

**Member Advocacy Toolkit**

**ISSUE⏐U.S. Steel and Aluminum tariffs**

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| **ISSUE BRIEF⏐** | **White House imposes steel and aluminum tariffs on EU, Canada and Mexico**  |

**May 31, 2018**

**What is the issue?**

The Trump administration will proceed with tariffs on steel and aluminum from the European Union, Canada and Mexico. The tariffs take effect June 1 and are expected to challenge ongoing NAFTA negotiations. As a result, all three countries have announced retaliatory tariffs on numerous U.S. imports.

Department of Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross made the announcement May 31, citing national security concerns. “Without a strong economy, you can’t have strong national security,” he said. “The president’s overwhelming objective is to reduce our trade deficit.”

According to the [Washington Post](https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/economy/trump-imposes-steel-and-aluminum-tariffs-on-the-european-union-canada-and-mexico/2018/05/31/891bb452-64d3-11e8-a69c-b944de66d9e7_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.07dacd21e110), officials from the three countries – among Washington’s closest allies for decades – dismiss the idea that their shipments threaten domestic security. “Europe, Canada, and Mexico are not China, and you don’t treat allies the same way you treat opponents,” said Sen. Ben Sasse (R-Neb.).

Trade talks with EU, Canada and Mexico will continue as the tariffs – 25 percent on imports of steel and 10 percent on aluminum – take effect. Other trading partners, including Argentina, Australia, Brazil and South Korea have already negotiated voluntary export limits.

**How will this impact my business?**

The commercial foodservice equipment and supplies industry depends on a reliable, global supply chain to make quality products, effectively compete throughout the world and employ thousands of people in North America. Tariffs have already complicated these business fundamentals through price increases and the unintended consequence of creating supply shortages, which may become more significant, constraining production of finished goods.

**What is NAFEM doing to address this issue?**

NAFEM is actively working with the [Coalition of American Metal Manufacturers and Users](https://www.tariffsaretaxes.org/) (CAMMU) to oppose the tariffs, which threaten jobs and global competitiveness.

According to the Coalition, “We are deeply disappointed that the Trump Administration has decided to move forward with imposing steel and aluminum tariffs on the EU, Canada, and Mexico. Make no mistake: restricting the raw material supply in the U.S. and imposing tariffs on imports from our closest trading partners places American manufacturers directly in harm’s way. The pain will by no means be limited to the manufacturing sector; a slew of other U.S.-made products will soon be penalized with retaliatory tariffs by our major export trading partners.

The last time the U.S. imposed steel tariffs in 2002, more than 200,000 American manufacturers lost their jobs. The consequences of these tariffs could be even worse for U.S. companies as the 2002 tariffs did not apply to Canada and Mexico.

Our member manufacturers – even those who only use steel and aluminum produced in the U.S. – have already experienced price spikes and increased lead times for the steel and aluminum inputs they use to make finished products.

The bottom line is that when U.S. manufacturers pay vastly more for steel and aluminum than manufacturers anywhere else in the world, it undermines their ability to compete and be successful on the global market. The tariffs particularly impact small- and medium-sized companies who will lose business to their overseas competitors.  Our members are also reporting concerns over their own exports as their overseas customers shift to non-U.S. suppliers who do not face government restrictions on steel and aluminum.  And when a customer removes you from their supply chain, especially for smaller, family-owned businesses, it is tough to bring that work back to the U.S.

This trade war will negatively impact manufacturing workers who have benefited from the other pro-manufacturing policies already implemented by the Trump Administration – and in most cases more than undoing growth generated from the tax cuts enacted late last year. Plans by U.S. manufacturers to expand will be put on hold indefinitely. Companies will be forced into difficult choices about technology, investment and jobs. We urge President Trump to change course now to protect and sustain millions of U.S. manufacturing jobs.”

**What should my company do to address this issue?**

Members should contact the White House and their U.S. Senators and Representatives immediately to indicate their continued opposition to the tariffs. To help, we’ve attached a toolkit of communications materials.

