

September 11, 2026

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Democratic Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Opposition to Secondary Sanctions Tariff Authority in the Lindsey O. Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act

Dear Speaker Johnson and Democratic Leader Jeffries:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we write to express concern with the tariff authority for secondary sanctions included in the Lindsey O. Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act of 2026 (H.R. 5334), which passed the Senate and will be considered by the House. Our associations strongly support holding Russia accountable for its war against Ukraine through targeted and enforceable sanctions aimed at the Russian government, its financial institutions and its defense industrial base. However, the potential of new broad 100% tariffs on imports from secondary countries risks raising costs for American businesses, workers and consumers.

The tariff authority included in the bill could impose duties of up to 100% on goods from countries identified as major purchasers of Russian crude oil or natural gas, or as facilitators of Russian oil sanctions evasion. That approach would effectively tax U.S. importers and consumers based on purchases of Russian energy by entities in third countries — conduct that is outside the control of American companies. Tariffs of this scale would increase costs for everyday consumer goods, manufacturing inputs and other products while creating significant uncertainty for companies that make sourcing, pricing and inventory decisions months in advance. Imposing a tariff on the goods of a third country does not punish the entities purchasing Russian energy within those third countries. It may actually discourage their countries from trying to stop these entities from making such purchases. In fact, it disincentivizes the pluri- and multilateral cooperation required by other sections of this bill. It could also lead to those countries — including European allies — to impose retaliatory tariffs against U.S. exports, including agriculture.

Secondary sanctions can be a powerful foreign policy tool when carefully targeted at bad actors, financial institutions, entities and transactions that materially support Russia's war effort. Tariffs, by contrast, are a blunt trade tool that can penalize law-abiding U.S. companies importing legitimate goods, invite retaliation, complicate trade negotiations and shift costs onto American families without ensuring that pressure reaches the intended actors. Unfortunately, the bill as introduced conflates secondary tariffs with sanctions. This results in a muddying of tariff and sanctions policies that will create implementation challenges, ultimately undermining the effectiveness of both. This includes a lack of clarity and criteria for determining the top five countries facilitating Russian oil sanctions evasion. Further, U.S. and allied cooperation and alignment is necessary to support Ukraine against Russia. Potential indiscriminate and broad use

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of tariffs against our allies would be counterproductive and may even prolong the conflict that we all seek to end.

We urge Congress to remove the tariff authority from the bill and instead focus on targeted sanctions, stronger enforcement against sanctions evasion and coordinated diplomacy with countries purchasing Russian energy.

Thank you for your consideration. Our associations look forward to working with you to advance a strong Russia sanctions package that holds the right actors accountable without imposing unnecessary costs on American families, workers and businesses and harming U.S. relationships with our allies.

Sincerely,

Accessories Council
Airforwarders Association
American Apparel & Footwear Association
American Association of Exporters and Importers
American Feed Industry Association
Consumer Technology Association (CTA)
Cleaning Equipment Trade Association (CETA)
Coalition of Services Industries
CONNECT - Coalition of New England Companies for Trade
Council of Fashion Designers of America
Distilled Spirits Council of the United States
Farmers for Free Trade
Footwear Distributors & Retailers of America (FDRA)
Gemini Shippers Association
Global Business Alliance
Information Technology Industry Council
Industrial Fasteners Institute
Jewelers Vigilance Committee

National Association of Beverage Importers
National Fisheries Institute
National Foreign Trade Council
National Industrial Transportation League
National Retail Federation
North American Association of Food Equipment Manufacturers (NAFEM)
Outdoor Industry Association
Pet Food Institute
Plumbing Manufacturers International
PRINTING United Alliance
Retail Industry Leaders Association (RILA)
Sports & Fitness Industry Association (SFIA)
Technology Trade Regulation Alliance (TTRA)
The Fashion Jewelry and Accessories Trade Association
Travel Goods Association (TGA)
U.S. Chamber of Commerce
U.S. Fashion Industry Association
United States Council for International Business
We Pay the Tariffs

CC: Members of the United States House of Representatives