



Washington Council on International Trade

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**WCIT Supports Footwear Tariff Reduction Legislation Spearheaded by Washington Senator**

**SEATTLE** – The Washington Council on International Trade applauds Senators Maria Cantwell (D-WA) and Pat Roberts (R-KS) for their introduction of legislation that would eliminate tariffs on footwear imported from 120 developing countries. If passed, the GSP Footwear Act of 2017 would relieve outdoor companies and consumers from import taxes as high as 37.5%.

“This legislation is vital to Washington-based outdoor retailers,” said WCIT President Lori Otto Punke. “Staggering import tariffs hinder Washington state’s global competitiveness. Outdoor recreation retail is an \$877 billion-dollar industry supporting almost 8 million local jobs, many of which are housed here in the Pacific Northwest. With 99% of apparel manufacturing taking place outside the U.S. in 2017, it’s vital we break down trade barriers to support the skilled, local workforce tied to the outdoor retail through retail marketing, merchandising, logistics, accounting, research, and more.”

*Read more about supporting local retail on our [retail competitiveness factsheet](#).*

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**About the Washington Council on International Trade**

WCIT is the only organization in Washington dedicated exclusively to advocating for public policies that increase our state's international competitiveness. On behalf of its members — manufacturers, farmers, retailers and service providers – WCIT advocates for trade policies and investments that benefit Washington's workers and employers.

WCIT works to:

- **Evaluate** and share objective data on the impact of trade policies on Washington’s economy
- **Educate** our local, state and federal elected officials about the benefits of strong international trade policies and investments to Washington employers and residents
- **Engage** diverse stakeholders from across the state – including manufacturers, retailers, farmers and service providers - to drive policy changes that help them succeed in the global marketplace

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