

## **Item 1A. Risk Factors**

This section describes circumstances or events that could have a negative effect on our financial results or operations or that could change, for the worse, existing trends in our businesses. The occurrence of one or more of the circumstances or events described below could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition, results of operations and cash flows or on the trading prices of our common stock. The risks and uncertainties described in this Annual Report on Form 10-K are not the only ones facing us. Additional risks and uncertainties that currently are not known to us or that we currently believe are immaterial also may adversely affect our businesses and operations.

***We operate in a highly competitive and rapidly evolving market, and our market share and results of operations could be adversely affected if we fail to compete effectively in the future.***

The basic apparel market is highly competitive and evolving rapidly. Competition is generally based upon brand, comfort, fit, style and price. Our businesses face competition today from other large domestic and foreign corporations and manufacturers, as well as mass merchant retailers, department stores and other retailers, including many of our customers, that market and sell basic apparel products under private labels that compete directly with our brands. Also, online retail shopping is rapidly evolving, and we expect competition in the e-commerce market to intensify in the future as the Internet facilitates competitive entry and comparison shopping. If we do not successfully develop and maintain a relevant omni-channel experience for our customers, our businesses and results of operations could be adversely impacted. Increased competition may result in a loss of or a reduction in shelf space and promotional support and reduced prices, in each case decreasing our cash flows, operating margins and profitability. Our ability to identify and capitalize on retail trends, including technology, e-commerce and other process efficiencies to gain market share and better service our customer base will, in large part, determine our future success. If we fail to compete successfully, our market share, results of operations and financial condition will be materially and adversely affected.

***The rapidly changing retail environment could result in the loss of or material reduction in sales to certain of our customers, which could have a material adverse effect on our business, results of operations, financial condition and cash flows.***

The retail environment is highly competitive. Consumers are increasingly embracing shopping online and through mobile commerce applications. As a result, a greater portion of total consumer expenditures with retailers is occurring online and through mobile commerce applications. If our brick-and-mortar retail customers fail to maintain or grow their overall market position through the integration of physical retail presence and digital retail, these customers may experience financial difficulties including store closures, bankruptcies or liquidations. This could, in turn, substantially reduce our revenues, increase our credit risk and have a material adverse effect on our results of operations, financial condition and cash flows.

***Any inadequacy, interruption, integration failure or security failure with respect to our information technology could harm our ability to effectively operate our business.***

Our ability to effectively manage and operate our business depends significantly on information technology systems. The failure of these systems to operate effectively and support global growth and expansion, problems with integrating various data sources, challenges in transitioning to upgraded or replacement systems, difficulty in integrating new systems or systems of acquired businesses, or a breach in security of these systems could adversely impact the operations of our business.

Hackers and data thieves are increasingly sophisticated and operate large-scale and complex automated attacks. Any breach of our network may result in the loss of valuable business data, misappropriation of our consumers' or employees' personal information, or a disruption of our business, which could give rise to

unwanted media attention, materially damage our customer relationships and reputation, and result in lost sales, fines or lawsuits.

Moreover, we must comply with increasingly complex and rigorous regulatory standards enacted to protect business and personal data. Any failure to comply with these regulatory standards could subject us to legal and reputational risks. Misuse of or failure to secure personal information could also result in violation of data privacy laws and regulations, proceedings against us by governmental entities or others, damage to our reputation and credibility, and could have a negative impact on revenues and profits.

***Significant fluctuations and volatility in the price of various input costs, such as cotton and oil-related materials, utilities, freight and wages, may have a material adverse effect on our business, results of operations, financial condition and cash flows.***

Inflation can have a long-term impact on us because increasing costs of materials and labor may impact our ability to maintain satisfactory margins. For example, the cost of the materials that are used in our manufacturing process, such as oil-related commodity prices and other raw materials, such as cotton, dyes and chemicals, and other costs, such as fuel, energy and utility costs, can fluctuate as a result of inflation and other factors. Similarly, a significant portion of our products are manufactured in other countries and declines in the value of the U.S. dollar may result in higher manufacturing costs. In addition, sudden decreases in the costs for materials may result in the cost of inventory exceeding the cost of new production, which could result in lower profitability, particularly if these decreases result in downward price pressure. If, in the future we incur volatility in the costs for materials and labor that we are unable to offset through price adjustments or improved efficiencies, or if our competitors' unwillingness to follow our price changes results in downward price pressure, our business, results of operations, financial condition and cash flows may be adversely affected.

***Our failure to properly manage strategic projects in order to achieve the desired results may negatively impact our business.***

The implementation of our business strategy periodically involves the execution of complex projects, which places significant demands on our management, accounting, financial, information and other systems and on our business. Our ability to successfully implement such projects is dependent on management's ability to timely and effectively anticipate and adapt to our changing business needs. We cannot assure you that our management will be able to manage these projects effectively or implement them successfully. If we miscalculate the resources or time we need to complete a project or fail to implement the project effectively, our business and operating results could be adversely affected.

