



## PRESS STATEMENT

### **NCTO Welcomes the Official Launch of the Rhode Island Textile Innovation Network**

September 24, 2018

WASHINGTON, DC – The National Council of Textile Organizations (NCTO) congratulates the state of Rhode Island and its textile and apparel industry for the official launch of the Rhode Island Textile Innovation Network (RITIN). The Slater Mill Museum in Pawtucket was the site of the event.

At the launch, [RITIN unveiled its new website](#) and held an expo featuring local manufacturers. The activities dovetailed with NCTO's [We Make Amazing](#) campaign promoting the U.S. textile industry, namely that Rhode Island's textile industry is involved in research, development, design and manufacturing of an incredible array of end products and providing career opportunities with on-the-job training and advancement.

“Rhode Island companies make some of the world’s most amazing textiles and are an important cog in the U.S. textile and apparel supply chain, especially with respect to innovating and manufacturing textiles used by America’s military,” said NCTO President & CEO Auggie Tantillo.

Welcoming the official launch of RITIN, Tantillo added, “Thanks to e-commerce and other emerging technologies, the global textile and apparel sector is experiencing an era of rapid change. Rhode Island is to be commended for being proactive in helping to ensure that its industry remains at the forefront in leveraging those changes to America’s benefit,” Tantillo added.

RITIN fosters collaboration among textile industry leaders, designers, academia and government with a mission to make Rhode Island a leader in advanced textile manufacturing and to develop solutions to recruit and train the sector’s future workforce.

Created in late 2016 by [U.S. Senator Sheldon Whitehouse](#) and the [University of Rhode Island Business Engagement Center](#), RITIN operates with planning grants received in late 2017 from [Real Jobs RI](#) and the [Rhode Island Commerce Corporation](#). [Polaris MEP](#), an affiliate of the National Institute of Standards and Technology’s Manufacturing Extension Partnership ([NIST MEP](#)) provides RITIN’s program management.

NCTO is a Washington, DC-based trade association that represents domestic textile manufacturers, including artificial and synthetic filament and fiber producers.

- U.S. employment in the textile supply chain was 550,500 in 2017.
- The value of shipments for U.S. textiles and apparel was \$77.9 billion in 2017.
- U.S. exports of fiber, textiles and apparel were \$28.6 billion in 2017.
- Capital expenditures for textile and apparel production totaled \$2.4 billion in 2016, the last year for which data is available.

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