

## Blog: Now's the Time

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Last month, the president of the Home Fashion Products Association ([HFPA](#)) travelled to Washington to testify against the Trump Administration proposal to levy 25% tariffs on \$300 billion worth of Chinese imports, including home textiles.

It takes effort to get a seat at the table for these hearings. Trade organizations and individual companies wanting to speak out on the subject, whether pro or con, had to make a case in advance. HFPA is one of the 350 chosen.

In preparation for the visit, the HFPA also worked with individual member companies eager to submit comments on their own to the US Trade Representative. In fact, as the specter of tariffs surfaced in early 2018, the HFPA's legal counsel updated members on every development — whether the tariffs involved China, Canada, Mexico or other countries.

In so doing, it has kept the entire home textiles industry informed. HTT, a long-time HFPA member, shares those alerts with our readers. If you're starting to suspect this is building up to a pitch for the HPFA, you're right.

HFPA Jeff Kaufman testified that he was representing the estimated 500 home textiles importers and producers in the US. Let's do the math: 500 companies total and roughly 130 or so with showrooms in New York. Guess how many are members of the HFPA? Forty-seven.

Non-members, of which there are obviously many, share a misperception that the organization doesn't do more than set market dates. Not true. The HFPA's regulatory bird-dogging is one of its greatest benefits to members. It also works to craft consensus industry standards for key product categories. The American Feather & Down Council (AFDA), a member/ally/division of the HFPA, actively works to flag falsely labelled product at retail in order to protect consumers and even the playing field.

The HFPA also funds scholarships for students in home product development programs and conducts industry webinars. Several of its

members host showroom tours during New York Home Fashions Market week for FIT students.

Now that 295 Fifth Avenue is on the block, the HFPA is working with tenants to ensure the continuance of a home textiles hub in New York — whether it remains in the Textiles Building or moves elsewhere.

This “little organization” does a helluva lot for the industry that mostly goes unrecognized. If its worth hadn’t been appreciated before, it certainly ought to be now. Here’s the message for those who are not among the 47 member companies: Stop free-riding. Join the HFPA.

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**Editor-in-Chief Jennifer Marks shares news and views from around the home textiles marketplace.**