



National
Retail Federation

NATIONAL RETAIL FEDERATION

NEWS RELEASE

THE VOICE OF RETAIL WORLDWIDE

Liberty Place, 325 7th Street, NW, Suite 1100, Washington, DC 20004
Phone: 202.783.7971 Fax: 202.737.2849

For Immediate Release

Contact: J. Craig Shearman

(202) 626-8134 Office

shearmanc@nrf.com

NRF to Lead Delegation to World Trade Organization

WASHINGTON, D.C., April 21, 2005 - The National Retail Federation announced today that NRF and a European counterpart will take a group of retailers and trade associations to Switzerland next week to meet with World Trade Organization officials on international trade issues.

"This visit is intended to lay the groundwork for the progress that NRF and retailers hope to see made at the WTO Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong in December," NRF Vice President and International Trade Counsel Erik Autor said. "WTO members will begin work in preparation for that meeting soon, so now's the time to educate them on retailers' priorities and objectives." NRF plans to lead a delegation of retailers to the Hong Kong conference just as it did with WTO ministerials in Cancun in 2003 and Seattle in 1999.

Next week's meeting in Geneva will focus on negotiations to eliminate trade barriers for consumer products that retailers import from foreign manufacturers and on retailers' ability to open stores overseas. NRF will emphasize a number of issues under consideration in the ongoing Doha Round of trade talks, including rules governing antidumping cases, safeguards and countervailing duties among others.

U.S. companies and organizations scheduled to join NRF for the trip include Wal-Mart, Gap Inc. and the Footwear Distributors and Retailers of America. The U.S. group will be led by Autor and NRF Senior Vice President for Government Relations Steve Pfister. The trip is being organized jointly with EuroCommerce, a Brussels trade association similar to NRF that represents retailers and wholesalers in Europe. EuroCommerce will bring a number of its members, including Germany's Metro Group and the German Federation of Wholesale and Foreign Trade.

Meetings are planned on Tuesday and Wednesday with ambassadors to the WTO from key delegations including the United States, the European Union, Japan and China, along with chairmen of several WTO negotiating groups and senior WTO officials.

The National Retail Federation is the world's largest retail trade association, with membership that comprises all retail formats and channels of distribution including department, specialty, discount, catalog, Internet and independent stores as well as the industry's key trading partners of retail goods and services. NRF represents an industry with

more than 1.4 million U.S. retail establishments, more than 23 million employees - about one in five American workers - and 2004 sales of \$4.1 trillion. As the industry umbrella group, NRF also represents more than 100 state, national and international retail associations.
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