***Due to the extensive nature of our foreign operations, fluctuations in foreign currency exchange rates could negatively impact our results of operations.***

A growing percentage of our total revenues (approximately 32% in 2017) is derived from markets outside the United States. We sell a majority of our products in transactions denominated in U.S. dollars; however, we purchase many of our raw materials, pay a portion of our wages and make other payments to participants in our supply chain in foreign currencies. As a result, when the U.S. dollar weakens against any of these currencies, our cost of sales could increase substantially. Outside the United States, we may pay for materials or finished products in U.S. dollars, and in some cases a strengthening of the U.S. dollar could effectively increase our costs where we use foreign currency to purchase the U.S. dollars we need to make such payments. Changes on foreign currency exchange rates could have an adverse impact on our financial condition, results of operations and cash flows.

We use foreign exchange forward contracts to hedge material exposure to adverse changes in foreign exchange rates. However, no hedging strategy can completely insulate us from foreign exchange risk. We are also exposed to gains and losses resulting from the effect that fluctuations in foreign currency exchange rates

have on the reported results in our consolidated financial statements due to the translation of operating results and financial position of our foreign subsidiaries.

***Our business depends on our senior management team and other key personnel.***

Our success depends upon the continued contributions of our senior management team and other key personnel, some of whom have unique talents and experience and would be difficult to replace. The loss or interruption of the services of a member of our senior management team or other key personnel could have a material adverse effect on our business during the transitional period that would be required for a successor to assume the responsibilities of the position. Our future success will also depend on our ability to develop and/or recruit employees with the core competencies needed to support our growth in global markets and in new products or services. We may not be able to attract or retain these employees, which could adversely affect our business.

***Our operations in international markets, and our earnings in those markets, may be affected by legal, regulatory, political and economic risks.***

During 2017, net sales from our International segment were \$2.1 billion, representing approximately 32% of total net sales. In addition, a significant amount of our manufacturing and production operations are located, or our products are sourced from, outside the United States. As a result, our business is subject to risks associated with international operations. These risks include the burdens of complying with foreign laws and regulations, unexpected changes in tariffs, taxes or regulatory requirements, and political unrest and corruption.

Regulatory changes could limit the countries in which we sell, produce or source our products or significantly increase the cost of operating in or obtaining materials originating from certain countries. Restrictions imposed by such changes can have a particular impact on our business when, after we have moved our operations to a particular location, new unfavorable regulations are enacted in that area or favorable regulations currently in effect are changed.

Countries in which our products are manufactured or sold may from time to time impose additional new regulations, or modify existing regulations, including:

- changes in duties, taxes, tariffs and other charges on imports;
- limitations on the quantity of goods which may be imported into the United States from a particular country;
- requirements as to where products and/or inputs are manufactured or sourced;
- creation of export licensing requirements, imposition of restrictions on export quantities or specification of minimum export pricing and/or export prices or duties;
- limitations on foreign owned businesses; or
- government actions to cancel contracts, re-denominate the official currency, renounce or default on obligations, renegotiate terms unilaterally or expropriate assets.

In addition, political and economic changes or volatility, geopolitical regional conflicts, terrorist activity, political unrest, civil strife, acts of war, public corruption and other economic or political uncertainties could interrupt and negatively affect our business operations. All of these factors could result in increased costs or decreased revenues and could materially and adversely affect our product sales, financial condition and results of operations.

Recently, political discourse in the United States has increasingly focused on ways to discourage U.S. corporations from outsourcing manufacturing and production activities to foreign jurisdictions. Many prominent government officials have publicly addressed the need to discourage these practices through television, news

publications and social media platforms, including through the possibility of imposing tariffs or other penalties on goods manufactured outside the United States to attempt to discourage these practices. During 2017, the United States has withdrawn from some of its existing trade agreements and it has also been suggested that the United States may materially modify or withdraw from other trade agreements. Any of these actions, if ultimately enacted, could adversely affect our results of operations or profitability. Further, our image, the reputation of our brands and our stock price may be adversely affected if we are publicly singled out for criticism by government officials as a result of our foreign operations.

We are also subject to the U.S. Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, in addition to the anti-corruption laws of the foreign countries in which we operate. Although we implement policies and procedures designed to promote compliance with these laws, our employees, contractors and agents, as well as those companies to which we outsource certain of our business operations, may take actions in violation of our policies. Any such violation could result in sanctions or other penalties and have an adverse effect on our business, reputation and operating results.

In addition, in June 2016, voters in the United Kingdom approved an advisory referendum to withdraw from the European Union, commonly referred to as "Brexit." This referendum has created political and economic uncertainty, particularly in the United Kingdom and the European Union, and this uncertainty may persist for years. The withdrawal could significantly disrupt the free movement of goods, services, and people between the United Kingdom and the European Union, and result in increased legal and regulatory complexities, as well as potential higher costs of conducting business in Europe. The United Kingdom's vote to exit the European Union could also result in similar referendums or votes in other European countries in which we do business. The uncertainty surrounding the terms of the United Kingdom's withdrawal and its consequences could adversely impact consumer and investor confidence, and the level of consumer purchases of discretionary items and retail products, including our products. Any of these effects, among others, could materially adversely affect our business, results of operations, and financial condition.

