries may be eligible for reduced rates of duty or for duty-free entry under one or more preferential tariff programs. Such tariff treatment is set forth in the **special** subcolumn of HTS rate of duty column 1 or in the general notes. If eligibility for special tariff rates is not claimed or established, goods are dutiable at column 1-general rates. The HTS does not enumerate those countries as to which a total or partial embargo has been declared.

The **Generalized System of Preferences** (GSP) affords nonreciprocal tariff preferences to developing countries to aid their economic development and to diversify and expand their production and exports. The U.S. GSP, enacted in title V of the Trade Act of 1974 for 10 years and extended several times thereafter, applies to merchandise imported on or after January 1, 1976 and before the close of June 30, 1999. Indicated by the symbol "A", "A*", or "A+" in the special subcolumn, the GSP provides duty-free entry to eligible articles the product of and imported directly from designated beneficiary developing countries, as set forth in general note 4 to the HTS.

The **Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act** (CBERA) affords nonreciprocal tariff preferences to developing countries in the Caribbean Basin area to aid their economic development and to diversify and expand their production and exports. The CBERA, enacted in title II of Public Law 98-67, implemented by Presidential Proclamation 5133 of November 30, 1983, and amended by the Customs and Trade Act of 1990, applies to merchandise entered, or withdrawn from warehouse for consumption, on or after January 1, 1984. Indicated by the symbol "E" or "E*" in the special subcolumn, the CBERA provides duty-free entry to eligible articles, and reduced-duty treatment to certain other articles, which are the product of and imported directly from designated countries, as set forth in general note 7 to the HTS.

Free rates of duty in the special subcolumn followed by the symbol "IL" are applicable to products of Israel under the **United States-Israel Free Trade Area Implementation Act** of 1985 (IFTA), as provided in general note 8 to the HTS.

Preferential nonreciprocal duty-free or reduced-duty treatment in the special subcolumn followed by the symbol "J" or "J*" in parentheses is afforded to eligible articles the product of designated beneficiary countries under the **Andean Trade Preference Act** (ATPA), enacted as title II of Public Law 102-182 and implemented by Presidential Proclamation 6455 of July 2, 1992 (effective July 22, 1992), as set forth in general note 11 to the HTS.

Preferential free rates of duty in the special subcolumn followed by the symbol "CA" are applicable to eligible goods of Canada, and rates followed by the symbol "MX" are applicable to eligible goods of Mexico, under the **North American Free Trade Agreement**, as provided in general note 12 to the HTS and implemented effective January 1, 1994 by Presidential Proclamation 6641 of December 15, 1993. Goods must originate in the NAFTA region under rules set forth in general note 12(t) and meet other requirements of the note and applicable regulations.

Other special tariff treatment applies to particular products of insular possessions (general note 3(a)(iv)), products of the West Bank and Gaza Strip (general note 3(a)(v)), goods covered by the Automotive Products Trade Act (APTA) (general note 5) and the Agreement on Trade in Civil Aircraft (ATCA) (general note 6), articles imported from freely associated states (general note 10), pharmaceutical products (general note 13), and intermediate chemicals for dyes (general note 14).

The **General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade 1994** (GATT 1994), pursuant to the Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization, is based upon the earlier GATT 1947 (61 Stat. (pt. 5) A58; 8 UST (pt. 2) 1786) as the primary multilateral system of disciplines and principles governing international trade. Signatories' obligations under both the 1994 and 1947 agreements focus upon most-favored-nation treatment, the maintenance of scheduled concession rates of duty, and national treatment for imported products; the GATT also provides the legal framework for customs valuation standards, "escape clause" (emergency) actions, antidumping and countervailing duties, dispute settlement, and other measures. The results of the Uruguay Round of multilateral tariff negotiations are set forth by way of separate schedules of concessions for each participating contracting party, with the U.S. schedule designated as Schedule XX. Pursuant to the **Agreement on Textiles and Clothing** (ATC) of the GATT 1994, member countries are phasing out restrictions on imports under the prior "Arrangement Regarding International Trade in Textiles" (known as the **Multifiber Arrangement** (MFA)). Under the MFA, which was a departure from GATT 1947 provisions, importing and exporting countries negotiated bilateral agreements limiting textile and apparel shipments, and importing countries could take unilateral action in the absence or violation of an agreement. Quantitative limits had been established on imported textiles and apparel of cotton, other vegetable fibers, wool, man-made fibers or silk blends in an effort to prevent or limit market disruption in the importing countries. The ATC establishes notification and safeguard procedures, along with other rules concerning the customs treatment of textile and apparel shipments, and calls for the eventual complete integration of this sector into the GATT 1994 over a ten-year period, or by Jan. 1, 2005.

Rev. 10/26/98

APPENDIX B

**SELECTED PORTIONS OF THE
HARMONIZED TARIFF SCHEDULE OF THE UNITED STATES**

[Note: Appendix may not be included in the electronic version of this memorandum.]

APPENDIX C

STATEMENTS SUBMITTED BY THE PROPONENTS

[Note: Appendix C may not be included in the electronic version of this memorandum posted on the Commission's web site if an electronic copy of the statement was not received by the Commission.]

APPENDIX D

STATEMENTS SUBMITTED BY OTHER FIRMS/ORGANIZATIONS

[Note: Appendix D may not be included in the electronic version of this memorandum posted on the Commission's web site if an electronic copy of the statement was not received by the Commission.]

106TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2197

To suspend temporarily the duty on slide fasteners fitted with polished edge chain scoops of base metal.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 14, 1999

Mr. SHAYS introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Ways and Means

A BILL

To suspend temporarily the duty on slide fasteners fitted with polished edge chain scoops of base metal.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF DUTY.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 99 of
5 the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States is
6 amended by inserting in numerical sequence the following
7 new heading:

“	9902.96.01	Slide fasteners fitted with polished edge chain scoops of base metal (provided for in subheading 9607.11.00)	Free	Free	No change	On or before 12/31/2002	”.
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1 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by
2 subsection (a) applies with respect to goods entered, or
3 withdrawn from warehouse for consumption, on or after
4 the 15th day after the date of the enactment of this Act.

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