



U.S. Chamber of Commerce

Suzanne Clark  
President and  
Chief Executive Officer

April 30, 2025

The Honorable Scott Bessent  
The Secretary of the Treasury  
Washington, DC 20220

The Honorable Howard Lutnick  
The Secretary of Commerce  
Washington, DC 20230

The Honorable Jamieson Greer  
United States Trade Representative  
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Secretary Bessent, Secretary Lutnick, and Ambassador Greer:

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce and our members appreciate your efforts to negotiate bilateral agreements with other nations to achieve zero-for-zero reciprocity on tariffs and reduce non-tariff barriers to trade. Agreements that meaningfully reduce barriers to trade expand U.S. exports, supporting more jobs and higher wages for American families. Quickly and successfully concluding these negotiations—and ending the U.S. tariffs imposed in the year to date—is critical given the negative impact recent tariffs are having on the U.S. economy, employers, and American families.

While we are hopeful these agreements can be reached quickly, we are deeply concerned that even if it only takes weeks or months to reach agreements, many small businesses will suffer irreparable harm. The Chamber is hearing from small business owners every day who are seeing their ability to survive endangered by the recent increase in tariff rates.

The Chamber requests the administration take immediate action to save America's small businesses and stave off a recession. Specifically, while you continue to negotiate, we are asking that the administration immediately use its tariff flexibility to implement a tariff exclusion process that:

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1. Provides an automatic exclusion from the new tariffs for any small business importer.
  - Small businesses do not have the margin or capital reserves to sustain the increased tariffs, nor do they have the ability to quickly modify supply chains.
2. Provides automatic exclusions for all products that cannot be produced in the U.S. or are not readily available from domestic sources.
  - Tariffs on coffee, bananas, cocoa, certain minerals and other products not generally available in the U.S. only raise prices for small businesses and consumers. The same applies to tariffs on many other bespoke industrial inputs critical to American manufacturers.
3. Establishes a process for businesses to expeditiously obtain exclusions in situations where the company can demonstrate that, as applied, the tariff imposes significant risks to U.S. employment.
  - More than 40 million American jobs depend on trade. Protecting these jobs and multiplying them is imperative to drive greater economic growth and American prosperity.

The Chamber shares President Trump's goals of expanding American production, creating new jobs, and growing our economy. To those ends, we look forward to continuing to work with the administration to advance pro-growth policies, including a permanent extension of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, deregulation, permitting reform, and expansion of American energy production.

Thank you for your consideration. We would be pleased to discuss this proposal at your convenience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Suzanne P. Clark". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.