***Our ability to successfully integrate acquired businesses could impact our financial results.***

As a leading branded apparel company, we expect to continue pursuing strategic acquisitions as part of our long-term business strategy, such as our recent acquisitions of Champion Europe, Hanes Australasia and Alternative Apparel. Difficulties may arise in the integration of the business and operations of businesses that we acquire and, as a result, we may not be able to achieve the cost savings and synergies that we expect will result from such transactions. Achieving cost savings is dependent on consolidating certain operational and functional areas, eliminating duplicative positions and terminating certain agreements for outside services. Additional operational savings are dependent upon the conversion of core operating systems, data systems and products and the standardization of business practices. Complications or difficulties in the conversion of core operating systems, data systems and products may result in the loss of customers, operational problems, one-time costs currently not anticipated or reduced cost savings resulting from such acquisitions. Annual cost savings in each such transaction may be materially less than anticipated if the closing of the acquisition is delayed unexpectedly, the integration of operations is delayed beyond what is anticipated or the conversion to a single set of data systems is not accomplished on a timely basis.

Acquired businesses may not achieve expected results of operations, including expected levels of revenues, and may require unanticipated costs and expenditures. In addition, following completion of an acquisition, we may not be able to maintain the levels of revenue, earnings or operating efficiency that we and the acquired business have achieved or might achieve separately. Acquired businesses may also subject us to liabilities that we were unable to discover in the course of our due diligence, and our rights to indemnification from the sellers of such other businesses, even if obtained, may not be sufficient to offset the relevant liabilities. In addition, the integration of newly acquired businesses may be expensive and time-consuming and may not be entirely successful. Integration of the acquired businesses may also place additional pressures on our systems of internal control over financial reporting. The process of integrating the operations of acquired businesses could

cause an interruption of, or loss of momentum in, the activities of one or more of our combined businesses and the possible loss of key personnel. If we are unable to successfully integrate any newly acquired business or if the acquired businesses fail to produce targeted results, it could have an adverse effect on our results of operations or financial condition.

***We rely on a relatively small number of customers for a significant portion of our sales, and the loss of or material reduction in sales to any of our top customers could have a material adverse effect on our business, results of operations, financial condition and cash flows.***

In 2017, our top 10 customers accounted for approximately 46% of our total net sales and our top two customers, Wal-Mart and Target accounted for 18% and 13% of our total net sales, respectively. We expect that these customers will continue to represent a significant portion of our net sales in the future. Moreover, our top customers are the largest market participants in our primary distribution channels across all of our product lines. We generally do not enter into purchase agreements that obligate our customers to purchase our products, and as a result, most of our sales are made on a purchase order basis. A decision by any of our top customers to significantly decrease the volume of products purchased from us could substantially reduce revenues and may have a material adverse effect on our business, results of operations, financial condition and cash flows. In addition, if any of our customers devote less selling space to apparel products, our sales to those customers could be reduced even if we maintain our share of their apparel business. Any such reduction in apparel selling space could result in lower sales and our business, results of operations, financial condition and cash flows may be adversely affected.

***We have a complex multinational tax structure, and changes in effective tax rates or adverse outcomes resulting from examination of our income tax returns could impact our capital deployment strategy and adversely affect our results.***

We have a complex multinational tax structure with multiple types of intercompany transactions, and our allocation of profits and losses among us and our subsidiaries through our intercompany transfer pricing agreements is subject to review by the Internal Revenue Service and other tax authorities. Our future effective tax rates could be adversely affected by earnings being lower than anticipated in countries where we have lower statutory rates and higher than anticipated in countries where we have higher statutory rates, by changes in the valuation of our deferred tax assets and liabilities, or by changes in tax laws, regulations, accounting principles or interpretations thereof. In order to service our debt obligations, we may need to increase portions of income remitted to the United States from our foreign subsidiaries, which may increase our income tax expense. In addition, we are also subject to the continuous examination of our income tax returns and related transfer pricing documentation by the Internal Revenue Service and other tax authorities. We regularly assess the likelihood of adverse outcomes resulting from these examinations to determine the adequacy of our provision for income taxes. There can be no assurance that the outcomes from these continuous examinations will not have an adverse effect on our operating results and financial condition. Additionally, changes in tax laws, regulations, future jurisdictional profitability of us and our subsidiaries, and related regulatory interpretations in the countries in which we operate may impact the taxes we pay or tax provision we record, as well as our capital deployment strategy, which could adversely affect our results of operations.

