

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 3, 2025

Dear Secretary Lutnick:

At a time when our nation is experiencing an unprecedented housing affordability crisis, President Trump's decision last month to impose up to 25 percent tariffs on goods from Canada and Mexico – two of our most important trading partners – is reckless and self-defeating, and it will drastically increase the cost of constructing housing in the United States. I strongly believe these across-the-board tariffs must be reversed as a way to prevent higher prices on Americans. With the President's self-imposed 30-day pause on the tariffs set to expire tomorrow, and in light of his perplexing Executive Order last week claiming lumber imports to be a national security threat<sup>1</sup>, I urge you to work with the President to at least provide tariff exemptions for critical construction materials so that we can support housing development, help communities address the severe housing shortage, and lower overall housing costs for hardworking families across the country.

In Nevada and throughout the nation, exorbitant housing prices are putting a strain on already-tight household budgets. At a time when high interest rates and low inventory are driving up housing costs, the need to build affordable homes is growing more acute by the day. However, it is simply too expensive to build affordable housing in the current high-cost environment. Labor shortages, supply chain disruptions, and fluctuating material costs all drive up construction costs, making it harder to develop housing that is affordable for low- and middle-income families.

Now is the time to increase the supply of affordable housing by incentivizing housing construction and reducing barriers to development. President Trump's tariffs – including on Canadian lumber – would have the opposite effect, raising prices on construction materials and increasing uncertainty for homebuilders. At such a crucial time, the last thing the construction industry needs are tariffs on key imports that would only exacerbate affordability challenges. While we can and should work to diversify our supply of critical homebuilding materials in the future, that will take time, and the need to address the affordable housing crisis is urgent. Imposing tariffs on the very trading partners who ensure we have a strong and stable supply of construction materials would be a self-inflicted wound of the highest magnitude. Such blanket tariffs would undercut our ability to source stable supplies of key building materials at competitive prices, and it is renters and homebuyers who will end up paying the price.

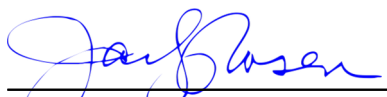
Compounding our nation's housing affordability crisis through the imposition of reckless tariffs would be devastating and must be reconsidered. To that end, I respectfully ask that you work with the President to exempt critical construction materials, including lumber, from any tariffs imposed on Canada and Mexico. Doing so will not harm our national security, but will instead invest in the economic security of Americans across the country who are struggling to afford a home in an era of rising costs.

Thank you for your consideration.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/03/addressing-the-threat-to-national-security-from-imports-of-timber-lumber/>

Sincerely,



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Jacky Rosen  
United States Senator