

FOREIGN TRADE

PUSHBACK GROWS OVER BEEF TARIFF PLAN



THOM BRIDGE, HELENA (MONT.) INDEPENDENT RECORD

President Donald Trump's proposal to allow 300,000 metric tons of ground beef to be imported into the U.S. by companies that have committed to selling it below current market prices has sparked criticism from cattle and farm groups and lawmakers in agricultural states who say the plan will hurt American farmers.

GOP lawmakers, key cattle groups say Trump proposal will hurt farmers

LEE WIRE SERVICES

A key supporter of Republican President Donald Trump criticized him Sunday after he announced his plan to suspend tariffs on the import of foreign beef.

Lawmakers from agricultural states, including Alabama Sen. Katie Britt, and key cattle and farm groups said the decision would hurt American farmers.

Britt, a first-term Republican, said in an interview Sunday "I appreciate the administration's efforts" but urged Trump to reconsider.

"I have heard directly from Alabamians about this policy shift, and I share their deep concerns," Britt said.

In a surprise announcement Friday, Trump posted on social media that for the next 90 days, the United States will allow 300,000 metric tons of ground beef to be imported by companies that have committed to selling them below current market prices.

"Today, I concluded a deal to substantially lower the price of ground beef for working American families," Trump wrote in a post. "This deal will reduce prices for Americans while giving space for our Great

American Beef Herd to grow again."

Trump did not say which countries he reached a deal with on the suspended tariffs or which companies committed to lower prices. In July, the average price of a pound of ground beef sold in the United States was \$6.89, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The announcement drew immediate criticism from the National Cattlemen's Beef Association and several GOP officials who typically support the administration.

Britt said the decision risks hurting local farmers.

"Importing more foreign beef comes at the expense of our cattlemen, who are critical to both affordable and sustainable food supplies," she said.

"I appreciate the administration's efforts to make life more affordable for hardworking Americans; however, we must do so in a way that supports our cattlemen here at home and strengthens domestic food security. I ask the administration to reconsider its approach to achieve those goals."

Montana Sen. Tim Sheehy wrote on social media that he "advised President

Trump against this course of action for a year."

America's domestic cattle herds are the smallest size since the 1950s, according to recent reporting.

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association also criticized Trump's action. "While America's cattle producers share the goal of keeping groceries affordable for consumers, flooding the market with government-subsidized, below-market beef is not the way to rebuild the American cattle herd," the group said in a statement.

A White House official, who discussed the move on the condition of anonymity, said Trump's deal on ground beef is intended to be a short-term action to fill a gap to meet consumer demand. The administration will simultaneously work with ranchers to expand domestic production for the long term, the official said.

Meanwhile, Trump's promised 50% tariffs on some Canadian goods went into effect just after midnight Saturday, after the United States and its northern neighbor failed to reach a trade agreement.

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Federal policy complicates battle against opioid crisis

Some worry restrictions on use of federal grant funds may lead to more overdoses

SCOTT MAUCIONE

Baltimore Public Radio

Last year, Baltimore had three mass overdose incidents in the span of three months in its Penn North neighborhood.

In one incident, more than two dozen people were hospitalized after many were found unresponsive, lying in the streets or on sidewalks. No one died, but some came close.

Follow-up testing found that the street drugs contained high levels of N-methylclonazepam, a benzodiazepine that operates similarly to Xanax or Valium.

Like opioids, benzodiazepines suppress breathing. When they're combined, the risk of overdose goes up. And benzodiazepines don't respond to opioid overdose reversal drugs.

Afterward, the Baltimore Harm Reduction Coalition created test strips specifically for benzodiazepines. The group distributed them — along with test strips that identify other harmful adulterants, such as fentanyl, xylazine, and medetomidine — at clinics and neighborhood events. The strips, available at no cost, can also be found in bars and spread out on street corners. People testing drugs mix a small amount with water and then dip a test strip into the liquid. The strip will change color if it identifies an adulterant.

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SCOTT MAUCIONE, BALTIMORE PUBLIC RADIO

Baltimore Mayor Brandon Scott is joined by other city officials as he provided an update after a mass overdose incident in the city's Penn North neighborhood in July 2025.