On December 22, 2017, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (the “Tax Act”) was enacted. The Tax Act significantly revised U.S. corporate income tax law by, among other things, reducing the corporate income tax rate to 21%, introducing a new minimum tax on global intangible low-taxed income (“GILTI”) and implementing a modified territorial tax system that includes a one-time transition tax on deemed repatriated earnings from foreign subsidiaries. We have estimated the impact of the newly enacted law by incorporating assumptions made based upon our current interpretation and analysis to date of the Tax Act. Some of the tax provisions that become effective during fiscal year 2018 are expected to increase our effective tax rate, such as the new GILTI tax regime. The actual impact of the Tax Act may differ from our estimates due to, among other things, further

refinement of our calculations as allowed under Staff Accounting Bulletin No. 118 (“SAB 118”), changes in interpretations and assumptions we have made, guidance that may be issued and actions we may take as a result of the Tax Act.

***Our reputation, ability to do business and results of operations could be impaired by improper conduct by any of our employees, agents or business partners.***

Our business is subject to federal, state, local and international laws, rules and regulations, such as state and local wage and hour laws, the U.S. Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, the U.K. Bribery Act, the False Claims Act, the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (“ERISA”), the Global Data Protection Regulation, securities laws, import and export laws (including customs regulations), unclaimed property laws and many others. We cannot provide assurance our internal controls will always protect us from the improper conduct of our employees, agents and business partners. Any violations of law or improper conduct could damage our reputation and, depending on the circumstances, subject us to, among other things, civil and criminal penalties, material fines, equitable remedies (including profit disgorgement and injunctions on future conduct), securities litigation and a general loss of investor confidence, any one of which could have a material adverse impact on our business prospects, financial condition, results of operations, cash flows, and the market value of our stock.

***The loss of one or more of our suppliers of finished goods or raw materials may interrupt our supplies and materially harm our business.***

We purchase all of the raw materials used in our products and approximately 27% of the units sold derived from apparel designed by us from a limited number of third party suppliers and manufacturers. Our ability to meet our customers’ needs depends on our ability to maintain an uninterrupted supply of raw materials and finished products from our third party suppliers and manufacturers. Our business, financial condition or results of operations could be adversely affected if any of our principal third party suppliers or manufacturers experience financial difficulties that they are not able to overcome resulting from worldwide economic conditions, production problems, difficulties in sourcing raw materials, lack of capacity or transportation disruptions, or if for these or other reasons they raise the prices of the raw materials or finished products we purchase from them. The magnitude of this risk depends upon the timing of any interruptions, the materials or products that the third party manufacturers provide and the volume of production.

Our dependence on third parties for raw materials and finished products subjects us to the risk of supplier failure and customer dissatisfaction with the quality of our products. Quality failures by our third party manufacturers or changes in their financial or business condition that affect their production could disrupt our ability to supply quality products to our customers and thereby materially harm our business.

***The success of our business is tied to the strength and reputation of our brands. If the reputation of one or more of our brands erodes significantly, it could have a material impact on our financial results.***

Many of our brands have worldwide recognition, and our financial success is directly dependent on the success of our brands. The success of a brand can suffer if our marketing plans or product initiatives do not have the desired impact on a brand’s image or its ability to attract consumers. Our results could also be negatively impacted if one of our brands suffers substantial harm to its reputation due to a significant product recall, product-related litigation or the sale of counterfeit products. Additionally, negative or inaccurate postings or comments on social media or networking websites about the Company, its practices or one of its brands could generate adverse publicity that could damage the reputation of our brands.

We also license some of our important trademarks to third parties. For example, we license *Champion* to third parties for athletic-oriented accessories. Although we make concerted efforts to protect our brands through quality control mechanisms and contractual obligations imposed on our licensees, there is a risk that some licensees may not be in full compliance with those mechanisms and obligations. If the reputation of one or more

of our brands is significantly eroded, it could adversely affect our sales, results of operations, cash flows and financial condition.

***Our results of operations could be materially harmed if we are unable to manage our inventory effectively and accurately forecast demand for our products.***

We are faced with the constant challenge of balancing our inventory levels with our ability to meet marketplace needs. Factors that could affect our ability to accurately forecast demand for our products include our ability to anticipate and respond effectively to evolving consumer preferences and trends and to translate these preferences and trends into marketable product offerings, as well as unanticipated changes in general economic conditions or other factors, which result in cancellations of orders or a reduction or increase in the rate of reorders placed by retailers.

Inventory reserves can result from the complexity of our supply chain, a long manufacturing process and the seasonal nature of certain products. We sell a large number of our products to a small number of customers, and these customers generally are not required by contract to purchase our goods. As a result, we often schedule internal production and place orders for products with third-party manufacturers before our customers' orders are firm. If we fail to accurately forecast consumer demand, we may experience excess inventory levels or a shortage of product required to meet the demand. Inventory levels in excess of consumer demand may result in inventory write-downs and the sale of excess inventory at discounted prices, which could have an adverse effect on the image and reputation of our brands and negatively impact profitability. On the other hand, if we underestimate demand for our products, our manufacturing facilities or third-party manufacturers may not be able to produce products to meet consumer requirements, and this could result in delays in the shipment of products and lost revenues, as well as damage to our reputation and relationships. These risks could have a material adverse effect on our brand image as well as our results of operations and financial condition.

