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# Presidential Memorandum Prioritizes Commerce Steel Investigation

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Today President Donald J. Trump signed a presidential memorandum calling on Secretary Wilbur Ross to prioritize a Department of Commerce investigation initiated last night into the effects of steel imports on US national security. The study will consider overcapacity, dumping, illegal subsidies, and other factors, to determine whether steel imports threaten American economic security and military preparedness.

“We are going to fight for American workers and American-made steel by conducting a thorough investigation into steel imports,” said President Trump. “Thanks especially to Secretary Wilbur Ross for helping lead this critical effort.”

After a thorough investigation, if any national security threats from steel imports are identified, Secretary Ross will provide a report that includes recommendations for next steps. Under Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act, the President has broad power to adjust imports—including through the use of tariffs—if excessive foreign imports are found to be a threat to US national security.

“We will conduct this investigation thoroughly and expeditiously so that, if necessary, we can take actions to defend American national security, workers, and businesses against foreign threats,” said Secretary Ross. “This investigation will help determine whether steel import issues are making us less safe in a world that is increasingly fraught with geopolitical tensions.”

The United States is relatively unusual in that it has no tariffs on steel but has had to impose antidumping or countervailing duties in over 150 cases, with 13 more currently pending.

Our military often needs specialty steel alloys that require unusual production skills and are used for armor, vehicles, ships, aircraft, and infrastructure. As a result, a robust and healthy domestic steel production industry

may be deemed necessary to guarantee military supply chains in the event of conflict.

While these defense concerns continue to loom, the US steel industry has struggled in recent years. Industry employment has been declining, companies are highly leveraged, and businesses remain both capital intensive and lacking strong cash flow. Imports now represent 26% of the market and the US steel mills and foundries are operating at just 71% of capacity.

The investigation will include a formal request for public comment to be published in the Federal Register, followed by a public hearing.

Please visit [www.commerce.gov/steel](http://www.commerce.gov/steel) for more information on this investigation.

### *Remarks by Secretary Ross as Prepared For Delivery*

Thank you, Mr. President, for your leadership on this and so many other important issues.

I proud to stand here today and say that, under your leadership, we are restoring the primacy of American national security, American workers, and American businesses.

For years, we have simply reacted to over 150 cases of improper imports of foreign steel into this country.

With our investigation launched last night, the federal government will finally become proactive.

This investigation will help ensure steel import issues do not make us less safe in a world that is increasingly fraught with geopolitical tensions.

The sheer volume of steel trade cases makes it clear that global steel overcapacity has an impact on our economy, but for the first time we will examine its impact on our national security.

We will conduct this investigation thoroughly and expeditiously so that we can fully enforce our trade laws and defend this country against those who would do us harm.

I look forward to the completion of this investigation so that I can report not just the findings, but also any concrete solutions that we may deem appropriate.

Thank you again Mr. President.

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