



Washington Retail Association *Seeks Visionary* **PRESIDENT & CEO**



Lead the Future of Retail Advocacy in Washington State

The Washington Retail Association (WR) is seeking a dynamic and strategic leader to serve as its next President & CEO—a rare and exciting opportunity to guide one of the most respected trade associations on the West Coast into its next era of impact, innovation, and growth.

Retail is undergoing transformational change. From evolving consumer expectations and technological advances to regulatory complexity, supply chain volatility, and the rising challenge of organized retail crime—today's retail leaders face more complexity than ever before. As the voice for over 3,500 storefronts across the state, WR stands at the forefront of these challenges, delivering bold advocacy, trusted expertise, and a united voice for retailers of all sizes and sectors.

The retail industry plays a vital role in Washington's economy, generating \$226 billion in gross taxable income and accounting for 41% of the state's total sales tax revenue. Nearly 400,000 jobs across the state are provided by the industry, making it the second-largest private sector employer. One in four jobs in Washington is supported by retail, and 93% of retailers in the state have fewer than 50 employees—highlighting the importance of small businesses in the sector.

About the Washington Retail Association

Founded in 1987 by forward-thinking merchants, WR has grown into a powerful and influential organization, recognized statewide and nationally for advancing the success and vitality of the retail industry. Representing a broad and diverse membership—including national chains, independent shops, wholesalers, and service providers—WR is a statewide retail association committed to fostering a thriving retail environment that supports the success of retailers and serves the needs of Washington consumers.

With its headquarters in the State Capital of Olympia, WR combines deep policy knowledge, long-standing partnerships, and earned respect in the Capitol to influence meaningful change for its members. Its programs include:

- **Policy & Government Affairs:** A dedicated team that monitors and responds to every state bill and regulation through a retail lens—advocating for policies that protect and grow the industry.
- **Retail Association Services, Inc.:** A for-profit subsidiary offering members access to business tools, through its third-party administrator, Brown & Brown, and enrollment in the Retrospective Rating (Retro) Program—a safety incentive initiative designed to lower workers' compensation costs.
- **Washington Retail Foundation:** A 501(c)(3) organization focused on workforce development, retail career pathways, and community impact.

WR is also an active collaborator, affiliated with national organizations like the National Retail Federation, Retail Industry Leaders Association, and the Council of State Retail Associations. WR also maintains strong partnerships with chambers of commerce and other business advocacy groups throughout the state.



Key Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership

The President & CEO will be responsible for driving the organization's ongoing evolution through bold vision, innovation, and transformative leadership. They will identify new opportunities that deliver value to members, foster strategic partnerships, and promote sustainable revenue growth. Close collaboration with the Board will be essential to advance strategic priorities and uphold sound governance. As the primary spokesperson and public face of the Association, the President & CEO will actively represent the organization to the media, policymakers, industry leaders, and the broader public, ensuring its voice is both influential and respected.

Policy and Advocacy

This role plays a central part in shaping and advocating for policies that sustain a vibrant, safe, and competitive retail sector. The President & CEO will serve as a prominent and trusted voice during legislative sessions, within regulatory environments, and across key coalitions. Through direct lobbying, public speaking, and proactive issue leadership, they will champion the interests of the industry and ensure its priorities are heard at all levels of government and influence.

Membership and Partnerships

Fostering strong relationships with members is a key aspect of this role. The President & CEO will focus on deepening engagement with existing members while also attracting new, diverse stakeholders to strengthen the Association's reach and relevance. They will also build collaborative relationships with state and national associations, leveraging shared knowledge and resources to amplify collective impact.

Organizational and Team Leadership

Leading a dedicated staff and network of professional contractors, the President & CEO will inspire a culture of excellence, collaboration, and shared purpose. They will oversee daily operations, manage budgeting processes, and implement performance metrics to maintain financial health and ensure the organization operates with maximum effectiveness. In addition, they will prioritize the professional development and engagement of the team, cultivating a high-performing and mission-driven workforce.

The Role: President & CEO

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the President & CEO serves as the chief strategist, spokesperson, and operational leader of WR. This individual will inherit a legacy of effective leadership and be empowered to shape the organization's future in response to an evolving retail landscape.

Ideal Candidate

WR is seeking a bold and respected leader who brings:

- Proven executive experience, preferably in a trade association, public affairs, membership and PAC development or industry advocacy leadership.
- Demonstrated success in legislative affairs, policy development, and government relations.
- Strategic acumen and the ability to lead through complexity and change.
- Strong communication, fundraising, and stakeholder engagement skills.
- Experience in the retail industry and commitment to the mission and values of the retail sector.

Why This Role Matters

WR's next President & CEO will step into a role with real influence—guiding an organization with credibility, resources, and a strong foundation toward a future filled with both challenge and opportunity. For a visionary leader with a passion for advocacy, innovation, and service, this is a unique opportunity to make a lasting impact on one of the most vital sectors of Washington's economy.

**Preliminary screening of applications
will begin early September**



WASHINGTON RETAIL
ASSOCIATION



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Qualifications

The ideal candidate will have progressive experience in executive leadership roles, with a strong record of hands-on management. A bachelor's degree is required; an advanced degree is desirable. Demonstrated experience in financial management is essential, with a strong preference for candidates who have successfully overseen budgets and balance sheets in the range of \$2–\$5 million or more. The candidate must possess the financial acumen to ensure compliance, manage risk, and drive performance across multi-faceted financial operations.

Compensation & Benefits

Washington Retail Association offers a highly competitive executive compensation and benefits package designed to attract and retain top leadership talent. Key components include:

- **Base Salary Range:** \$180,000 – \$230,000, commensurate with experience and qualifications
- **Annual Performance-Based Incentive Bonus Opportunity**
- **Participation in an Executive 457(b) Deferred Compensation Plan**
- **Generous Paid Time Off, including Vacation and Sick Leave**
- **Comprehensive Benefits Package**, including 100% employer-paid health and dental coverage, and a 3% Safe Harbor retirement plan contribution

Final compensation will be determined based on the selected candidate's experience, credentials, and other job-related factors, in accordance with applicable laws.



To Be Considered

The Washington Retail Association is an equal opportunity employer and we encourage all qualified candidates to submit both a cover letter and resume via candidate web portal.

Cover letters should be addressed to Theresa Treat, WR HR Advisory Chair, and thoughtfully crafted to articulate your interest in the position and fit for the role. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. Preliminary screening will begin early September.

Learn more and apply at:
washingtonretail.org/ceosearch