Additionally, sudden decreases in the costs for materials may result in the cost of inventory exceeding the cost of new production; if this occurs, it could have a material adverse effect on our business, results of operations, financial condition or cash flow, particularly if we hold a large amount of excess inventory. Excess inventory charges can reduce gross margins or result in operating losses, lowered plant and equipment utilization and lowered fixed operating cost absorption, all of which could have a material adverse effect on our business, results of operations, financial condition or cash flows.

***Our existing customers may require products on an exclusive basis, forms of economic support and other changes that could be harmful to our business.***

Customers increasingly may require us to provide them with some of our products on an exclusive basis, which could cause an increase in the number of stock keeping units, or "SKUs," we must carry and, consequently, increase our inventory levels and working capital requirements. Moreover, our customers may increasingly seek markdown allowances, incentives and other forms of economic support, which reduce our gross margins and affect our profitability. Our financial performance is negatively affected by these pricing pressures when we are forced to reduce our prices without being able to correspondingly reduce our production costs.

***We may be adversely affected by unseasonal or severe weather conditions.***

Our business may be adversely affected by unseasonable or severe weather conditions. Periods of unseasonably warm weather in the fall or winter, or periods of unseasonably cool and wet weather in the spring or summer, can negatively impact retail traffic and consumer spending. In addition, severe weather events such as snow storms or hurricanes typically lead to temporarily reduced retail traffic. Any of these conditions could result in negative point-of-sale trends for our merchandise and reduced replenishment shipments to our wholesale customers.

***Inability to access sufficient capital at reasonable rates or commercially reasonable terms or maintain sufficient liquidity in the amounts and at the times needed could adversely impact our business.***

We rely on our cash flows generated from operations and the borrowing capacity under our Revolving Loan Facility and other external debt financings to meet the cash requirements of our business. We have significant capital requirements and will need continued access to debt capital from outside sources in order to efficiently fund the cash flow needs of our business and pursue strategic acquisitions.

Although we currently have available credit facilities to fund our current operating needs, we cannot be certain that we will be able to replace our existing credit facilities or refinance our existing or future debt at a reasonable cost when necessary. The ability to have continued access to reasonably priced credit is dependent upon our current and future capital structure, financial performance, our credit ratings and general economic conditions. If we are unable to access the capital markets at a reasonable economic cost, it could have an adverse effect on our results of operations or financial condition.

***Our inability to successfully recover should we experience a disaster or other business continuity problem could cause material financial loss, loss of human capital, regulatory actions, reputational harm, or legal liability.***

We have a complex global supply chain and distribution network that supports our ability consistently to provide our products to our customers. Should we experience a local or regional disaster or other business continuity problem, such as an earthquake, tsunami, terrorist attack, pandemic or other natural or man-made disaster, our continued success will depend, in part, on the safety and availability of our personnel, our office facilities, and the proper functioning of our computer, telecommunication and other systems and operations. While our operational size, the diversity of locations from which we operate, and our redundant back-up systems provide us with a strong advantage should we experience a local or regional disaster or other business continuity event, we could still experience operational challenges, in particular depending upon how a local or regional event may affect our human capital across our operations or with regard to particular aspects of our operations, such as key executive officers or personnel in our technology group. If we cannot respond to disruptions in our operations, for example, by finding alternative suppliers or replacing capacity at key manufacturing or distribution locations, or cannot quickly repair damage to our information, production or supply systems, we may be late in delivering, or be unable to deliver, products to our customers. These events could result in reputational damage, lost sales, cancellation charges or excessive markdowns. All of the foregoing can have an adverse effect on our business, results of operations, financial condition and cash flows.

***If we are unsuccessful in establishing effective advertising, marketing and promotional programs, our sales could be negatively affected.***

Inadequate or ineffective advertising could inhibit our ability to maintain brand relevance and drive increased sales. Additionally, if our competitors increase their spending on advertising and promotions, if our advertising, media or marketing expenses increase, or if our advertising and promotions become less effective than those of our competitors, we could experience a material adverse effect on our business results of operations and financial condition.

***Economic conditions may adversely impact demand for our products, reduce access to credit and cause our customers, suppliers and other business partners to suffer financial hardship, all of which could adversely impact our business, results of operations, financial condition and cash flows.***

Although the majority of our products are replenishment in nature and tend to be purchased by consumers on a planned, rather than on an impulse, basis, our sales are impacted by discretionary spending by consumers. Discretionary spending is affected by many factors that are outside of our control, including, among others, general business conditions, interest rates, inflation, consumer debt levels, the availability of consumer credit,

currency exchange rates, taxation, energy prices, unemployment trends and other matters that influence consumer confidence and spending. Reduced sales at our wholesale customers may lead to lower retail inventory levels, reduced orders to us or order cancellations. These lower sales volumes, along with the possibility of restrictions on access to the credit markets, may result in our customers experiencing financial difficulties including store closures, bankruptcies or liquidations. This may result in higher credit risk relating to receivables from our customers who are experiencing these financial difficulties. Any of these occurrences could have a material adverse effect on our business, results of operations, financial condition and cash flows.

