

March 19, 2018

The Honorable Donald J. Trump  
President of the United States  
The White House  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As leading American footwear companies and brands, with hundreds of thousands of employees across the U.S., we write to express our strong concerns over reports that the Administration may consider tariff increases on footwear as a potential Section 301 remedy.

We support efforts to strengthen intellectual property protections around the world, and this has been one of the top priorities of our industry for many years. However, we reject the idea that the solution to this important issue is new hidden taxes on every American who buys and sells shoes.

U.S. footwear imports already face astronomically high tariff rates that fall disproportionately on working class individuals and families. While U.S. tariffs on all consumer goods average just 1.3 percent, they average 11 percent for footwear and reach rates as high as 67.5 percent. In 2017 alone, U.S. footwear companies and U.S. consumers paid nearly \$3 billion in these hidden taxes. This amounts to billions upon billions of dollars paid since these tariffs were first enacted in the 1930s. U.S. footwear tariffs stifle innovation and job creation and raise the cost of shoes for every American.

Adding even more tariffs on top of this heavy burden would mean higher costs for footwear consumers and fewer U.S. jobs. Given the price sensitivity of our products, any additional increases in our costs would strike right at the heart of our ability to keep product competitively priced for our consumers.

In addition, footwear is a very capital-intensive industry, with years of planning required to make sourcing decisions, and companies cannot simply move factories to adjust to these changes. Any action taken to increase duties on Chinese footwear will have an immediate and long-lasting effect on American individuals and families.

Our companies design and develop the most innovative and sought-after footwear in the world and often face challenges in protecting their designs, patents, and trade dress. We want to work with the Administration to address these challenges and ensure adequate protections for the integrity of our brands. However, increasing tariffs on U.S. companies and consumers penalizes those that are seeking relief.

On behalf of our hundreds of millions of consumers, thank you for your consideration of our views. We ask that you keep American families and workers in mind as you contemplate increasing the tax on footwear sold in the United States.

Sincerely,

Aerosoles	FN Platform/UBM	Payless ShoeSource
Allen Edmonds	Foot Petals	R.G. Barry Brands
Bates	Franco Sarto	Rack Room Shoes
BBC International	Genesco	Robert Wayne Footwear
Bionica Footwear	George Brown Bilt	Ryka
BOGS	H.H. Brown Shoe Co.	Sam Edelman
Børn Handcrafted Footwear	Harley Davidson Footwear	Saucony
Brooklyn Boot Company	Hush Puppies	Schwartz & Benjamin
Bzees	HyTest	SG Companies
Caleres	International Seaway Trading Corporation	Shoe Carnival
Carolina Footwear	Isolá Footwear	Snowden Brothers
Cat Footwear	J. Renéé	Söffft Shoe Company
Chaco	Jane and the Shoe	Sorel
Chippewa Boots	Johnston & Murphy	Sperry
Clarks	Journeys	Stacy Adams
Columbia Sportswear	Justin Boots	Steve Madden
Converse	Keds	Stride Rite
Cove Shoe Company	Kork-Ease	Tony Lama Boots
Cross	Korks Footwear	Topline Footwear
Dearfoams	LifeStride	Umi
Deer Stags	Merrell	Under Armour
Dexter Bowling Footwear	Montana Footwear	Via Spiga
Dolce Vita	Naturalizer	Vionic Group
Double H Boots	NIKE	Walk-Over Footwear
Dr. Scholls Shoes	Nocona Boots	Weyco Group
Famous Footwear	Nunn Bush	Wolverine Worldwide
Feiyue Footwear	Off Broadway Shoe Warehouse	
Florsheim	ONO	

CC: The Honorable Robert Lighthizer, *United States Trade Representative*  
The Honorable Wilbur Ross, *Secretary of Commerce*  
The Honorable Larry Kudlow, *Director, National Economic Council*