Are Working-Class Trump Supporters Getting What They Voted for on Trade?

Our Trade Pact Evaluator Tests if Deals Can Deliver on Trump's Promises to Boost American Manufacturing and Jobs or Prioritize Other Interests

Donald Trump became president twice with trade and tariff promises that drew working-class support nationwide. **He promised to impose tariffs to rebuild U.S. manufacturing, create good American jobs, and rebalance trade** after decades of huge U.S. trade deficits fueled deindustrialization and income inequality. When announcing April 2 "Reciprocal" tariffs, he said: "With today's action we are finally going to be able to make America great again… *Jobs and factories will come roaring back into our country*."

After a week of tariffs—set at incoherent levels abusing the International Emergency Economic Powers Act—Trump announced a 90-day pause on higher rates and demanded countries negotiate for "tariff relief." But in these negotiations, the Trump administration's most strident demands have been for other nations to stop taxing Big Tech firms and to roll back their anti-monopoly, privacy and other safeguards against Big Tech abuses. When there have been actual trade demands, it has not been for nations to alter policies that fuel floods of unfair imports, but to accept more U.S. liquefied natural gas (LNG) or ag commodity exports. This will not make a dent in the U.S. trade deficit, which is an import-driven problem. Nor will it bolster American manufacturing or jobs.

The administration has not revealed the full list of nations engaged in talks or details about deals. Our tester can be applied to framework texts, letters, announcements about deals to negotiate future deals, and the like that have been announced to date and are expected in coming days.

Trump Tariff-Relief "Trade Deal" Evaluator

Inclusion of green-check terms can help deliver gains for American workers, U.S. manufacturing and supply chain resilience and smaller farmers.

Red-check items do nothing to promote American manufacturing and related jobs or to rebalance trade but rather uses tariffs to benefit special interests.

 **Target U.S. Trade Deficit Nation:** Deal is with a country/bloc with a sustained trade surplus with the world (see chart) or with which the U.S. has a large bilateral trade deficit, like Vietnam. The deal is not with a country/bloc with which the U.S. has balanced trade (like Canada) or a surplus (like the U.K.).

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 **Counter Wage-Suppression Trade Gains:** Deal includes commitments to not suppress wages to unfairly boost exports with trade conditioned on nations' domestic law conforming with International Labor Organization fundamental worker rights and enforcement of them and/or wage-level commitments.

 **Counter Environmental "Dumping" Trade Gains:** Deal includes commitments against environmental dumping (cost externalization) to unfairly bolster exports with trade conditioned on nations agreement to enforce environmental and carbon standards in Multilateral Environmental Agreements they have signed.

 **Discipline Against Overcapacity Subsidies:** Deal includes commitments to limit significant government subsidies that lead to overproduction of goods for export or to not export subsidized goods.

 **Counter Currency Misalignment:** Deal includes commitments to end/limit use of currency-valuation-related actions or policies to boost exports and to cooperate on currency misalignments that contribute to trade imbalances.

 **Discipline Chinese Passthrough:** Deal includes rules to counter passing Chinese imports through to the United States either legally (e.g., via embedded Chinese content or Chinese foreign direct investment (FDI) in a country) or illegally (e.g., via transshipment or label fraud).

 **Limits on Imports:** Deal includes negotiated export quotas, tariffs, tariff-rate quotas, or other instruments that limit imports to the United States from the other country.

 **Undermines Competition Policy Enforcement:** Deal is conditioned on trade partners waiving enforcement or penalties against U.S. Big Tech corporations for competition policies that do not discriminate based on nationality of a service or firm.

 **Weakens Big Tech Oversight:** Deal is conditioned on trade partners weakening or eliminating competition, privacy, data security, AI, or other Big Tech oversight policies that do not discriminate based on nationality of a service or firm.

 **"Digital Trade" Big Tech Giveaways:** Deal includes the Big-Tech-favored "digital trade" terms, which ban government regulation of data flows and storage (even though such rules conflict with existing U.S. federal and state data security and privacy laws and policies) and guarantee special secrecy protections for Big Tech source code and algorithms (even though such rules would undermine the Right-to-Repair laws enacted by many states and being considered by Congress.) The Obama administration inserted these "digital trade" terms into the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement, and Big Tech pushed them into the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) negotiated during the first Trump administration. The USMCA and a U.S.-Japan deal are the only U.S. agreements that include such extreme terms, which broke with the model of "e-commerce" rules in past U.S trade deals.

 **Environmental Policy Attacks:** Deal is conditioned on trade partners weakening or eliminating environmental, conservation, carbon, or other green policies that do not discriminate based on nationality of a good, service, or firm, which also can increase imports of goods made in such conditions.

 **Food Policy Attacks:** Deal is conditioned on trade partners weakening or eliminating safety, labeling, or inspection standards, animal welfare rules, or other food policies that do not discriminate based on nationality of a good or firm, which perversely could increase imports of food produced in such conditions and expand the sizeable U.S. trade deficits in agriculture and in food.

 **Deportation Demands:** Deal is conditioned on trade partners allowing militarized deportation flights or housing non-citizen deportees.

 **Other Non-Trade Demands:** Deal is conditioned on trade partners ceding territory or other geopolitical demands unrelated to trade.

 **Shady Business Deals:** New Trump Organization resorts, golf courses, or other investment or IP rights are approved by the trade partner country, and/or Starlink operating permissions are granted or other private business deals for Trump, his advisors, or wealthy friends occur parallel to deal.