

FDRA Convenes Footwear Leaders in Nation's Capital to Kick Off America250 and Shape the Next Era of Industry Innovation

Executive Strategy Summit to focus on the future of American commerce and the urgent need for trade modernization ahead of the nation's 250th anniversary

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The **Footwear Distributors and Retailers of America (FDRA)** will host its annual **Executive Strategy Summit** on April 22–23, 2026, bringing together the industry's top executives, economists, and policymakers. This year's Summit holds special significance as the industry aligns with America250, the national, nonpartisan initiative commemorating the 250th anniversary of the United States.

"As we look toward the America250 milestone, we aren't just celebrating our past; we are fighting for our future," said **Matt Priest, President and CEO of FDRA**. "The footwear industry represents the best of American resilience and global partnership. However, to remain competitive and provide value to American families, we must modernize our trade policies and move past the outdated tariff structures that act as a hidden tax on every consumer."

Honoring the footwear industry's role in the American story since 1776, the Summit uses the upcoming Semiquincentennial to highlight a legacy of innovation. The program features expert briefings on consumer behavior, domestic manufacturing, and White House trade strategies to help brands navigate inflation and supply chain shifts. The event concludes with executives meeting with lawmakers on Capitol Hill to urge decisive action on tariff reform. By pushing for these policy shifts, the Summit aims to lower costs for American families and secure the industry's leadership in global commerce for the next 250 years.

"Our message to Washington is simple: an innovative industry shouldn't be held back by 100-year-old trade laws," **added Priest**. "By reducing the tariff burden, we can spark a new era of growth that honors the spirit of America250."

For more information about **FDRA** or the **2026 Executive Strategy Summit**, please visit shoexecutive.com.

For more information about [FDRA](https://fdra.org) 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