In addition, economic conditions, including decreased access to credit, may result in financial difficulties leading to restructurings, bankruptcies, liquidations and other unfavorable events for our suppliers of raw materials and finished goods, logistics and other service providers and financial institutions which are counterparties to our credit facilities and derivatives transactions. In addition, the inability of these third parties to overcome these difficulties may increase. If third parties on which we rely for raw materials, finished goods or services are unable to overcome financial difficulties and provide us with the materials and services we need, or if counterparties to our credit facilities or derivatives transactions do not perform their obligations, our business, results of operations, financial condition and cash flows could be adversely affected.

***If we fail to maintain effective internal controls, we may not be able to report our financial results accurately or timely or prevent or detect fraud, which could have a material adverse effect on our business or the market price of our securities.***

Effective internal controls are necessary for us to provide reasonable assurance with respect to our financial reports and to effectively prevent or detect fraud. If we cannot provide reasonable assurance with respect to our financial reports and effectively prevent or detect fraud, our brands and operating results could be harmed. Pursuant to the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002, we are required to furnish a report by management on internal control over financial reporting, including management's assessment of the effectiveness of such control. Internal control over financial reporting may not prevent or detect misstatements because of its inherent limitations, including the possibility of human error, the circumvention or overriding of controls, or fraud. Therefore, even effective internal controls cannot provide absolute assurance with respect to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements. In addition, projections of any evaluation of effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting to future periods are subject to the risk that the control may become inadequate because of changes in conditions, or that the degree of compliance with the policies or procedures may deteriorate. If we fail to maintain the adequacy of our internal controls, including any failure to implement required new or improved controls, or if we experience difficulties in their implementation, our business and operating results could be harmed and we could fail to meet our reporting obligations, which could have a material adverse effect on our business and the market price of our securities.

***We may suffer negative publicity if we or our third party manufacturers violate labor laws or engage in practices that are viewed as unethical or illegal, which could cause a loss of business.***

We cannot fully control the business and labor practices of our third party manufacturers, the majority of whom are located in Asia, Central America and the Caribbean Basin. If one of our own manufacturing operations or one of our third party manufacturers violates or is accused of violating local or international labor laws or other applicable regulations, or engages in labor or other practices that would be viewed in any market in which our products are sold as unethical, we could suffer negative publicity, which could tarnish our brands' image or result in a loss of sales. In addition, if such negative publicity affected one of our customers, it could result in a loss of business for us.

***We are subject to certain risks as a result of our indebtedness.***

Our indebtedness primarily includes (i) a \$1.0 billion revolving loan facility (the "Revolving Loan Facility"), a \$750 million term loan a facility (the "Term Loan A"), a \$500 million term loan b facility (the

“Term Loan B”), a AUD\$200 million Australian term a-1 loan facility (the “Australian Term A-1”) and an AUD\$65 million Australian revolving loan facility (the “Australian Revolver” and together with the Revolving Loan Facility, the Term Loan A, the Term Loan B, the Australian Term A-1 and the Australian Revolver, the “Senior Secured Credit Facility”), (ii) our \$900 million 4.625% Senior Notes due 2024 (the “4.625% Senior Notes”) and our \$900 million 4.875% Senior Notes due 2026 (the “4.875% Senior Notes”), (iii) our €500 million 3.5% Senior Notes due 2024 (the “3.5% Senior Notes”) and (iv) a \$275 million accounts receivable securitization facility (the “Accounts Receivable Securitization Facility”).

The Senior Secured Credit Facility contains restrictions that affect, and in some cases significantly limit or prohibit, among other things, our ability to borrow funds, pay dividends or make other distributions, make investments, engage in transactions with affiliates, or create liens on our assets. Covenants in the Senior Secured Credit Facility and the Accounts Receivable Securitization Facility require us to maintain a minimum interest coverage ratio and a maximum total debt to EBITDA (earnings before interest, income taxes, depreciation expense and amortization), or leverage ratio. The indentures governing the Senior Notes also restrict our ability to incur additional secured indebtedness in an amount that exceeds the greater of (a) \$3.0 billion or (b) the amount that would cause our consolidated secured net debt ratio to exceed 3.25 to 1.00, as well as certain other customary covenants and restrictions. These restrictions and covenants could limit our ability to obtain additional capital in the future to fund capital expenditures or acquisitions, meet our debt payment obligations and capital commitments, fund any operating losses or future development of our business affiliates, obtain lower borrowing costs that are available from secured lenders or engage in advantageous transactions that monetize our assets or conduct other necessary or prudent corporate activities. Any failure to comply with these covenants and restrictions could result in an event of default that accelerates the maturity of our indebtedness under such facilities, resulting in an adverse effect on our business.

