

White House Issues Presidential Proclamations Imposing Section 232 Tariffs on Steel and Aluminum Imports

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President Trump, on March 8, 2018, issued two presidential proclamations imposing global tariffs of 25 percent on steel imports and 10 percent on aluminum imports in connection with the Section 232 investigations recently concluded by the Department of Commerce. The effective date of the tariffs for both Section 232 actions is March 23, 2018; their duration has not been specified at this time.

Steel

Product Scope

The presidential proclamation covers steel imports entered under HTSUS 7206.10 through 7216.50, 7216.99 through 7301.10, 7302.10, 7302.40 through 7302.90, and 7304.10 through 7306.90, including any subsequent revisions to these HTS classifications.

Remedy

This trade action imposes a 25 percent tariff on steel imports from all countries, with the exception of Canada and Mexico.

Aluminum

Product Scope

The presidential proclamation covers the following aluminum imports: (a) unwrought aluminum (HTS 7601); (b) aluminum bars, rods, and profiles (HTS 7604); (c) aluminum wire (HTS 7605); (d) aluminum plate, sheet, strip, and foil (flat rolled products) (HTS 7606 and 7607); (e) aluminum tubes and pipes and tube and pipe fitting (HTS 7608 and 7609); and (f) aluminum castings and forgings (HTS 7616.99.51.60 and 7616.99.51.70), including any subsequent revisions to these HTS classifications.

Remedy

This trade action imposes a 10 percent tariff on aluminum imports from all countries, with the exception of Canada and Mexico.

Product Exclusions

There will also be a mechanism for U.S. parties to apply for the exclusion of specific products based on unmet demand or specific national security considerations. The Secretary of Commerce shall issue procedures for exclusion requests within 10 days of March 8, 2018.

Country Exclusions

Canada and Mexico will be temporarily exempt from these measures due to their security relationship with the United States. Other countries may be able to qualify for a modification or removal of the tariffs if they come up with “alternate ways to address the threatened impairment of national security caused by imports.” The United States Trade Representative will be responsible for negotiations regarding such alternative arrangements. According to a White House official, the tariff rate for other countries may increase if Canada and Mexico secure a permanent exemption.

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