

PRESS RELEASE | **April 30, 2026**

Footwear Industry Warns: Vietnam Designation Could Increase Costs for Americans

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

“Footwear and athletic brands rely on Vietnam as a critical, trusted part of the global supply chain that serves American consumers. Today’s designation of Vietnam as a ‘Priority Foreign Country’ in the Special 301 report is a deeply concerning step—one that risks driving up costs for Americans and making counterfeiting and IP enforcement challenges worse rather than better.

“For years, U.S. policy has encouraged companies to diversify sourcing away from China, and many brands did exactly that—investing in Vietnam and other countries to build resilient supply chains. Targeting those same partners now creates a whack-a-mole policy environment that raises costs, disrupts planning, and risks pushing production decisions in the wrong direction.

“Strong intellectual property protection matters, and our industry supports practical, targeted solutions that actually improve enforcement. We urge USTR to use the consultation period to pursue constructive, workable approaches with Vietnam rather than higher taxes on American companies in the name of protecting intellectual property. Making goods more expensive for Americans is never the answer.”

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