

August 2, 2024

The Honorable Amy A. Karpel
Chair
U.S. International Trade Commission
500 E Street S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20436

The Honorable Rhonda K. Schmidlein
Commissioner
U.S. International Trade Commission
500 E Street S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20436

The Honorable Jason E. Kearns
Commissioner
U.S. International Trade Commission
500 E Street S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20436

The Honorable David S. Johanson
Commissioner
U.S. International Trade Commission
500 E Street S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20436

Re: Proposed Tariffs on Aluminum Lithographic Printing Plates Will Lead to Newspaper Closures, Journalism Job Losses

Dear Chair Karpel and Commissioners Schmidlein, Kearns, and Johanson:

We are writing on behalf of the U.S. newspaper and magazine publishing industries to urge the International Trade Commission (ITC) to reject antidumping (AD) and countervailing duties (CVD) on imports of aluminum lithographic printing plates from Japan and China. These duties threaten the critical news-gathering mission of news publishers, put American jobs at risk, and will cause additional news outlets to shutter, contributing to growth in the number of news deserts across the country.

News and other publishers use aluminum lithographic printing plates to print newspapers, magazines, books, and other materials. Other industries use these same plates to print everything from school textbooks to restaurant menus, and packaging for consumer goods to furniture assembly instruction manuals. Many newsrooms in the U.S. rely on printing technology that requires violet plates, which are not produced in the U.S., or thermal plates, which are produced in the U.S., Europe, Japan, and China. Prohibitive duties on thermal plate imports from Japan and China would place newsrooms' supply



chain at risk because the duties would be passed on from suppliers, directly hitting a publisher's bottom line. Equally concerning is the impact the import duties would have on limiting access to equipment maintenance, availability of parts, and healthy price negotiation in a fragile industry.

Local journalism is in crisis in the United States, with well-documented and mounting financial challenges that have forced many news publishers to shut down or lay off journalists at an alarming rate. News outlets are currently closing at a rate of more than two per week in the U.S., and one third of the newspapers in publication in 2005 will no longer exist by the end of 2024, according to a report from the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University.

Local news is the lifeblood of our communities and preserving quality journalism supports a healthy democracy. When newspapers close, there is a community-wide negative impact – civic engagement decreases, corruption increases, and combatting misinformation becomes more difficult, which is particularly critical in an election year. This impact is disproportionately borne by vulnerable communities, including rural communities and communities of color.

Quality journalism has never been more important to a healthy democracy, and tariffs on aluminum plates will further burden the news publishers responsible for delivering that journalism at a moment when they are already operating in a challenging economic environment.

To ensure that there is no disruption to the flow of news and information to communities throughout the country, and to ensure that all Americans have access to reliable news in an age of misinformation, the ITC must reject tariffs on aluminum printing plates.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Daboffy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Danielle Coffey, President & CEO
News/Media Alliance