

PRESS RELEASE | **January 1, 2026**

FDRA's Matt Priest on Turning Challenges into Growth in 2026

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, **Matt Priest, President and CEO of Footwear Distributors and Retailers of America (FDRA)**, released the following statement:

"As we close out 2025, this year has tested our industry with inflation, uneven demand, and supply chain adjustments—but it also highlighted the strength and innovation that define footwear.

"The year ahead offers both opportunity and responsibility. Policymakers have a unique chance to shape outcomes that matter to American families. Decisions on trade and tariffs will impact household budgets and consumer confidence, and FDRA will continue to advocate for fair, predictable frameworks that protect consumers and strengthen businesses.

"Our commitment is unwavering: to lead with data-driven insights, foster collaboration, and champion innovation that keeps footwear accessible, affordable, and sustainable. Together, we can turn challenges into progress and make 2026 a year of growth and opportunity. We also look forward to working closely with President Trump and his administration to ensure policies prioritize American families and support a strong, competitive footwear industry."

For more information about FDRA or to schedule an interview with Matt Priest on the state of the footwear industry, please email fdracomms@cgagroup.com

About FDRA

FDRA is governed and directed by footwear executives and is the only trade organization focused solely on the footwear industry. Serving the full footwear supply chain, it boosts its members' bottom lines through innovative products, training, consulting on footwear design and development, sourcing and compliance, trade and customs, advocacy, and consumer and sales trend analysis for shoe retailers around the world. FDRA supports 500 companies and brands worldwide, representing 98% of the total U.S. footwear industry. Learn more: fdra.org