



Footwear & Politics

By Thomas Crockett • Feb 20, 2025

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FDRA President & CEO Matt Priest testified before the Administration this week, where he talked about tariff proposals and IP challenges in global markets.

FDRA talks tariffs and IP challenges



This week, FDRA President & CEO Matt Priest testified before the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) for its annual global intellectual property (IP) review. With the threat of more tariffs coming soon, we are concerned about the unintended consequences on intellectual property (IP) protection for U.S. brands.

Why it matters:

- Matt has testified before USTR's Special 301 Review Committee for nearly a decade.
- Through this process, USTR hears directly from stakeholders and uses the information gathered to engage with our trading partners to improve IP protection for U.S. brands. USTR has used FDRA's feedback in the past as it prepares for dialogues with other countries.

What we said:

- Matt's testimony focused largely on counterfeit goods entering the U.S. and the need to strengthen IP processes in other countries. FDRA highlighted specific challenges in 15 countries. [Read our comments](#)
- **Counterfeits:** Tariffs could lead to a rise in **!** counterfeits, as U.S. consumers shift to lower priced alternatives. We have seen this happening in countries like Brazil, which has high tariffs to protect the domestic market.
- **IP reforms:** With the President's new reciprocal tariff plan, it is imperative that the U.S. enters into new deals with countries quickly. If we end up in trade wars, these countries may be less willing to make much-needed IP reforms to benefit U.S. companies. These countries may also be less willing to help U.S. brands trying to navigate the complex IP landscapes in these countries.

Go deeper: Watch Matt's video recap [here](#):



Recap: hearing takeaways

Stay Close: We will keep you updated on the latest developments on tariffs during next week's [FDRA Member Call](#).

- We hold this call every Tuesday at 2:00 p.m. ET (one-time signup for the rest of the year).

Thanks for reading this week's Footwear & Politics update. Feel free to share this newsletter with others on your team. Have a great rest of the week!

Thomas

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