

## United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1904

December 8, 2025

COMMITTEES:  
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LABOR, AND PENSIONS  
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ON INTELLIGENCE

The Honorable Howard Lutnick  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20230

The Honorable Jamieson Greer  
United States Trade Representative  
600 Seventeenth Street NW  
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Secretary Lutnick and Ambassador Greer:

I am writing to request targeted relief from the tariff imposed on steel and aluminum for the wild blueberry industry in Maine. The industry is already facing immense hardship due to weather conditions this year, which have resulted in losses of more than \$28 million for the wild blueberry industry. The drought conditions in Maine, combined with the increased costs from tariffs, have put this critical Maine industry at risk.

The wild blueberry industry is vital to Maine's economy, contributing \$361 million annually. Last year, Maine produced approximately 85 million pounds of wild blueberries, representing nearly 100 percent of all wild blueberries and 10 percent of all blueberries grown in the United States. Wild blueberries are an antioxidant rich superfood widely lauded for their health benefits and Maine is the only U.S. producer of this important wild fruit. Unfortunately, the 50 percent tariff on steel and aluminum has significantly increased the cost of the equipment used to harvest the wild blueberry crop in Maine. This specialized equipment, which harvests approximately 90 percent of Maine's wild blueberry crop, is only available in Canada. The tariff has similarly increased the price of mowing equipment, which relies on thousands of cutting knives that must be frequently replaced. These are also only readily available in Canada. Wild blueberry farmers have said that, due to the tariff, these knives have approximately doubled in price. Without access to affordable parts, and with no U.S.-based manufacturer that produces specialized wild blueberry equipment, Maine's wild blueberry producers will see significant increases to their costs. When combined with the devastating drought conditions, Maine's wild blueberry producers are uniquely hard hit and face dire financial hardship.

This serves as yet another example of the interconnected nature of Maine's economy with Canada and the need to reach a trade deal with our closest trading partner. As the Administration continues to work on trade negotiations with Canada, I request that you exempt wild blueberry harvesting, processing, and mowing equipment from the tariff imposed on steel and aluminum from Canada. I understand the Administration terminated the exclusion process for steel and aluminum earlier this year – a decision I encouraged the Administration to reverse in an earlier letter. Nevertheless, it is critical that Maine's wild blueberry industry receive targeted relief.

The ramifications of tariffs on Canadian goods have not been exclusive to our blueberry industry. Price increases have reverberated across our agricultural economy. Increases in the price of equipment, fertilizer, sulfur, and pesticides have had negative effects on our potato farmers, for example, who import 90% of the fertilizer they use from Canada. Fertilizer alone accounts for 11% of the total input cost for Maine potato growers. Our forest products industry has also suffered from high tariffs. I urge the Administration to ensure its tariff policies align with its stated goal of supporting our farmers and producers—or our consumers, our manufacturers, our blueberry growers, and more will all continue to pay the price.

Thank you for your consideration and attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Susan M. Collins  
United States Senator