

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

June 13, 2018

The Honorable Wilbur Ross  
Secretary  
United States Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Ave NW  
Washington DC 20230

In re: Investigations 701-TA – 584 and 731 – TA – 1382

Dear Secretary Ross:

We write with concern about the future of the more than 180 newspapers in Oklahoma that are already being negatively affected by preliminary tariffs imposed upon Uncoated Groundwood paper, including newsprint, in the dockets cited above. Commercial printers and directory publishers are also caught in the rapid increase in paper prices resulting from these cases.

There are more than 2,200 jobs in Oklahoma in the printing and publishing sectors, and exponentially more jobs that depend on the business these sectors generate. Local businesses count on their newspapers for advertising to increase their own markets and generate jobs. Civic clubs, youth sports, churches and even local government depend heavily upon the ability to reach citizens through newspaper pages. Although most of our local newspapers have websites, publishers tell us that these sites are supported by the revenues from print advertising, and would be hobbled if the printed newspaper were to fail. Furthermore, if local newspapers are forced to cut back on their issues or close their businesses, thousands of jobs would be eliminated, forcing many of these individuals, especially in rural areas, to seek financial assistance from their government. It is unlikely the Administration had in mind to collect more tariffs on foreign goods in order to send them back as unemployment assistance checks to the thousands of Americans who will lose their job due to the change in trade policy.

Publishers large and small are reporting major price increases from paper suppliers. Some tell us that their suppliers cannot guarantee the timing of shipments and that shortages are anticipated this summer. The unfolding diminished demand for newsprint will lead to more contraction within the paper production industry, which in turn will impose long-term harm upon the paper market and those of their customers.

While we appreciate your efforts to ensure American businesses compete on a level playing field, we ask that your Department consider the downstream impacts of newsprint tariffs, which as described earlier are causing job loss and economic disparity for many communities in our state. Newspapers and the Oklahoma communities that count on them are depending on their voices being heard by the government that represents them and their interests as ongoing discussions over global trade disputes ensue.

Sincerely,



James M. Inhofe  
U.S. Senate



James Lankford  
U.S. Senate



Markwayne Mullin  
U.S. House of Representatives



Frank D. Lucas  
U.S. House of Representatives



Tom Cole  
U.S. House of Representatives



Steve Russell  
U.S. House of Representatives