

Expanded Section 232 Tariffs on Steel and Aluminum

Updated March 18, 2025

Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962 ([19 U.S.C. §1862](#), as amended) authorizes the President to impose trade restrictions—such as a tariff or quota—if the Secretary of Commerce determines, following an investigation, that imports of a good “threaten to impair” U.S. national security.

In 2018, President Trump proclaimed a [25% tariff on steel](#) and a [10% tariff on aluminum](#) imports from most trading partners under Section 232. During both the Trump and Biden Administrations, the United States negotiated exemptions for some U.S. trading partners (see **Figure 1**) and granted [entity-specific exclusions](#) as well as [General Approved Exclusions \(GAEs\)](#) applicable to any importer.

On February 10, 2025, President Trump made changes to the Section 232 [steel](#) and [aluminum](#) tariffs, including the following:

- increased aluminum tariffs from 10% to 25%, eliminated all country exemptions, and terminated all existing GAEs effective March 12, 2025;
- expanded the scope of products covered by the tariffs; and
- prohibited the Commerce Secretary from considering new product exclusions from February 11, 2025 (entity-specific product exclusions to “remain effective until their expiration date or until excluded product volume is imported, whichever occurs first”).

Congress may consider possible positive and negative implications of expanded tariffs for the U.S. economy, U.S. relations with trading partners, and issues related to congressional trade authorities.

Background

In 2018, President Trump imposed Section 232 tariffs on steel and aluminum imports after the Commerce Secretary determined that [steel](#) and [aluminum](#) imports were threatening to impair U.S. national security by “weakening” the U.S. internal economy. In 2020, President Trump expanded the tariffs to include [certain derivatives of steel and aluminum articles](#). The Biden Administration largely maintained these tariffs and, in 2023, [increased tariffs on Russian aluminum imports to 200%](#) in response to Russia’s war on Ukraine.

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In response to the Section 232 tariffs, [various trading partners](#) implemented [retaliatory tariffs against U.S. exports](#), some of which were suspended after negotiations. The Trump Administration granted Australia, Canada, and Mexico full exemptions while other partners received exemptions after negotiating import quotas. In 2022, the Biden Administration granted a [temporary tariff suspension to Ukraine](#), which was [extended](#) to June 2025.

Figure 1. Section 232 Steel and Aluminum Country Exemptions

As of February 2025

	STEEL	ALUMINUM
Argentina*	●	●
Australia	●	●
Brazil*	●	
Canada	●	●
European Union countries*	●	●
Japan*	●	
Mexico	●	●
South Korea*	●	
Ukraine**	●	
United Kingdom*	●	●
* Negotiated import quota		
** Temporary tariff suspension		

Source: CRS, from various presidential proclamations.

February 2025 Presidential Proclamations

President Trump stated that he is terminating country exemptions and product exclusions for the Section 232 steel and aluminum tariffs because such measures “undermine” the tariffs’ objectives, such as achieving U.S. domestic capacity utilization rate targets, and “threaten to impair” U.S. national security. Among the reasons President Trump cited were increased U.S. steel and aluminum imports from exempted countries, concerns about other countries legally or illegally avoiding tariffs by investing in and exporting through exempted countries (sometimes called “transshipment”), and product exclusions granted to a “significant volume of imports.” In the [proclamation on steel imports](#), President Trump claimed a lack of “sufficient action” by exempted partners “to address non-market excess capacity caused primarily by China, or sufficient cooperation ... on issues like trade remedies and customs matters or monitoring bilateral steel trade.”

The February 2025 proclamations may significantly expand the scope of derivative steel and aluminum articles subject to the Section 232 tariffs (see **Table 1**). According to 2024 data from the U.S. Census Bureau, the [2020 Proclamation](#) covered derivative products worth \$457 million in U.S. imports (not accounting for country exemptions or product exclusions), while the February 2025 proclamations list derivative products worth \$150 billion in U.S. imports. Tariffs apply only to the steel or aluminum content of derivative products and do not apply to derivative products processed abroad using steel or aluminum originally “melted and poured” (steel) or “smelted and cast” (aluminum) in the United States. U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) has issued instructions on reporting [steel](#) and [aluminum](#) content in derivative products. The Section 232 tariffs apply in addition to most-favored nation (MFN) tariffs, which are imposed on goods from trading partners without a U.S. [free trade agreement](#). The tariffs are also in addition to other U.S. duties imposed as [trade remedies](#), or under the [International Emergency Economic Powers Act](#) or [Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974](#).

The expanded tariffs went into effect on March 12 without any exemptions (tariffs on Russian aluminum remain at 200%). Some previously-exempted partners have announced retaliatory measures. On March 13, [Canada](#) implemented 25% tariffs on C\$29.8 billion (\$21 billion) worth of U.S. imports. The [European Union](#) stated that it will reimpose [previously-suspended](#) retaliatory tariffs on April 1 and is considering imposing a second tranche of tariffs in mid-April, for a combined total of up to €26 billion (\$28 billion) worth of U.S. goods.

