

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 21, 2019

The Honorable Robert E. Lighthizer
United States Trade Representative
600 17th Street NW
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Ambassador Lighthizer:

We write to express concerns regarding proposed actions involving list 4 of the Section 301 tariffs on China that could severely impact the Georgia Port Authority and commerce in the southeastern United States. As you know, the President's effort to address unfair and harmful trade practices committed by China is a top tier issue and something we support. Correcting trade imbalances and creating a level playing field for American businesses and manufacturers will ensure a thriving economy for the future.

With regard to analyzing impacts on American manufacturing in the United States, we are glad the department is working to be both fair and tough in its stance on tariffs. However, as USTR continues its review of the fourth tranche of Section 301 tariffs, we hope you and your staff will consider the importance of fairness and predictability, so that American businesses can continue to create jobs and increase economic prosperity.


Georgia is home to two major shipping ports, the Port of Savannah and the Port of Brunswick. In FY2017, our ports imported and exported 499,836 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEU), which represent 7,809,178 tons of goods, more than half of which were exports. Thanks to the President's commitment to fund the Savannah Harbor Expansion Project, imports and exports coming through Georgia's ports are set to increase in the coming years. These goods are loaded and offloaded using ship-to-shore cranes (HTUS code 8426.19.00), which were originally included in list 3 of the Section 301 tariffs, but were subsequently removed after you determined they should not be subject to the Section 301 tariffs. Consistent with that decision, we urge you to remove ship-to-shore cranes from the proposed list 4 of the Section 301 tariffs. Doing so would allow our ports to continue with important infrastructure upgrades and will prevent major disruptions to trade in the southeastern United States.

Furthermore, we ask that USTR remove all items that were initially removed from previous Section 301 tranches and then added again to list 4. Doing so will help to ensure predictability, reinforce the integrity of the exemption process, and reduce redundancy. Thank you for your consideration on this important matter.

Regards,



Johnny Isakson
United States Senator



David Perdue
United States Senator