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USTR Seeks Comments on China Tariffs – Your Input Could Reduce Your Import Costs

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SUMMARY

On June 2, the Office of the United States Trade Representative (“USTR”) issued a press release and Federal Register notice inviting public comments on a new “U.S.-China Board of Trade” mechanism designed to manage bilateral trade in non-sensitive products. If your company imports products from China or exports to China, this represents a potential opportunity to advocate for tariff relief.

According to the notice, “[t]he U.S.-China Board of Trade is a positive way to manage the realities of the U.S.-China economic relationship and the imperative to defend American workers and industries from negative aspects of trading with China.”

BACKGROUND

In 2018, the USTR initiated an investigation under Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974 (Section 301) into China's acts, policies, and practices related to technology transfer, intellectual property, and innovation. As a result, the Trump Administration assessed import duties on many products of China entering the United States. In September 2024, the USTR concluded a four-year review of the Section 301 investigation. Existing tariffs were maintained and tariffs on certain strategic sectors were increased. The USTR is now in the process of seeking public input for a second four-year review of Section 301 tariffs.

KEY DEADLINES

Initial Comments Due: July 10, 2026

Rebuttal/Response Comments Due: July 27, 2026

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOUR BUSINESS

If you import from China, the USTR is specifically seeking input on which Chinese products should be classified as “non-sensitive” and therefore eligible for favorable tariff modifications—potentially reducing or eliminating current additional U.S. tariffs. Products identified as non-sensitive would be those posing minimal economic, national security, or supply chain resilience risks.

Identified Topics

- Specific products (at the HS 8-digit level) that should qualify for tariff relief because they are non-sensitive
- Import volumes and market share data
- How tariff reductions would benefit (or potentially harm) U.S. consumers, workers, and producers
- Any tariff inversion issues affecting your supply chain
- How the U.S.-China Board of Trade should function, generally

The mechanism also addresses U.S. exports to China. The USTR seeks input on which U.S. products currently subject to Chinese tariffs should be eligible for reduction to China's Most Favored Nation (MFN) rates.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

Submit written comments through USTR's online portal using docket number USTR-2026-0430 entitled "Request for Comments on the Scope and Operation of a Mechanism to Promote Reciprocal Managed Trade with China."

To make a rebuttal or a response, use docket number USTR-2026-0431 entitled "Rebuttal/Response to Comments on the Scope and Operation of a Mechanism to Promote Reciprocal Managed Trade with China."

NEXT STEPS

We recommend that affected companies identify relevant products currently subject to additional tariffs, gather supporting data (import/export volumes, market impacts, supply chain information), and consider consulting with counsel to prepare substantive comments.

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