



July 23, 2018

Chairman Rodney Frelinghuysen and Conferees of the House Committee on Appropriations,

As conferees for the fiscal year 2019 Energy and Water, Legislative Branch, and Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act ([H.R.5895](#)), we encourage you to cede to the Senate-passed motion instructing you to include language requiring congressional approval of tariffs designated under Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962.

The Trump administration has done outstanding work strengthening the American economy through regulatory reform and historic tax cuts, but tariffs threaten to unwind that progress. Tariffs trigger self-inflicted economic harm and lead down a destructive, tit-for-tat path as our trade partners retaliate with more tariffs. They threaten higher costs for American businesses and consumers while jeopardizing the jobs of countless workers.

The Constitution clearly states that Congress holds authority on trade decisions, including tariffs, under [Article 1, section 8, clauses 1 and 3](#). Accepting the Senate’s motion would rightly restore some of this power to Congress because trade restrictions with significant economic implications should receive serious consideration by our most democratic institutions. In addition, requiring that two branches of government set policy in this area diffuses the potential for special interests to abuse tariffs at the expense of the American people.

Trade creates millions of jobs and provides a wide array of goods and services at affordable prices to American consumers. It lifts people out of poverty and leads to economic growth, job creation, higher wages, more consumer choice, and life-enhancing innovations.

Given the serious, negative economic implications of tariffs, it is crucial for decisions on the issue to be made with the consent of Congress. That is why we urge you to accept the Senate’s instructions to ensure Congress has a say in the application of national security-designated tariffs.

Sincerely,

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