

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 1, 2020

President Donald Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington DC 20500

Dear President Trump:

We have a shared interest in addressing unfair trading practices and protecting American jobs in the domestic aluminum industry, but it is clear that your current policies are not working. In 2018, when your Administration first announced Section 232 tariffs on steel and aluminum, we hoped that your efforts would be targeted towards China and similar bad actors, while avoiding damaging relationships with some of our closest allies and trading partners.

Two years later, excess capacity in China is still a serious problem for the American aluminum industry, and just last week, Alcoa announced that it would be curtailing operations of its Intalco facility in Ferndale, Washington. In its announcement, Alcoa cited falling prices and increased global surplus of aluminum. Alcoa has indicated it will respond by laying off 700 employees, which will have a devastating impact on the surrounding community. It is evident that your Administration's approach to Chinese overcapacity so far has not had its intended effect and we urge you to prioritize resolving this issue.

First, we strongly urge you to fix the broken exclusion process. It is clearly appropriate to grant some companies, especially small businesses, exclusions if necessary. However, it is troubling that the Department of Commerce granted exclusions at volumes that vastly exceed current import levels. The Aluminum Association sent a letter to Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross on April 22nd about this issue, and we strongly urge you to address this as soon as possible.

Second, we believe your "phase one" deal with China was a missed opportunity. While some of the commitments on forced technology transfer and intellectual property were a step in the right direction, the agreement did nothing to address the issue of Chinese overcapacity or contain any meaningful commitments from China to reform its state-owned enterprises (SOEs). In fact, the deal could strengthen Chinese SOEs since China will likely have to rely on them to meet its purchase commitments of American goods. Without addressing China's excess capacity and SOE reform, any subsequent deal with China will be another missed opportunity.

Finally, this Administration must start working closely with our allies to combat China's predatory trade practices. We may have areas of disagreement with our allies on some trade issues, but this is one area where working together has always had the potential to have an important impact.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter, and we are happy to work with you as we fight to save American jobs in the aluminum industry.

Sincerely,



Suzan DelBene
Member of Congress



Rick Larsen
Member of Congress



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



Patty Murray
United States Senator

CC: Secretary Wilbur Ross
Ambassador Robert Lighthizer