

April 29, 2025

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

Dear Mr. President:

Thank you for your recent comments that you will consider tariff exemptions for those companies hit particularly hard due to the nature of their industry and through no fault of their own. As leading U.S. footwear businesses, manufacturers, and retailers, we urge you to exempt footwear from the reciprocal tariffs.

Given the nature of the U.S. footwear industry, American footwear businesses and families face an existential threat from such substantial cost increases. Hundreds of businesses face the prospect of closure. Tens of thousands of jobs are at stake. Many orders have been placed on hold, and footwear inventory for U.S. consumers may soon run low.

We are hit particularly hard by the tariff actions, because the U.S. government already places a significant tariff burden on our industry before any new tariffs are added. For example, children's shoes often have rates of 20 percent, 37.5 percent, and higher, *before accounting for the reciprocal tariffs*. In addition, some of the highest rates in the tariff code are placed on low-value shoes purchased by hardworking American families. *The new reciprocal rates are stacked on top of the existing high footwear tariff rates, meaning that many American footwear companies will now have to pay a tariff ranging from more than 150 percent to nearly 220 percent.*

Many companies making affordable footwear for hardworking lower and middle-income families cannot absorb tariff rates this high, nor can they pass along these costs. Without immediate relief from the reciprocal tariffs they will simply shutter.

Unlike some industries, we make items Americans must purchase and cannot finance. This means we generally cannot make our products at such high price points and bake in the costs of these tariffs. Many Americans buy shoes at \$30 to \$50, and they pay instantly. The significant price increases from these tariffs will preclude these American consumers from having affordable footwear options.

In addition, these tariffs will not drive shoe manufacturing back to the U.S. It takes significant capital investment and years of planning to shift sourcing. The new tariffs in fact remove the business certainty that is needed to make these types of investments and erase almost all the necessary capital. There is also a reciprocal tariff on the machinery and materials needed to make footwear in the U.S.

Despite having some of the highest tariffs – higher than nearly every other product and in effect for nearly 100 years — domestic footwear manufacturing has declined. We are in fact the one industry where tariffs do not significantly increase domestic production; tariffs just become a major impact at the cash register for every family.

If the current situation continues, American footwear workers and consumers will suffer. This is an emergency that requires immediate action and attention. The American footwear industry does not have months to adjust business models and supply chains while absorbing this unprecedented and unforeseen tariff regime. Many of our companies do not know how, or even if, they are going to pay the costs of already shipped merchandise now arriving on U.S. shores. The inability to pay for these immediate and unforeseen additional tariffs places many U.S. footwear businesses at imminent risk. We are deeply concerned about imminent U.S. footwear job losses, added costs for consumers, and reduced consumer spending that will fundamentally hamper our industry and harm the entire U.S. economy.

A more targeted approach, focused on strategic items rather than basic consumer goods, would advance critical national security imperatives without causing unnecessary pain to American families. We respectfully ask you to remove footwear from any reciprocal tariff regime.

Sincerely,

ACI International
adidas America, Inc.
Advanced Manufacturing Group
Ariat International
BBC International
BILLY Footwear
Bigston Shoes
BIRDIES
Black Diamond Group
Bogs
Brooks
Caleres
Capri Holdings Limited (Versace, Jimmy Choo and Michael Kors)
Clarks
Cole Haan
Columbia Sportswear
Consolidated Shoe Co.
Corkys
Crocs
Dansko LLC
Deckers Brands
Deer Stags
Designer Brands
E.S. Originals
Eastland Shoe Corp.
Falc USA
Faryl Robin
Florsheim
Footwear Unlimited
Forsake
Freeman Footwear
French Shiner Footwear
Genesco
H.H. Brown Shoe Company
Highline United

Johnston & Murphy
Jones & Vining
JOURNEE
Journeys
Justin Brands, Inc.
KNS International
KURU Footwear
Lamo Sheepskin
LOWA Boots
Marc Fisher Footwear
matmarket
Mykos Footwear
NIKE, Inc.
Nunn Bush
Oboz
Ortholite
Oomphies
Peridot Advisors LLC
Project Cloud Shoes
Puma
REEF
RG Barry Brands
Reliable Knitting Works
Remac Inc.
Rocky Brands
SeaJack LLC
Skechers U.S.A., Inc.
Stacy Adams
Steve Madden
TAFT
TOMS Shoes
TWISTED X
Under Armour
VF Corporation
VANCE
Vida Shoes International, Inc.
Washington Shoe Company
Weyco Group
White Mountain
Wolverine Worldwide
Woolloomooloo

cc: The Honorable Howard W. Lutnick, United States Secretary of Commerce
The Honorable Jamieson Greer, United States Trade Representative
The Honorable Scott Bessent, United States Secretary of the Treasury