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NASHVILLE -- The Tennessee Department of Labor & Workforce Development today announced that the U.S. Department of Labor has approved a petition for Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) for the Beltex Corporation. This petition covers all workers of the company in New Tazewell who produced men's and boy's underwear.

Trade Adjustment Assistance is a program administered in Tennessee for the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) by the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development. The program offers assistance to workers whose jobs have been adversely affected by imports from foreign competitors. The certification by the USDOL applies to layoffs which began on December 20, 1999, and will remain in effect until January 26, 2003, when the petition expires.

Under the provisions of the law, TRA and NAFTA allow for retraining while workers are still receiving regular unemployment insurance benefits. Two separate 26-week periods of trade benefits may be obtained for workers while enrolled in approved training after regular unemployment insurance benefits have been exhausted. Workers who would not benefit from retraining may receive only one 26-week period of trade benefit payments. The programs also provide allowances for attempting to secure new employment in other areas and relocating to the new place of employment. Specific instructions will be provided to affected workers through their local Tennessee Department of Labor & Workforce Development office.

Claims for assistance will be taken on Wednesday, May 23, 2001, from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., and Thursday, May 24, from 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., at the Beltex Corporation, 531 Straight Creek Road in New Tazewell. The Tennessee Department of Labor & Workforce Development has sent notices to former Beltex Corporation employees informing them when they are scheduled to report.

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The Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development is an equal opportunity employer. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities

El Departamento del Trabajo y Desarrollo de la Fuerza Laboral es un organismo empresarial que aplica la igualdad de oportunidades. Los Servicios y ayudas auxiliares estan disponibles para los individuos con impedimentos si los solicitan.