

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 18, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Republican Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Steny H. Hoyer  
Majority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer  
Democratic Leader  
U.S. Senate

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Republican Leader McCarthy, Majority Leader Hoyer, Majority Leader McConnell, and Democratic Leader Schumer:

Our nation confronts an unprecedented public health and economic emergency due to coronavirus, requiring an unprecedented response from national leaders. As part of that response, we have urged the administration to suspend, for the duration of the emergency, tariffs it has imposed on Chinese imports under Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974 and on aluminum and steel imports from most countries under Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962—contingent on China and other nations agreeing to suspend the counter-tariffs they have placed on American exports in response to the administration’s tariff actions. We believe such a “détente” in the tariff conflict would provide a measure of much-needed relief to millions of American families and businesses during this extraordinarily difficult period.

Today, 161 trade associations representing businesses in every sector urged the President to temporarily suspend these tariffs. If the administration does not respond to this appeal, we respectfully ask you to include a provision in the coronavirus economic support and stimulus package that (1) suspends—or at least meaningfully reduces—existing 301 and 232 tariffs until the emergency is over, (2) prohibits the imposition of additional 301 or 232 tariffs during the emergency, and (3) directs U.S. Customs and Border Protection to refund 301 and 232 tariffs that U.S. businesses have paid to date. Congress delegated to the executive branch the authority to impose tariffs under 301 and 232, and Congress can curtail or circumscribe that authority where appropriate. We believe the current emergency warrants resolute congressional action if the requested administrative action is not forthcoming.

We have long expressed concerns about the adverse impact of 301 and 232 tariffs and counter-tariffs on the American economy, even as we recognize that China’s trade and investment practices violate international rules and necessitate a strong, smart, and strategic response from America and

our allies. We know there are other Members of Congress who are more sympathetic to the administration's tariff actions than we are, and we respect this difference of opinion.

However, we are living in a dramatically different world than we were just several weeks ago. Many American workers and businesses that were once thriving, or at least surviving, now suddenly stand on the precipice of financial ruin. These tariffs and counter-tariffs are making their life more difficult—a strong headwind in what is quickly becoming a violent economic storm—and we have the obligation to relieve that burden to the greatest extent possible.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,



Stephanie Murphy  
Member of Congress



Joe Cunningham  
Member of Congress