

TIM KAINÉ
VIRGINIA

COMMITTEE ON
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COMMITTEE ON
FOREIGN RELATIONS

COMMITTEE ON
THE BUDGET

COMMITTEE ON
HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR,
AND PENSIONS

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4607

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April 30, 2025

Mr. Karl Prutton Polzer
Falls Church, VA 22046-2728

Dear Mr. Polzer:

Thank you for contacting me about President Donald Trump's tariffs and global trade. I appreciate hearing from you.

Engaging in global trade can strengthen economic opportunities for workers and businesses. By increasing access to markets abroad, Americans can benefit from customers who seek to buy our goods and services. Last year alone, Virginia exported \$21.8 billion in goods to foreign markets. At the same time, when countries engage in unfair trade practices, it can hurt American workers and companies. In these cases, targeted tariffs or other trade enforcement actions can help level the playing field or pressure trading partners to reverse unfair policies. I support such targeted actions when they are executed using appropriate authorities and done in a strategic way.

Since the beginning of February, President Trump and his administration have announced and imposed broad, non-strategic tariffs on most of the world, including on some of our closest allies. This kind of near-universal tariff agenda is equivalent to a tax on American consumers and threatens the livelihoods of Virginians, especially our farmers and small businesses. Sweeping tariffs could severely harm domestic manufacturers and would cause a typical American family's annual costs to increase by around \$4,000. Virginians want lower – not higher – costs.

One of the first components of President Trump's misguided tariff agenda was to impose a 25 percent tariff on goods coming in from Canada – a price that would end up getting

passed down to consumers. Canada is a huge customer for Virginia businesses – last year, 15 percent of Virginia’s exports went to Canada. Total trade between Virginia and Canada in 2023 reached \$6.3 billion, with \$3.6 billion in exports and \$2.7 billion in imports. In 2022, top exports included motor vehicles and transportation equipment, such as medium- and heavy-duty trucks. In Southwest Virginia, 56.1 percent of economic output depends on trade. That’s more than half of the economic output of an entire region of the Commonwealth that would be at risk if President Trump’s tariff agenda were to come to fruition.

To protect Virginians and the American people from the impacts of President Trump’s plans to impose broad-based tariffs, I led my colleagues in the Senate in introducing legislation to undo the Administration’s tariffs on Canadian imports. This resolution was “privileged” – meaning that unlike for most legislation, the Majority Leader had no power to block it from coming to the floor for a vote. I am pleased that this legislation passed the Senate in a 51-48 vote, with four of my Republican colleagues joining with all Democrats in voting for it. I am grateful to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle who voted to pass this legislation, and I will continue to put pressure on the House of Representatives to take up this bill.

In addition to my resolution to roll back the Canada tariffs, my colleagues and I are also working on several pieces of legislation that would prevent the tariff power from being abused by any president – present or future. I, alongside my colleague Senator Jeanne Shaheen, have introduced the *Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes on Imported Goods Act* to shield American families and businesses from soaring prices caused by broad-based “emergency” tariffs on imported products. The legislation would keep costs down for imported goods by limiting the president’s authority to impose unlimited tariffs under the *International Emergency Economic Powers Act* (IEEPA), a law that was never designed or intended for such tariffs. This is the emergency power that President Trump invoked for his tariff agenda. The *Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes on Imported Goods Act* would clarify that IEEPA may not be used to increase costs on American families by placing tariffs or tariff-rate quotas on imported goods, while preserving the IEEPA’s existing, targeted provisions that allow the president to impose sanctions in the specific interest of national security. IEEPA is a law intended for targeted actions against foreign adversaries, such as cartels and terrorists, not allies – and my bill would ensure that it is used for its intended purpose and not to incite a frivolous global trade war.

I also introduced the *Stopping Tariffs on Allies and Bolstering Legislative Exercise of (STABLE) Trade Policy Act* with Senator Chris Coons, which would institute a requirement that Congress approve proposed tariffs before a president imposes them on U.S. allies and free trade agreement (FTA) partners. President Trump has abused presidential tariff

authorities to impose tariffs on these close partners under the guise of national security risks and emergencies, undermining treaties and agreements ratified by Congress. The bill reinstates congressional authority over trade policy and limits the president's ability to unilaterally impose tariffs on our allies. The *STABLE Trade Policy Act* was introduced shortly before President Trump's across-the-board tariffs on Canada and Mexico were announced. The two nations, both members of a trade agreement that President Trump himself negotiated in his first term, accounted for almost one-third of all U.S. goods imports last year.

President Trump's broad tariff actions have caused economic chaos and mass uncertainty. In March 2025, U.S. stock markets were roiled by the announcement of President Trump's near-universal imposition of tariffs. In addition, consumers' expectations and small business optimism have plummeted since January. American businesses have faced retaliation on their exports, putting American jobs at risk. It is no surprise that polls have overwhelmingly demonstrated that the American people do not support Trump's trade war. According to a recent survey by Public First, just 28 percent of American adults support specifically applying tariffs to Canada, while 43 percent oppose doing so.

Please be assured that I will stand strong against attempts by President Trump and his administration to unilaterally impose tariffs on our international trading partners. I appreciate hearing from you, and applaud your concern about the negative effects of these tariffs.

Thank you again for contacting me.

Sincerely,

Signature - Tim Kaine