**Who should I contact with questions?**

For questions on this topic, please contact Charlie Souhrada, CFSP*,* NAFEM’s vice president, regulatory & technical affairs: csouhrada@nafem.org or +1.312.821.0212; or visit www.nafem.org.

**Action Plan**

This is an urgent and fast-moving issue. It is important that members contact the White House and their U.S. Senators and Representatives immediately to indicate their continued opposition to the steel and aluminum tariffs.

1. Identify your elected U.S. Senators and Representatives at this [website](http://www.usa.gov/Agencies.shtml#State,_Local,_and_Tribal_Government.). Be sure to identify officials in all the communities/states in which your business has offices, plants and other operations.
2. Familiarize yourself with the talking points on this issue included within this toolkit. It is essential that members speak with “one voice,” presenting a consistent, compelling message on behalf of their companies and the industry.
3. Given the urgency of this issue, we recommend you telephone and/or email your elected officials and the White House.
* If you call, use the talking points in this toolkit.
* If you send an email or letter, addresses are also included in the [website](https://www.usa.gov/agencies#State,_Local,_and_Tribal_Government.) above. It is important to also email the White House, contacting Benjamin Joseloff, White House/National Economic Council at benjamin.g.joseloff@nsc.eop.gov.
1. If you or your company are active in social media - *and your social media sites are followed by elected officials* – use the social media engagement tools in this toolkit to share your opposition to the tariffs. If your company uses social media and has not yet invited elected officials to follow it, please do so as they often follow progress of businesses and business leaders in their districts via social media.
2. If you have questions, please contact Charlie Souhrada, CFSP*,* NAFEM’s vice president, regulatory & technical affairs: csouhrada@nafem.org or +1.312.821.0212.

**Talking Points**

**What is this document?**

As advocates for our industry, it is essential that all members speak with “one voice,” presenting a consistent, compelling message on behalf of their individual companies and the industry, about this topic.

**How do I use it?**

These talking points are the foundation of all your communication on the steel and aluminum tariffs. Please use them consistently for maximum impact. If you decide to call elected officials, these talking points can be the basis of your conversation.

Our company opposes the tariffs on steel and aluminum imports and is deeply disappointed that the Trump Administration has decided to move forward with imposing these tariffs on the EU, Canada, and Mexico.

* We produce [*list products*] in the U.S., employing [*XX*[people in [*list states*].
* Restricting our raw material supply and imposing tariffs on imports from our closest trading partners places American manufacturers like us directly in harm’s way.
* To maintain and grow our business, we need affordable access to global supply chains. Although we source much of our steel and aluminum requirements domestically, there are many types of steel and aluminum we use that are not domestically available.
* The increased price of imported steel and aluminum is significantly increasing raw materials costs for us and other U.S. manufacturers, making it difficult to compete with imported, non-tariffed finished goods.
* Additionally, we’re seeing significant price increases and supply shortages for domestic metals because of these tariffs on imports.
* Unfortunately, because of these higher prices for both domestic and imported steel and aluminum, and retaliatory tariffs announced by our major export trading partners, we could see lower sales, less investment and potentially, even a loss of jobs.
* While we understand that the President’s intent is to help protect national security and 80,000 U.S. steel industry jobs, we are part of a group of industries that employ more than 1 million people producing products from these metals. The tariffs threaten more jobs than those in the entire steel-producing industry.
* This decision will adversely impact national security, the economy and even the steel industry. It will undermine our competitiveness and limit our ability to domestically produce value-added products – many of which, *like our products,* are used to supply and feed the U.S. military.
* When companies like ours pay vastly more for steel and aluminum than manufacturers anywhere else in the world, it undermines our ability to compete and be successful on the global market.
* The last time the U.S. imposed steel tariffs in 2002, more than 200,000 American manufacturers lost their jobs. The consequences of these tariffs could be even worse for U.S. companies as the 2002 tariffs did not apply to Canada and Mexico.
* It is unfortunate that this trade war will negatively impact manufacturing workers who have benefited from the other pro-manufacturing policies already implemented by the Trump Administration. It could more than undo growth generated from the tax cuts enacted late last year. Plans by companies like ours to expand may be put on hold indefinitely as we are forced into difficult choices about technology, investments and jobs.
* Thank you for doing all you can to urge President Trump to change course now to protect and sustain millions of U.S. manufacturing jobs.

