

March 10, 2025

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Trump,

I am writing to request you rescind the proposed wide-ranging and indiscriminate tariffs in light of their highly harmful impact on energy costs, businesses, and consumers. Most immediately, these new taxes on imports from Canada will drive up energy costs in Connecticut. Tariffs on many other products from Canada and Mexico, including the planned new taxes on imports of steel, aluminum, and other products, are fundamentally misguided and will impose intolerable costs on Connecticut's defense and commercial manufacturers as well as consumers.

American consumers and businesses have been hard hit already by several years of elevated inflation. Although rates of cost increases have been reduced significantly, the current rate remains above the Federal Reserve's target of two percent¹ and new taxes on imports of critical products including energy from Canada will reignite its rise.

While you have repeatedly claimed that other countries pay for tariffs, the facts are otherwise. Tariffs in the United States are paid by the importer of record, which is often an American company. In practice, the costs of tariffs are passed on to American consumers as higher prices for basic necessities, such as gas, electricity, groceries, and housing. Implementing new exorbitant tariffs undoubtedly will lead to higher prices with devastating impacts on the cost of living for individuals in Connecticut and across the country.

For example, in Connecticut, consumers already face some of the highest electricity rates in the nation, with an average cost of 28.16 cents per kilowatt-hour compared to the national average of 16.26 cents per kilowatt-hour as of December 2024.² The major cause of these higher prices is that the majority of electricity is generated at facilities that rely on higher priced natural gas. Even more importantly however, a significant share of Connecticut's electricity is sourced from cheaper Eastern Canadian hydropower. The ten percent tariff that you have proposed on

¹ "12-month percentage change, Consumer Price Index," U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, last modified February 12, 2025, <https://www.bls.gov/charts/consumer-price-index/consumer-price-index-by-category-line-chart.htm>

² "Electric Power Monthly," U.S. Energy Information Administration, last modified December 31, 2024, https://www.eia.gov/electricity/monthly/epm_table_grapher.php?t=epmt_5_6_a.

energy resources from Canada will directly impact these electricity costs – according to an estimate from ISO New England, this tax would add \$66 million in annual customer costs.³

An additional important concern for Connecticut consumers is the likelihood that Canada will retaliate to your trade policy by shutting off electricity imported into the United States, as has been suggested by Ontario Premier Doug Ford.⁴ This action would accelerate Connecticut’s energy crisis and be disastrous for Americans from Michigan and Minnesota to New York and New England. In addition, 80 percent of New England’s gasoline and diesel fuel is imported from Canada – meaning tariffs would exacerbate Connecticut’s energy problems beyond just residential electricity costs.⁵

Rising energy costs are not the only negative consequences Connecticut consumers will face because of the Trump tariffs as countless essential consumer goods see steep price increases. Canada and Mexico are among Connecticut’s largest trading partners, with our State importing billions of dollars in value of household appliances, electrical equipment, plastics products, cutlery and hand tools, medical equipment and supplies, cleaning products, and many other commodities vital to Connecticut businesses and families.⁶ Further, Connecticut companies export tens of millions of dollars in goods and services to these countries.

The downstream effects of tariffs on input goods such as metals, basic chemicals, wood products, and industrial machinery will further raise prices and damage Connecticut’s economy. Consumer prices are sure to rise on larger purchases, especially on housing. Connecticut is already facing a severe affordable housing shortage and relies on construction materials such as lumber from trading partners like Canada. Tariffs on these goods will only increase construction costs and reduce our State’s ability to address this crisis.

The trade policy your administration is currently pursuing – indiscriminately levying tariffs with no regard for the wellbeing and purchasing power of the American consumer – seems deeply unwise and unfair. These tariffs will most certainly lead to spiraling prices for families in Connecticut and across the country and threaten to wreak havoc on local economies and supply chains. I strongly urge you to reconsider and reverse course on these tariffs for the sake of our country and all Americans.

Sincerely,



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator

³ ISO-New England Inc., Exigent Circumstances Filing of Revisions to Transmission, Markets and Services Tariff to Permit Recovery of Import Duties, Docket No. ER25, page 2, https://www.iso-ne.com/static-assets/documents/100020/exigent_circumstances_filing.pdf.

⁴ Laila Kearney, “Trump’s tariffs on Canada could make US power bills even pricier,” Reuters, March 5, 2025, <https://www.reuters.com/business/energy/trumps-tariffs-canada-could-make-us-power-bills-even-pricier-2025-03-05>.

⁵ James T. Brett, Letter to Secretary Lutnick and Ambassador Greer, The New England Council, March 4, 2025, <http://www.newenglandcouncil.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Tariffs-Letter-Secretary-Lutnick-Ambassador-Greer-2-28-25.pdf>.

⁶ U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, “State Goods Trade with Canada 2024,”; “State Goods Trade with Mexico 2024,” accessed March 10, 2025.