The lenders under the Senior Secured Credit Facility have received a pledge of substantially all of our existing and future direct and indirect subsidiaries, with certain customary or agreed-upon exceptions for certain foreign subsidiaries and certain other subsidiaries. Additionally, these lenders generally have a lien on substantially all of our assets and the assets of our U.S. subsidiaries and certain other foreign subsidiaries, with certain exceptions. The financial institutions that are party to the Accounts Receivable Securitization Facility have a lien on certain of our domestic accounts receivable. As a result of these pledges and liens, if we fail to meet our payment or other obligations under the Senior Secured Credit Facility or the Accounts Receivable Securitization Facility, the lenders under those facilities will be entitled to foreclose on substantially all of our assets and, at their option, liquidate these assets, which would adversely impact the operations of our business.

***Market returns could have a negative impact on the return on plan assets for our pension, which may require significant funding.***

The plan assets of our pension plans, which had a return of approximately 11% during 2017 and a return of approximately 3% during 2016, are invested mainly in domestic and international equities, bonds, hedge funds and real estate. We are unable to predict the variations in asset values or the severity or duration of any disruptions in the financial markets or adverse economic conditions in the United States, Europe and Asia. The funded status of these plans, and the related cost reflected in our consolidated financial statements, are affected by various factors that are subject to an inherent degree of uncertainty, particularly in the current economic environment. Under the Pension Protection Act of 2006 (the “Pension Protection Act”), losses of asset values may necessitate increased funding of the plans in the future to meet minimum federal government requirements. Under the Pension Protection Act funding rules, our U.S. qualified pension plan is approximately 94% funded as of December 30, 2017. Any downward pressure on the asset values of these plans may require us to fund obligations earlier than we had originally planned, which would have a negative impact on cash flows from operations.

***If we are unable to protect our intellectual property rights, our business may be adversely affected.***

Our trademarks are important to our marketing efforts and have substantial value. We aggressively protect these trademarks from infringement and dilution through appropriate measures, including court actions and administrative proceedings. We are susceptible to others imitating our products and infringing our intellectual property rights. Infringement or counterfeiting of our products could diminish the value of our brands or otherwise adversely affect our business. Actions we have taken to establish and protect our intellectual property rights may not be adequate to prevent imitation of our products by others or to prevent others from seeking to invalidate our trademarks or block sales of our products as a violation of the trademarks and intellectual property rights of others. In addition, unilateral actions in the United States or other countries, such as changes to or the repeal of laws recognizing trademark or other intellectual property rights, could have an impact on our ability to enforce those rights.

The value of our intellectual property could diminish if others assert rights in, or ownership of, our trademarks and other intellectual property rights. We may be unable to successfully resolve these types of conflicts to our satisfaction. In some cases, there may be trademark owners who have prior rights to our trademarks because the laws of certain foreign countries may not protect intellectual property rights to the same extent as do the laws of the United States. In other cases, there may be holders who have prior rights to similar trademarks. We are from time to time involved in opposition and cancellation proceedings with respect to some items of our intellectual property.

***We design, manufacture, source and sell products under trademarks that are licensed from third parties. If any licensor takes actions related to their trademarks that would cause their brands or our company reputational harm, our business may be adversely affected.***

We design, manufacture, source and sell a number of our products under trademarks that are licensed from third parties, such as our Polo Ralph Lauren men's underwear and our Donna Karan and DKNY intimate apparel. Because we do not control the brands licensed to us, our licensors could make changes to their brands or business models that could result in a significant downturn in a brand's business, adversely affecting our sales and results of operations. If any licensor engages in behavior with respect to the licensed marks that would cause us reputational harm, or if any of the brands licensed to us violates the trademark rights of another or are deemed to be invalid or unenforceable, we could experience a significant downturn in that brand's business, adversely affecting our sales and results of operations, and we may be required to expend significant amounts on public relations, advertising and, possibly, legal fees.

***Our balance sheet includes a significant amount of intangible assets and goodwill. A decline in the estimated fair value of an intangible asset or of a business unit could result in an asset impairment charge, which would be recorded as a noncash expense in our Consolidated Statement of Income.***

Goodwill, trademarks and other identifiable intangible assets must be tested for impairment at least annually. The fair value of the goodwill assigned to a business unit could decline if projected revenues or cash flows were to be lower in the future due to effects of the global economy or other causes. If the carrying value of intangible assets or of goodwill were to exceed its fair value, the asset would be written down to its fair value, with the impairment loss recognized as a noncash charge in the Consolidated Statement of Income.

As of December 30, 2017, we had approximately \$1.2 billion of goodwill and \$1.4 billion of trademarks and other identifiable intangibles on our balance sheet, which together represent 37% of our total assets. No impairment was identified in 2017. Changes in the future outlook of a business unit could result in an impairment loss, which could have a material adverse effect on our results of operations and financial condition.

