



## **News Release**

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### **Workers from Phoenix Sewing eligible for federal aid**

INDIANAPOLIS (May 16, 2008) – The Indiana Department of Workforce Development today announced a ruling by the U.S. Department of Labor that former employees of Phoenix Sewing, Equity Management Group Division, in Fort Wayne are eligible to receive services under the federal Trade Adjustment Assistance program.

The TAA program, which is administered at the state level by the Indiana Department of Workforce Development, is made available to workers who are displaced due to foreign imports or shifts in production out of the country.

The federal ruling was issued on April 30, 2008 and applies to workers who became totally or partially separated from employment on or after March 18, 2007 through two years from the date of certification are eligible to apply for TAA assistance. The investigation was initiated on March 20, 2008, in response to a petition filed on behalf of workers of the facility. The workers are engaged in the production of handbags. The investigation revealed that the decline in employment and the closing of the firm is related to the increase of imports of articles like or directly competitive with handbags produced by Phoenix Sewing.

Additionally, the Department of Labor issued a certification for alternative trade adjustment assistance (ATAA) for separated older workers at Phoenix Sewing. It was found that a significant number of workers at the company age 50 or over possess skills that are not easily transferable and that competitive conditions within the industry are adverse. Older workers may choose between regular TAA benefits or a wage subsidy of 50% of the difference between their new salary and old salary, up to \$10,000.

The TAA program provides a variety of benefits and services to help unemployed workers prepare for and obtain suitable employment. Workers may be eligible for a variety of re-employment services, job search and relocation allowances and training. In addition, weekly trade re-adjustment allowances may be payable to eligible workers following the exhaustion of unemployment insurance benefits.

Eligible parties may obtain information at their local WorkOne center. A listing of all of the centers can be found at [http://www.in.gov/dwd/employers/workone\\_centers.html](http://www.in.gov/dwd/employers/workone_centers.html)