

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 25, 2017

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump;

We write to you in regards to investigations initiated under section 232(b)(1)(A) of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962 (the "Act") (19 U.S.C. 1862(b)(1)(A)) to determine whether steel and aluminum imports threaten to impair our national security. We share the President's strong commitment to ensuring both America's security and a level playing field for American manufacturing. However, if the scope of current 232 investigations does not exclude tinplate steel and aluminum, primary components used in the domestic manufacturing of food packaging and ones with no defense or national security application, we are concerned it could negatively affect U.S. food processors and increase food prices for consumers.

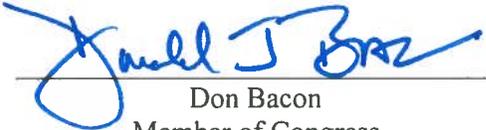
Tinplate steel is required for use in canned food packaging because it helps to extend the shelf life of the product. Domestic can manufacturers rely on imports of tinplate steel (classified under HTSUS subheadings 7210.12.0000, 7210.70.6090, 7210.50.0000, and 7210.50.0000) to meet approximately 42 percent of domestic demand. Given that tinplate steel makes up approximately 60 percent of the cost of the can, even a tariff as low as 5 percent on imported tinplate steel would increase the cost of goods by \$0.042 each. This cost would inevitably get passed on to consumers who, in many cases, are the most economically vulnerable and food insecure.

In addition to tinplate steel, we are concerned that the broad scope of the 232 investigations may impact aluminum as well. Aluminum foil is a critical input needed by processed product manufacturers (including for confectionery wrappings, condiment sachets, drink pouches, and other food packaging). When coupled with the current International Trade Commission antidumping investigation into Chinese aluminum foil imports, the U.S. food packaging and manufacturing industries could face significant increases in food packaging input costs due to aluminum foil, particularly domestic ultra-thin foil, not being available in the U.S.

While generating more than \$100 billion in total economic activity in the U.S. and employing tens of thousands of American workers every year, the canned food supply chain and flexible packaging industry provide some of the safest, most affordable food available to consumers today. As the Administration considers actions on imports, we encourage you to not let these vibrant domestic industries get unnecessarily caught in the crosshairs.

Due to the lack of sufficient domestic supply of tinplate steel and aluminum, as well as the fact that they do not pose a risk to national security, we strongly urge you to protect these important industries by excluding tinplate steel and aluminum for food packaging from any tariffs or other trade restrictions.

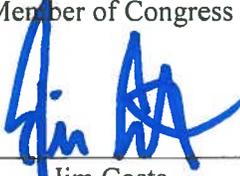
Sincerely,


Don Bacon
Member of Congress

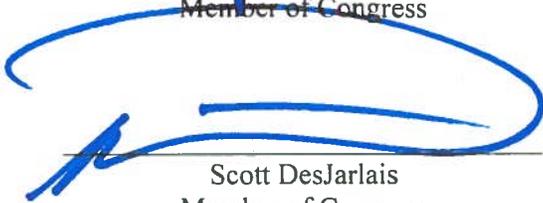

Rod Blum
Member of Congress



Lisa Blunt Rochester
Member of Congress



Jim Costa
Member of Congress



Scott DesJarlais
Member of Congress



John Garamendi
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Bill Huizenga
Member of Congress



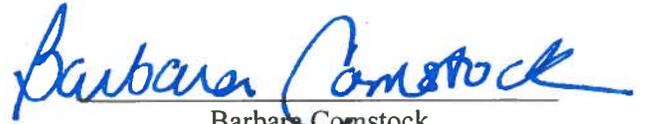
Ron Kind
Member of Congress



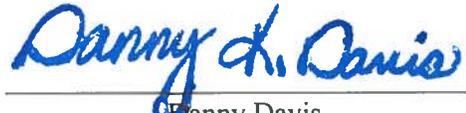
Frank A. LoBiondo
Member of Congress



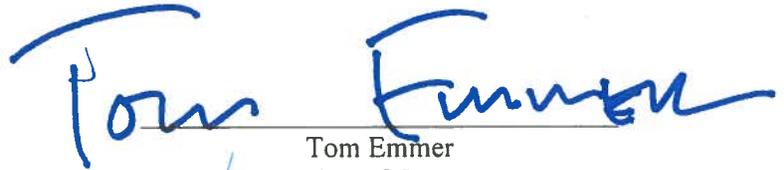
Steve Russell
Member of Congress



Barbara Comstock
Member of Congress



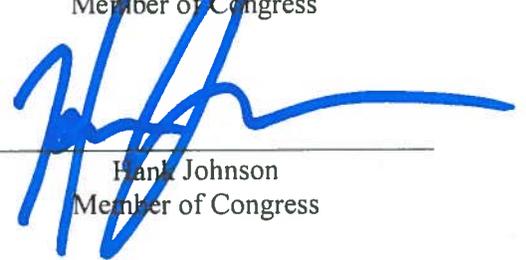
Danny Davis
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Tom Emmer
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Sam Graves
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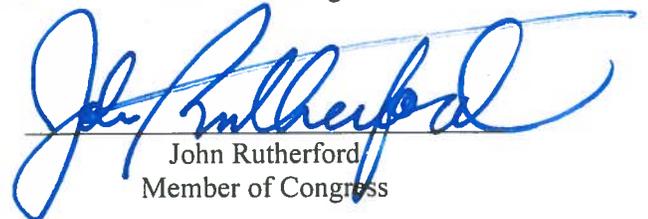
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CC: U.S. Secretary of Commerce Wilbur L. Ross, Jr.
U.S. Trade Representative Robert E. Lighthizer
National Economic Council Director Gary Cohn
National Trade Council Director Peter Navarro