

# AMERICANS FOR FREE ★ TRADE

January 29, 2021

Dear Members of the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress,

Congratulations on becoming a Member of the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress. We appreciate your dedication to public service and your willingness to make a difference in the lives of everyday Americans.

Our companies and associations joined together to form Americans for Free Trade in 2018. Our coalition represents every part of the U.S. economy including manufacturers, farmers and agribusinesses, retailers, technology companies, service suppliers, natural gas and oil companies, importers, exporters, and other supply chain stakeholders. Collectively, we employ tens of millions of Americans, including many of your constituents, through our vast supply chains.

The 117<sup>th</sup> Congress is beginning during a period of unprecedented difficulty and uncertainty for American families and American businesses. As businesses around the country try to implement and sustain a full and successful recovery from the ongoing economic harm caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, especially during a resurgence of cases and new restrictions on business operations, they need as much certainty as possible. That certainty can be provided in a number of ways, including by collaborating with our trading partners and allies to address violations of U.S. trade law, and by negotiating trade agreements that open up markets for – rather than trigger retaliation against – American exporters and the tens of millions of workers who rely on export markets around the world.

One area that needs immediate attention relates to our tariff policy. Over the last several years, American businesses and families have been assessed more than \$85 billion<sup>1</sup> in additional tariffs. These tariffs have resulted in less money in the pockets of American families<sup>2</sup>, a slowdown in U.S. manufacturing<sup>3</sup>, and decreased competitiveness for American businesses vis-à-vis their counterparts in Europe and Asia. Tariffs are taxes. They have created tremendous uncertainty and financial pain for American families, American workers, and American businesses.

As the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress considers bold new measures to address the ongoing public health and economic crises, we urge Members to examine closely the negative impact that tariffs have caused to American families, American workers, and American businesses over the last several years and consider a thorough study of whether they have met their stated objectives. This should

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<sup>1</sup> CBP Trade Statistics, available at <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/trade> (last visited 12/19/2020).

<sup>2</sup> See The Budget and Economic Outlook: 2020 to 2030, Congressional Budget Office, p. 33 (“As a result, tariffs are also projected to reduce average real household income by \$1,277 (in 2019 dollars) in 2020.”).

<sup>3</sup> See Flaaen, Aaron, and Justin Pierce, “Disentangling the Effects of the 2018-2019 Tariffs on a Globally Connected U.S. Manufacturing Sector,” Federal Reserve Board (Dec. 23, 2019).

include a request to the independent, bipartisan U.S. International Trade Commission to conduct an economic analysis regarding the impact of the tariffs in key areas, such as American jobs, manufacturing, competitiveness, innovation, and economic growth. In addition, we urge the appropriate committees of jurisdiction to examine the effectiveness of the tariffs and the section 301 product exclusion process administered by the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR).

As the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress conducts these important oversight activities, we also ask that Members urge USTR to take the following immediate actions:

- Reinstating the section 301 product exclusion process, including a retroactive extension for product exclusions that expired during 2020 to provide economic relief and predictability for American businesses, workers, and families;
- Improving the section 301 process to ensure it is administered in a fair, transparent, and predictable manner;
- Automatically extending all section 301 product exclusions for COVID response items so that American families and businesses can get the personal protective equipment, cleaning equipment, and manufacturing inputs they need to respond to the ongoing public health emergency;
- Resolving ongoing trade disputes through targeted actions and concerted bilateral engagement that reduces trade barriers and opens markets for American exporters – not one that imposes additional burdens on American businesses, American workers, and American families through tariffs and closes markets when trading partners retaliate.

Lifting the additional tariffs is a simple, straightforward way to provide an economic boost to American families, American workers, and American businesses and to help ensure a successful economic recovery. It is also an important step to repairing relationships with U.S. trading partners and allies and restoring our standing on the world stage.

If you have any questions about the AFT coalition, please visit our website at [www.americansforfreetrade.com](http://www.americansforfreetrade.com) or email us at [info@americansforfreetrade.com](mailto:info@americansforfreetrade.com).

Sincerely,

Accessories Council	American Bridal & Prom Industry Association (ABPIA)
ACT   The App Association	American Chemistry Council
Agriculture Transportation Coalition (AgTC)	American Coatings Association, Inc. (ACA)
ALMA, International (Association of Loudspeaker Manufacturing and Acoustics)	American Down and Feather Council
American Apparel & Footwear Association (AAFA)	American Fly Fishing Trade Association
American Association of Exporters and Importers (AAEI)	American Home Furnishings Alliance
American Association of Port Authorities	American Lighting Association
American Bakers Association	American Petroleum Institute
	American Pyrotechnics Association
	American Rental Association
	American Specialty Toy Retailing Association

