
From: Ed DeVilbiss <eddevilbiss@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 24, 2016 10:06 AM
Subject: Fwd: Earmarking away options for the military

Friends,

Hopefully Trump will be our leader rather than a Democrat. The following shows why he will need lots of council and support from additional Conservative House and Senate members.
ED

If you've been shopping lately for a pair of running shoes, then you know that there's almost an endless array of choices. And that's good for consumers. Most of us find that some brands of shoes fit our feet better than others. In fact, there may even be brands that you find downright painful.

Then there's the issue of pricing. Athletic shoes can run the gamut from a decent \$50 pair, to shoes that can cost about \$200. That's why choices matter.

So, imagine if you went down to your local running store and they only stocked three types of athletic shoes, all made by the same company. Business would be great for that company, but competition and consumer choice would be nonexistent.

Well, that's exactly what our military personnel are about to face. Most branches of the military give their members an allowance to spend on choosing from an array of shoes for their physical training. But, that's about to change.

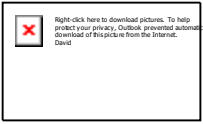
A couple of members of Congress whose **combined** Club for Growth lifetime rating is 54% – Reps. Bruce Poliquin (ME-02) and Niki Tsongas (MA-13) – found a way to bring home some pork to their districts. They inserted a provision in a military spending authorization bill that passed late last week to require that the Department of Defense buy only American-made athletic shoes. And, since only *New Balance* makes Pentagon-approved athletic shoes in the U.S., then that one company is now the beneficiary of this new government mandate. By the way, *New Balance* manufactures shoes in Maine and has its headquarters in Massachusetts.

The Defense Department says it now spends about \$17 million annually on cash allowances for athletic shoes. They estimate that the new approach will cost \$111 million, with only one model of shoe available, and \$333 million to make three models available. And this is not the government's only benefit for *New Balance*. The company has cheered for existing tariffs that add about 20% to the cost of the athletic shoes you buy that are made in Asia. *New Balance* has also opposed trade agreements which would lift those tariffs.

Four House members submitted an amendment to strip out this blatant corporate welfare, but that amendment wasn't even allowed a vote on the House floor. Our thanks go to Reps. Mark Sanford (SC-01), Dave Brat (VA-07), Mick Mulvaney (SC-05), and Tim Huelskamp (KS-01), for putting up a fight for common sense. All four are current recipients of the Club for Growth's *Defender of Economic Freedom* award, and they showed why again last week.

Obviously, the fight goes on in Washington, and this is yet another case that proves the need for more economic conservatives who are willing to stand up to corporate welfare.

Best regards,



David McIntosh
President | Club for Growth