***Our balance sheet includes a significant amount of deferred tax assets. We must generate sufficient future taxable income to realize the deferred tax benefits.***

As of December 30, 2017, we had approximately \$197 million of net deferred tax assets on our balance sheet, which represents approximately 3% of our total assets. Deferred tax assets relate to temporary differences (differences between the assets and liabilities in the consolidated financial statements and the assets and liabilities in the calculation of taxable income). The recognition of deferred tax assets is reduced by a valuation allowance if it is more likely than not that the tax benefits associated with the deferred tax benefits will not be realized. If we are unable to generate sufficient future taxable income in certain jurisdictions, or if there is a significant change in the actual effective tax rates or the time period within which the underlying temporary differences become taxable or deductible, we could be required to increase the valuation allowances against our deferred tax assets, which would cause an increase in our effective tax rate. A significant increase in our effective tax rate could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition or results of operations.

***We had approximately 67,200 employees worldwide as of December 30, 2017, and our business operations and financial performance could be adversely affected by changes in our relationship with our employees or changes to U.S. or foreign employment regulations.***

We had approximately 67,200 employees worldwide as of December 30, 2017. This means we have a significant exposure to changes in domestic and foreign laws governing our relationships with our employees, including wage and hour laws and regulations, fair labor standards, minimum wage requirements, overtime pay, unemployment tax rates, workers' compensation rates, citizenship requirements and payroll taxes, which likely would have a direct impact on our operating costs. Approximately 59,200 of those employees were outside of the United States. A significant increase in minimum wage or overtime rates in countries where we have employees could have a significant impact on our operating costs and may require that we relocate those operations or take other steps to mitigate such increases, all of which may cause us to incur additional costs, expend resources responding to such increases and lower our margins.

In addition, less than 50 of our employees in the United States and a significant number of our international employees are members of labor organizations or are covered by collective bargaining agreements. If there were a significant increase in the number of our employees who are members of labor organizations or become parties to collective bargaining agreements, we would become vulnerable to a strike, work stoppage or other labor action by these employees that could have an adverse effect on our business.

***Anti-takeover provisions of our charter and bylaws, as well as Maryland law, may reduce the likelihood of any potential change of control or unsolicited acquisition proposal that you might consider favorable.***

Our charter permits our Board of Directors, with the approval of a majority of the entire Board and without stockholder approval, to amend our charter to increase or decrease the aggregate number of shares of stock or the number of shares of stock of any class or series that we have the authority to issue. In addition, our Board of Directors may classify or reclassify any unissued shares of common stock or preferred stock and may set the preferences, conversion or other rights, voting powers and other terms of the classified or reclassified shares. Our Board of Directors could establish a series of preferred stock that could have the effect of delaying, deferring or preventing a transaction or a change in control that might involve a premium price for our common stock or otherwise be in the best interest of our stockholders. Our charter also provides that a director may be removed at any time, but only for cause, as defined in our charter, and then only by the affirmative vote of at least two thirds of the votes entitled to be cast generally in the election of directors. We have also elected to be subject to certain provisions of Maryland law that provide that any and all vacancies on our Board of Directors may only be filled by the affirmative vote of a majority of our remaining directors, even if they do not constitute a quorum, and that any director elected to fill a vacancy shall serve for the remainder of the full term of the directorship in which the vacancy occurred. Under Maryland law, our Board of Directors also is permitted, without stockholder approval, to implement a classified board structure at any time.

Our bylaws provide that nominations of persons for election to our Board of Directors and the proposal of business to be considered at a stockholders meeting may be made only in the notice of the meeting, by or at the direction of our Board of Directors or by a stockholder who is entitled to vote at the meeting and has complied with the advance notice procedures of our bylaws. Also, under Maryland law, business combinations between us and an interested stockholder or an affiliate of an interested stockholder, including mergers, consolidations, share exchanges or, in circumstances specified in the statute, asset transfers or issuances or reclassifications of equity securities, are prohibited for five years after the most recent date on which the interested stockholder becomes an interested stockholder. An interested stockholder includes any person who beneficially owns 10% or more of the voting power of our stock or any affiliate or associate of ours who, at any time within the two-year period prior to the date in question, was the beneficial owner of 10% or more of the voting power of our stock. A person is not an interested stockholder under the statute if our Board of Directors approved in advance the transaction by which he otherwise would have become an interested stockholder. However, in approving a transaction, our Board of Directors may provide that its approval is subject to compliance, at or after the time of approval, with any terms and conditions determined by our Board. After the five-year prohibition, any business combination between us and an interested stockholder generally must be recommended by our Board of Directors and approved by two supermajority votes or our common stockholders must receive a minimum price, as defined under Maryland law, for their shares. The statute permits various exemptions from its provisions, including business combinations that are exempted by our Board of Directors prior to the time that the interested stockholder becomes an interested stockholder.

These and other provisions of Maryland law or our charter and bylaws could have the effect of delaying, deferring or preventing a transaction or a change in control that might involve a premium price for our common stock or otherwise be considered favorably by our stockholders.