American Wind Energy Association  
Arizona Technology Council  
Arkansas Grocers and Retail Merchants Association  
Association For Creative Industries  
Association for PRINT Technologies  
Association of Equipment Manufacturers (AEM)  
Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers  
Auto Care Association  
Beer Institute  
BSA | The Software Alliance  
California Retailers Association  
Carolina Loggers Association  
Chemical Industry Council of Delaware (CICD)  
Coalition of New England Companies for Trade (CONNECT)  
Coalition of Services Industries (CSI)  
Colorado Retail Council  
Columbia River Customs Brokers and Forwarders Assn.  
Computer & Communications Industry Association (CCIA)  
Computing Technology Industry Association (CompTIA)  
Consumer Brands Association  
Consumer Technology Association  
Council of Fashion Designers of America (CFDA)  
CropLife America  
Customs Brokers & Freight Forwarders Assn. of Washington State  
Customs Brokers & Freight Forwarders of Northern California  
Distilled Spirits Council of the United States  
Electronic Transactions Association  
Experiential Designers and Producers Association (EDPA)  
Fashion Accessories Shippers Association (FASA)  
Fashion Jewelry & Accessories Trade Association  
Flexible Packaging Association  
Florida Ports Council  
Florida Retail Federation  
Footwear Distributors and Retailers of America (FDRA)  
Fragrance Creators Association  
Game Manufacturers Association  
Gemini Shippers Association  
Georgia Retailers  
Global Business Alliance  
Global Chamber®  
Global Cold Chain Alliance  
Greeting Card Association  
Halloween Industry Association  
Home Fashion Products Association  
Home Furnishings Association  
Household and Commercial Products Association  
Idaho Retailers Association  
Illinois Retail Merchants Association  
Independent Office Products & Furniture Dealers Association (IOPFDA)  
Indiana Retail Council  
Information Technology Industry Council (ITI)  
International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA)  
International Bottled Water Association (IBWA)  
International Foodservice Distributors Association  
International Housewares Association  
International Warehouse and Logistics Association  
International Wood Products Association  
ISSA - The Worldwide Cleaning Industry Association  
Jeweler's Vigilance Committee  
Juice Products Association (JPA)  
Juvenile Products Manufacturers Association  
Leather and Hide Council of America  
Licensing Industry Merchandisers' Association  
Los Angeles Customs Brokers and Freight Forwarders Assn.  
Louisiana Retailers Association  
Maine Grocers & Food Producers Association  
Maine Lobster Dealers' Association  
Maritime Exchange for the Delaware River and Bay  
Maryland Retailers Association  
Methanol Institute  
Michigan Chemistry Council  
Michigan Retailers Association  
Minnesota Retailers Association  
Missouri Retailers Association  
Motor & Equipment Manufacturers Association

Motorcycle Industry Council  
NAPIM (National Association of Printing Ink Manufacturers)  
National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS)  
National Association of Chemical Distributors (NACD)  
National Association of Foreign-Trade Zones (NAFTZ)  
National Association of Home Builders  
National Association of Music Merchants  
National Association of Printing Ink Manufacturers  
National Association of Trailer Manufacturers (NATM)  
National Confectioners Association  
National Council of Chain Restaurants  
National Customs Brokers and Freight Forwarders Association of America  
National Fisheries Institute  
National Foreign Trade Council  
National Grocers Association  
National Lumber and Building Material Dealers Association  
National Marine Manufacturers Association  
National Restaurant Association  
National Retail Federation  
National Ski & Snowboard Retailers Association  
National Sporting Goods Association  
Natural Products Association  
New Jersey Retail Merchants Association  
North American Association of Uniform Manufacturers and Distributors (NAUMD)  
North Carolina Retail Merchants Association  
Ohio Council of Retail Merchants  
Outdoor Industry Association  
Pacific Coast Council of Customs Brokers and Freight Forwarders Assns. Inc.  
Pennsylvania Retailers' Association  
PeopleforBikes  
Personal Care Products Council  
Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council  
Petroleum Equipment & Services Association  
Plumbing Manufacturers International  
Power Tool Institute (PTI)  
Promotional Products Association International  
Recreational Off-Highway Vehicle Association  
Retail Association of Maine  
Retail Council of New York State  
Retail Industry Leaders Association  
Retailers Association of Massachusetts  
RISE (Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment)  
RV Industry Association  
San Diego Customs Brokers and Forwarders Assn.  
SEMI  
Snowsports Industries America  
Society of Chemical Manufacturers & Affiliates  
Software & Information Industry Association (SIIA)  
South Dakota Retailers Association  
Specialty Equipment Market Association  
Specialty Vehicle Institute of America  
Sports & Fitness Industry Association  
TechNet  
Telecommunications Industry Association (TIA)  
Texas Retailers Association  
Texas Water Infrastructure Network  
The Airforwarders Association  
The Fertilizer Institute  
The Hardwood Federation  
The Toy Association  
The Vinyl Institute  
Travel Goods Association  
Truck & Engine Manufacturers Association (EMA)  
United States Council for International Business  
United States Fashion Industry Association  
US Global Value Chain Coalition  
US-China Business Council  
Virginia Retail Merchants Association  
Virginia-DC District Export Council (VA-DC DEC)  
Washington Retail Association  
Window and Door Manufacturers Association  
World Pet Association, Inc. (WPA)