

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 8, 2018

The Honorable Rhonda K. Schmidlein
Chairman, International Trade Commission
500 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20436

The Honorable Wilbur Ross
Secretary of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Chairman Schmidlein and Secretary Ross:

We write to express to you concern with the ongoing antidumping and countervailing duty investigations into the import of uncoated groundwood paper from Canada, including imported newsprint. As the Commission approaches the final phase of these investigations, we ask that you thoroughly consider the negative impact a trade remedy will have on the newspaper industry.

Recently, the Department of Commerce announced preliminary determinations of antidumping and countervailing duties that collectively range as high as 32 percent. As you know, although these duty rates are preliminary, US Customs and Border Protection is required to begin collecting bonds or cash deposits from importers covering the estimated amount. This is having an immediate impact on the pricing of newsprint for our local newspapers – some papers are experiencing a significant price increase from suppliers of up to almost 30 percent.

Over the past decade, there has been an industry wide shift toward digital media from newsprint. The petitioner's claim that the decline in demand for US newsprint is a result of imported Canadian newsprint rings hollow in light of the reality of an industry trying to adapt to a changing market in a digital age. As an industry that is already confronting a decline in newspaper circulation, readership and print advertising due to increased internet competition an affirmative final determination from the International Trade Commission has the potential to destabilize the industry and accelerate the decline of print news media. While some newspapers have been successful in cultivating digital content, increasing digital subscriptions, and procuring online advertising, small, local print newspapers will be more exposed to the risk of shutting their doors. We understand newspapers across the country are taking measures to counter increased costs by eliminating sections, cutting pages and reducing the width of the paper. Ironically, this reduction in consumption will hurt the U.S. newsprint industry, including the sole petitioner in the case. This prospect for continued declines in the consumption of newsprint will signal to suppliers that they should shift production to more profitable grades of paper, leaving newspapers without a supply to print the news of the day.

Often times, our newspapers remain the only source of information available to all the members of our communities regardless of access to internet or cable. The result of the tariffs would cause an undue burden. It would limit the availability of information and undermine our values to uphold a free and accessible press. Local journalism is the core of communities' access to information about their local

government, economy, and community activities. It bolsters our commitment to civic engagement and values. It should not be infringed upon by the claims of a single US producer.

We respectfully urge you to weigh the impact a remedy will have on the newspaper industry as you further deliberate during your investigation.

Sincerely,



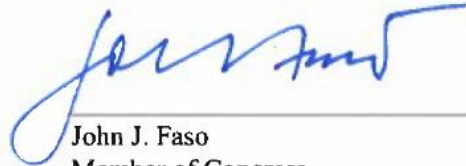
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