**Email Message**

**What is this document?**

If you prefer to communicate with U.S. Senators and Representatives by email, you can customize this message to do so.

**How do I use it?**

Customize this email by adding the information highlighted in yellow. Email it U.S. Senators and Representatives in all the communities/states in which your business has offices, plants and other operations. Please also use this message to communicate with the White House, contacting Benjamin Joseloff, White House/National Economic Council at benjamin.g.joseloff@nsc.eop.gov.

Honorable First name Last name

Title

Dear Ms. /Mr.:

I am the [add title] of [company name] located in [add town, state for Representatives or state for Senators]. We manufacture foodservice equipment including [add brief description of product line]. We have been in business for [XX] years and employ approximately [XXX] people at this location and [XXX] across our operations.

We’re sending this email to let you know that our company opposes the tariffs on steel and aluminum imports from the EU, Canada and Mexico and is deeply disappointed that the Trump Administration has decided to move forward with imposing these tariffs on the EU, Canada, and Mexico. To maintain and grow our business, we need affordable access to global supply chains.

The increased price of imported steel and aluminum has already significantly increased raw materials costs for us and other U.S. manufacturers, making it difficult to compete with imported, non-tariffed finished goods. Additionally, we’re already seeing significant price increases and delivery delays for domestic metals because of these tariffs on imports. Unfortunately, these higher prices for both domestic and imported steel and aluminum, and retaliatory tariffs announced by our major export trading partners, could lead to lower sales, less investment and potentially, even a loss of jobs.

While we understand that the President’s intent is to help protect national security and 80,000 U.S. steel industry jobs, we are part of a group of industries that employ more than 1 million people producing products from these metals. The tariffs threaten more jobs than those in the entire steel-producing industry.

Additionally, restrictions on basic steel imports will adversely impact national security, the economy and even the steel industry. They will undermine our competitiveness and limit our ability to domestically produce value-added products – many of which, *like our products,* are used to supply and feed the U.S. military.

When companies like ours pay vastly more for steel and aluminum than manufacturers anywhere else in the world, it undermines our ability to compete and be successful on the global market.

It is unfortunate that this trade war will negatively impact manufacturing workers who have benefited from the other pro-manufacturing policies already implemented by the Trump Administration. It could more than undo growth generated from the tax cuts enacted late last year. Plans by companies like ours to expand may be put on hold indefinitely as we are forced into difficult choices about technology, investments and jobs.

Thank you for doing all you can to urge President Trump to change course now to protect and sustain millions of U.S. manufacturing jobs.

Sincerely,

[name]

[title]

[company name]

[phone number]

**Social Media Posts**

**What is this document?**If you or your company are active in social media – *and your social media sites are followed by elected officials* – use the social media engagement tools in this toolkit to share your opposition to the tariffs. If your company uses social media and has not yet invited elected officials to follow it, please do so as they often follow the social media accounts of businesses and business leaders in their districts via social media.

**How do I use it?**

Post the Facebook message and Twitter tweet copy below to your accounts that are followed by elected officials.

**Facebook Post**

Note: Keep your post to under 250 characters, the recommended length to maximize likes, comments and shares.

We oppose the tariffs on steel/aluminum imports. Higher prices and retaliatory tariffs are putting 1+ million US manufacturing jobs at risk. We urge President Trump to change course. Allow us to successfully compete in the global market. #tariffsaretaxes

**Twitter Tweets**

Note: Keep your tweet to between 100 and 120 characters or less to allow others room to retweet (RT).

We oppose tariffs on steel/aluminum imports that risk US jobs & our ability to compete in the global market #tariffsaretaxes

We oppose tariffs on steel/aluminum imports, putting 1+ million US manufacturing jobs at risk #tariffsaretaxes