Some U.S. industry groups and Members of Congress [praised](#) the tariff actions. Other industry groups and Members expressed concerns about the [impact on U.S. companies](#) and the [imposition of tariffs on allies](#). [Some observers](#) contend the U.S. tariffs and potential [foreign retaliation](#) could cause inflation and price increases for U.S. consumers and producers and affect U.S. exports. In response to direction from Congress, the U.S. International Trade Commission (USITC) [analyzed](#) the economic impacts of the Section 232 steel and aluminum tariffs from 2018 to 2021. USITC found that the tariffs reduced steel and aluminum imports by 24% and 31%, respectively. USITC also found that the tariffs increased the U.S. market price of steel products by 2.4% and aluminum products by 3.6%.

Issues for Congress

Congress might consider the potential benefits and costs of expanded Section 232 tariffs for the U.S. economy, relations with trading partners including global discussions on overcapacity, and whether these actions are consistent with [U.S. international trade obligations](#).

Congress may also consider its role in trade policy vis-a-vis the executive branch. Some Members of Congress have proposed legislation to increase oversight of tariffs on imports from U.S. allies or free trade agreement partners ([S. 348](#)). In previous Congresses, some Members of Congress introduced legislation to assert a congressional role related to Section 232 actions (e.g., 117th Congress, [S. 746](#); 118th Congress, [S. 1060](#), [S. 5066](#), [H.R. 2549](#)). During the 116th Congress, some Members proposed mandating a product exclusion process for Section 232 tariffs ([S. 2362](#)).

Table 1. U.S. Steel and Aluminum Imports Potentially Subject to Expanded Section 232 Tariffs

2024 annual data; millions of U.S. dollars

Partner	Value (\$ mil.)	% Share Total Imports	Partner	Value (\$ mil.)	% Share Total Imports
<i>Steel</i>			<i>Steel Derivatives</i>		
Canada	\$7,169.5	23%	China	\$15,076.8	28%
European Union	\$6,832.0	22%	Mexico	\$8,042.9	15%
Mexico	\$3,499.9	11%	European Union	\$7,405.3	14%
South Korea	\$2,923.9	9%	Canada	\$5,577.3	10%
Brazil	\$2,911.1	9%	Taiwan	\$3,518.4	7%
Japan	\$1,704.8	5%	South Korea	\$2,668.8	5%
Taiwan	\$1,317.5	4%	India	\$2,511.6	5%
Vietnam	\$1,129.8	4%	Vietnam	\$2,025.1	4%
China	\$798.1	3%	Japan	\$1,627.0	3%
India	\$493.3	2%	Thailand	\$1,183.0	2%

Partner	Value (\$ mil.)	% Share Total Imports	Partner	Value (\$ mil.)	% Share Total Imports
All Others	\$2,719.8	9%	All Others	\$3,963.6	7%
Total Steel Imports	\$31,499.5	100%	Total Steel Derivative Imports	\$53,599.8	100%
<i>Aluminum</i>			<i>Aluminum Derivatives</i>		
Canada	\$9,438.5	51%	Mexico	\$22,890.3	22%
European Union	\$1,548.5	8%	China	\$21,820.2	21%
United Arab Emirates	\$1,147.3	6%	European Union	\$13,054.4	13%
China	\$818.9	4%	Canada	\$11,959.0	12%
South Korea	\$803.0	4%	South Korea	\$5,864.5	6%
Bahrain	\$605.7	3%	Japan	\$5,419.5	5%
Argentina	\$492.8	3%	Taiwan	\$4,781.4	5%
India	\$448.6	2%	Vietnam	\$3,956.5	4%
Mexico	\$396.9	2%	United Kingdom	\$2,160.7	2%
South Africa	\$393.4	2%	Thailand	\$2,005.7	2%
All Others	\$2,432.5	13%	All Others	\$8,754.2	9%
Total Aluminum Imports	\$18,526.1	100%	Total Aluminum Derivative Imports	\$102,666.4	100%

Source: CRS. General imports data from the U.S. Census Bureau (accessed via Trade Data Monitor) using Harmonized Tariff Schedule product codes listed in Proclamations 9704 and 9705 of March 8, 2018; 9980 of January 24, 2020; and 10895 and 10896 of February 10, 2025.

Notes: According to Proclamations 10895 and 10896 of February 10, 2025, for derivative products, Section 232 tariffs are to apply only to the steel or aluminum content of the derivative product and would not apply to derivative products processed in other countries using steel or aluminum that was “melted and poured” (steel) or “smelted and cast” (aluminum) in the United States. Also note, the lists of steel derivative products and aluminum derivative products contain some duplication (totaling approximately \$6.5 billion in 2024 imports).

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