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National Retail Federation condemns Trump's tariffs on China

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China has become an important market for China. Image credit: The Luxury Conversation

By STAFF REPORTS

The National Retail Federation has hit back strongly at President Donald Trump's latest tariffs on imported goods, asserting that it would be harmful for both business and consumers.

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President Trump has repeatedly threatened to institute tariffs on goods, particularly from China, over the past few months, and has added to the growing list this week. These threats have drawn criticism from around the world, and now the country's largest retail trade organization is weighing in as well.

"The latest list of \$200 billion of products to be subject to tariffs against China doubles down on a reckless strategy that will boomerang back to harm U.S. families and workers," said David French, senior vice president for government relations at NRF, in a statement. "The threat to the U.S. economy is less about a question of if' and more about when' and how bad.'

"Tariffs on such a broad scope of products make it inconceivable that American consumers will dodge this tax increase as prices of everyday products will be forced to rise," he said. "And the retaliation that will follow will destroy thousands of U.S. jobs and hurt farmers, local businesses and entire communities."

Tariff threats

Donald Trump has made no secret of his plans to heavily tax imported goods from perceived rival countries, most notably China.

Much of the president's rhetoric has focused on vilifying China and claims that the country is profiting greatly off imbalances between China and the U.S.

In retaliation, the president has suggested that heavy tariffs on imported goods from China will help boost the American economy, but many experts disagree.

The latest voice to join the chorus of criticism is the NRF, which has issued a harsh statement against the tariffs. The NRF cites inflating prices and difficulty of operations as major downsides of potential tariffs.



David French. Image credit: NRF

The increased calls for tariffs from President Trump come at a time when China is doing just the opposite. The Chinese government is significantly cutting tariffs on imported beauty products including skin and hair cosmetics in a move expected to boost the growth of brands such as Estée Lauder and Lancôme.

Tariffs on imported beauty products will drop from 8.4 percent to 2.9 percent starting July 1. According to data from Kantar, as Chinese consumers continuously desire products from outside of the country, particularly luxury products in the cosmetics category, the lowering of tariffs will be a significant boon for brands targeting the lucrative market ([see story](#)).

"The administration has been pursuing tariffs now for months and we still don't know what the endgame is," Mr. French said. "Now is the time to get back to the negotiating table with China while working through a global coalition that shares our concerns."

"The way things are shaping up, it may be too late, but we hope the administration changes course before we lose the momentum from tax and regulatory reform and return to an era of high prices, job loss and negative growth in our economy," he said.

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