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BORDER TRADE ALLIANCE CALLS ON TRUMP TO END TARIFFS

By Steve Clark
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The Border Trade Alliance, chaired by Cameron County Administrator Pete Sepulveda Jr., has released a statement condemning the Trump administration's imposition of 25% tariffs on goods imported from Canada and Mexico, which took effect Tuesday.

Sepulveda and BTA President Britton Mullen had this to say: "Tariffs on our friends, neighbors, and trading partners is a significant step backwards. The cost of these new import taxes will cause lost jobs and higher prices, undermining the president's goal of taming inflation."

They noted that BTA has consistently applauded the U.S. Mexico Canada Agreement, or USMCA, negotiated during President Donald Trump's first term.

"We should be striving to achieve the economic promise of USMCA and trilateral cooperation and prosperity," according to the statement. "We hope the administration will reconsider the effects of tariffs on consumers, job creators, and the country's economic health."

BTA, founded in 1986, describes itself as a grassroots, nonprofit organization that "provides a forum for discussion and advocacy on issues pertaining to border development and quality of life and trade in the Americas."

It is made up of a network of public and private sector representatives from the United States, Mexico and Canada, and is committed to "improving the quality of life of border communities through trade and commerce," as part of its core values, according to the group.

Economists across the political spectrum have warned that tariffs are essentially a tax on consumers and in this case have the potential to seriously damage the economy. During the campaign, Trump consistently described the U.S. economy as "a disaster" that he alone could fix.

In reality, he inherited a robust economy with low unemployment and slowing inflation, though Trump's promises to improve the economy struck a chord with many voters. The broad imposition of tariffs, which appears counter to that goal, is necessary because the other countries aren't doing enough to stem the flow of drugs like fentanyl into the United States, according to Trump.

Another pro-business group, the [Texas Business Leadership Council](#), or TBLC, on Tuesday issued a statement warning about the damage that will result if Trump follows through.

"Texas values the strong economic partnerships we have built with Mexico and Canada, our two largest trading partners," said TBLC President [Justin Yancy](#). "These relationships have fostered growth, stability and prosperity not only in Texas but for the entire United States, benefiting businesses, workers and consumers alike."

He said the [TBLC](#) recognizes the urgency of stopping illicit drugs, addressing border security and ensuring fair trade practices, "imposition of these tariffs on our neighboring countries will disrupt supply chains, increase costs for businesses and families, and create unnecessary barriers to economic cooperation," he said.

The [TBLC](#) is committed to helping find a "balanced path forward" that does not harm Americans, employers or employees but rather guarantees a thriving economic future for Texas and the nation, [Yancy](#) said, noting that Canada on Tuesday instituted a 25% duty of its own on the United States, while Mexico's president has said that country will "respond in kind."

The [TBLC](#) describes itself as a "network of Texas based CEOs and senior business executives who advance a long-term vision of a prosperous Texas in a globally competitive business environment."

Major U.S. retailers that consumers would see higher prices almost immediately on goods from Mexico and Canada. Meanwhile, stock markets fell on fears of a trade war and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, or USCC, called for a quick to the Trump administration tariffs.

"American families and businesses are struggling with high costs," said USCC Chief Policy Officer Neil Bradley. "It's one of the top issues that they want policymakers to address."

While the chamber supports pro-growth policies such as fewer regulations and lower taxation, and addressing the flow of illegal drugs and border issues, it also wants to see lower costs, he said.

"Tariffs will only raise prices and increase the economic pain being felt by everyday Americans across the country," Bradley said. "We urge reconsideration of this policy and a swift end to these tariffs."