

# The Columbus Dispatch

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## Rickenbacker trade zone tops in nation for textile, footwear imports

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Rickenbacker airport's Foreign Trade Zone ranked first in the nation for the total value of textile and footwear imports in 2015, according to data released Wednesday by the Columbus Regional Airport Authority. The airport authority administers the trade zone, which provides tax benefits and cost savings to companies importing goods into the United States.

By Marla Matzer Rose, The Columbus Dispatch

Rickenbacker Airport's foreign-trade zone ranked first in the nation in the total value of textile and footwear imports in 2015, according to data released Wednesday by the Columbus Regional Airport Authority.

The airport authority administers the trade zone, which provides tax benefits and cost savings to companies importing goods into the United States.

The trade zone -- referred to as FTZ No. 138 -- ranked ninth in the total value of all goods imported into the U.S. among 186 active zones.

More than \$7.8 billion worth of goods moved through the zone, up 37 percent over 2014. Textiles and footwear accounted for \$6.2 billion worth of those 2015 imports -- the most in the country.

The majority of the nation's apparel and footwear imports do not go through foreign trade zones, but of those that do, about 70 percent flow through Rickenbacker's foreign-trade zone.

David Whitaker, vice president of business development for the airport authority, called the ranking "a testament to the strong distribution and logistics landscape in the region, and our strong partners in the retail sector."

Columbus-based retailers including L Brands and Abercrombie & Fitch are key contributors to the apparel- and footwear-distribution business in central Ohio.

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