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Wyden Statement Opposing Jamieson Greer's Nomination for U.S. Trade Representative

As Prepared for Delivery

Since this committee last met to consider this nomination, the Trump trade agenda has continued to be a swampy mess. Trump is incredible at getting headlines about trade, but his administration is weaker than Kansas City's offensive line in the Super Bowl when it comes to getting something done for Americans.

And no one in the administration can explain what the plan is, or who - if anyone - is in charge.

To sum up the first three weeks of Trump trade activity: No results. Higher costs for American families and small businesses.

Colleagues, since last week, there has been mass uncertainty about how small packages from China and elsewhere would enter the country. This led to a brief ban by the Postal Service on receiving packages from China at all, and then a rollback of the policy altogether.

No results, higher costs for American families and small businesses.

There have been new tariff threats against countries around the world. Unclear under what law, and which countries or products will be impacted. But if it's anything like his planned tariffs on Mexico and Canada, the proposal will hit working Americans the hardest.

No results, higher costs for American families and small businesses.

And as of yesterday, Trump has slapped new tariffs on steel and aluminum imports. Colleagues, I have supported tariffs on steel and aluminum in the past and I believe new tariffs may well be needed in the future to level the playing field for American manufacturing. But Trump's tariffs are not going to solve the biggest problem, which is China flooding the market with cheap steel and aluminum and eating up America's markets, driving down prices. He is, yet again, wasting time on flashy nonsense—attacking Canada and other allies— instead of trying to help steelworkers on the front lines of a global economic war.

No results, higher costs for American families and small businesses.

Today the committee will vote on the nomination of Jamieson Greer to serve as U.S. Trade Representative. It is my judgement that Mr. Greer will not influence this administration to make the global economy work better for regular Americans, and that he is both unable and unwilling to be the administration's leading voice on trade as the law requires.

If confirmed, he will be a rubber stamp for more Trump trade chaos.

Trump campaigned on slapping blanket tariffs on all imported goods – imposing a multi-trillion dollar tax on everything American families buy from other countries – to pay for billionaire tax cuts. Greer has been in lockstep with Donald Trump, including supporting the use of tariffs for revenue, which is a tax that hits working Americans the hardest.

Mr. Greer has no quarrel with Trump's sweeping tariffs on Canada, Mexico, and China, with no strategy or plan to leverage them into trade wins for American stakeholders. These tariffs have already halted investment in manufacturing, and, if fully imposed, are expected to cost the typical U.S. household over \$1,200 a year.

Targeted and strategic tariffs can be a useful tool to address unfair trade practices and level the playing field for American workers and businesses. But the sweeping tariffs Trump has proposed – and Greer has supported – will jack up prices, cause shortages of necessities like health care and housing, and drive up inflation.

I have no confidence that Mr. Greer will be in the room for important trade and tariff decisions, unlike previous USTRs. Greer has said Donald Trump's use of tariffs to settle scores on issues unrelated to trade are not a trade issue, and therefore not something he would expect to be involved with if confirmed. It's unclear what influence over critical trade decisions Greer will have in the administration – or whether he'll have any at all.

The United States needs a USTR who doesn't pass the buck and is empowered to speak with authority, both to the Finance Committee on the Administration's trade policy, and to the President on the needs of the American people. Mr. Greer is not that person.

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