



CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515

Secretary Wilbur Ross
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave NW
Washington, DC 20230

October 24, 2019

Dear Secretary Ross,

I served in the United States Department of Commerce under President Barack Obama, and I greatly admire the Department's mission to promote job creation and economic growth by ensuring fair and reciprocal trade, provide the data necessary to support commerce and constitutional democracy, and foster innovation by setting standards and conducting foundational research and development.

I have had the privilege of working closely with the National Institute of Standards and Technology, which does excellent work to promote U.S. innovation and industrial competitiveness. In particular, the Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnership has been an irreplaceable source of expertise and best practices for small- and mid-size manufacturers in my home state of Michigan.

I am writing to request more information about the Department's response to this Administration's trade policies which are causing direct harm to U.S. businesses, workers and consumers. According to the Census Bureau trade data, my state of Michigan is one of the states most impacted by the 232 Section Steel and Aluminum Tariffs.

As this Administration's tariff-heavy trade strategy creates challenges for manufacturers in Michigan and around the country, I am concerned that the Department of Commerce, the agency tasked with promoting economic growth, is not offering adequate support to struggling American businesses. As a former employee of the Department of Commerce, I am also dismayed by recent reports indicating that the Department is "rudderless," a "disaster," and at its "apex of dysfunction." When the tariff exemption system was announced, the Department of Commerce predicted a 90-day processing time for a request. In the first year of the request process, nearly 76 percent of steel requests took longer than that estimate.

Additionally, the Commerce Department's Section 232 investigation into whether tariffs on autos and auto parts has been completed and delivered to the President. Additional tariffs on the auto sector will harm the hard-working American auto workers, parts suppliers and retailers,

dealers, vehicle service providers, and millions of consumers that depend on a healthy and competitive U.S. auto industry.

I am requesting detailed responses to the questions below.

- How many American companies, or companies that employ American workers, have contacted the Department of Commerce to apply for an exemption to tariffs that were put in place by this Administration?
- How many American companies, or companies that employ American workers, have been granted such an exemption?
- Are you aware of any companies that were forced to lay off American workers after the Department of Commerce rejected their application for a tariff exemption?
- What steps are being taken to ensure that the Department is doing everything possible to protect American businesses from the ongoing negative impacts of this Administration's trade policies?

Sincerely,



Haley M. Stevens
Member of Congress