



27 March 2026

Trade Lines

Policy Intelligence for Global Business Leaders

*Published by Blake Harden and Evan Giesemann
Washington Council EY*

Welcome to Trade Lines, your view from DC on the evolving landscape of international trade and regulatory policy. Curated for business leaders and decision-makers, this newsletter delivers timely insights into the issues shaping global commerce—from tariff shifts and supply chain disruptions to legislative developments and compliance trends. Our goal is to help you anticipate change, assess impact, and act with confidence in a fast-moving policy environment.

In This Issue

Global Signals

- EU Parliament advances trade deal with U.S.
- USTR Ambassador Greer attends WTO 14th Ministerial Meeting
- Trump-Xi meeting scheduled for May 14-15
- U.S.-Japan Action Plan on Critical Minerals
- Mexico and U.S. plan joint effort to boost enforcement of IP rules

Policy Pulse

- Commerce Department announces auto parts inclusion window
- State Department announces Pax Silica Fund

Hill Highlights

- Congress advances measure to partially fund DHS

Global Signals

EU Parliament advances trade deal with U.S.

On March 26, the European Parliament advanced two proposals to implement a trade deal with the U.S. in a plenary vote. A final compromise will likely be negotiated by EU country representatives on April 13. The approved deal would reduce tariffs on certain U.S. products and suspend application of duty collections. It

also includes a sunset clause which anticipates the deal expiring in March 2028 as well as provisions which tie application of the deal to the removal of section 232 tariffs on steel derivatives.

USTR Ambassador Greer attends WTO 14th Ministerial Meeting

The World Trade Organization's (WTO) 14th Ministerial Conference in Cameroon began on March 26. U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) Jamieson Greer delivered [remarks](#) at the kick-off of the meeting where he emphasized how the Trump Administration is focused on a trading system based on "reciprocity, fairness, and balanced trade". Ambassador Greer said, "U.S. trade policy measures are a corrective response to a trading system, embodied by the WTO, that has overseen and contributed to severe and sustained imbalances ...As ministers, our focus should be on reforms that would make the WTO more responsive to Members and improve our ability to achieve outcomes that optimize our trading relationships."

Ambassador Greer also called upon WTO members to make the e-commerce duty moratorium permanent. He said, "A permanent moratorium will ensure that WTO Members maximize the benefits of our shared commitment to promote the growth of the digital economy and to promote the export competitiveness of all businesses, particularly MSMEs. It would also demonstrate that the WTO is able to meaningfully contribute to international digital trade policy." Ambassador Greer emphasized that "the United States is not interested in another temporary extension of the moratorium," although he stopped short of saying that the U.S. would not back such a measure.

Ahead of the WTO 14th Ministerial, USTR issued a [report](#) on March 23 detailing desired WTO reform. Ambassador Greer said in a [press release](#) that "The WTO needs to change if it intends to have any relevance as the international trading system transitions to focus on reciprocity and balance ...Our report addresses key issues such as transparency, eligibility for special and differential treatment, plurilateral negotiations, the role of the Most Favored Nation principle, the role of the Secretariat, and essential security."

Trump-Xi meeting scheduled for May 14-15

President Trump announced this week that he would be traveling to China for a summit with President Xi on May 14-15, a meeting that has previously been delayed amidst the conflict in Iran. Posting on Truth Social, President Trump said, "My meeting with the Highly Respected President of China, President Xi Jinping, which was originally postponed due to our Military operation in Iran, has been rescheduled, and will take place in Beijing on May 14th and 15th. First Lady Melania and I will also host President Xi and Madame Peng for a reciprocal visit in Washington, D.C., at a later date, this year."

It is anticipated that topics under discussion will include the ongoing trade truce between the US and China along with broader geopolitical issues. This is the first visit to China by a sitting U.S. President since Trump's last visit in 2017.

U.S.-Japan Action Plan on Critical Minerals

On March 19, USTR [announced](#) the release of the *U.S.-Japan Action Plan on Critical Minerals*. Ambassador Greer described this Action Plan as “an important step to expand the production and diversity of critical minerals, laying the foundation for a binding plurilateral agreement supported by price floors and other measures.” Included in the Action Plan is a commitment that both countries will “discuss ...the feasibility and development of coordinated trade policies and mechanisms, such as border-adjusted price floors or other measures for critical minerals imports, focusing in the first instance on select critical minerals.”

Read the Action Plan [here](#).

Mexico and U.S. plan joint effort to boost enforcement of IP rules

Mexico’s Economy Ministry [announced](#) on March 23 a joint effort with USTR to boost enforcement of intellectual property (IP) rules. This effort will consist of a working group and roundtable for stakeholders to note concerns. The announcement says this effort will “facilitate increased criminal investigations, the use of effective law enforcement techniques, and successful prosecutions to deter intellectual property crimes.” These actions are part of efforts under the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) and USTR’s Special 301 report to improve IP protection and enforcement in Mexico.

Policy Pulse

Commerce Department announces new auto parts inclusion window

On March 24, the Department of Commerce published a [notice](#) announcing the *Opening of the Inclusions Window for the Section 232 Automobile Parts Tariff Inclusion Process*. The President issued a [proclamation](#) on *Adjusting Imports of Automobiles and Automobile Parts Into the U.S.* on March 26, 2025. This proclamation requires the Commerce Secretary to “establish a process for including additional automobile parts within the scope of the duties established in the Automobile Proclamation.”

This notice announces that the inclusions window for automobile parts submissions will open on April 1 and close on April 14. Inclusion requests can be submitted to the inbox AutoInclusions@trade.gov.

Following the closing of the submission window, Commerce will post accepted inclusion requests for a two-week public comment period on Docket ID ITA-2025-0040 on Regulations.gov. At that time, interested parties can view the inclusion requests Commerce has accepted and provide input about the requests before Commerce makes a final determination.

State Department Announces Pax Silica Fund

On March 26, the Department of State announced its intention to allocate \$250 million in foreign assistance to a Pax Silica Fund to strengthen the U.S. critical minerals supply chain. In a [press release](#), the new fund was described as an “initiative to support critical minerals extraction, processing, critical infrastructure, and manufacturing assets that support secure and reliable semiconductor supply chains” and will “create new commercial opportunities for U.S. and other trusted companies worldwide.”

Hill Highlights

On March 27, the Senate voted by unanimous consent to fund the Department of Homeland Security, except U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Both agencies received some funding as part of last year's *One Big Beautiful Bill Act*. The House is expected to vote on the measure over the weekend.

CBP's commercial operations continue to be staffed, although the agency did announce this week that it is postponing its annual Trade and Cargo Security Summit (TCSS). The agency announced that the TCSS will now take place September 8-10 in Dallas, Texas.

Upcoming Deadlines

March 27: Deadline for President to decide whether to act in the section 232 investigation concerning pharmaceuticals and pharmaceutical ingredients.

March 28: Commerce Department to send the President its findings on its section 232 investigations concerning drones and concerning polysilicon and derivative products by this date.

March 31: CBP to file a report detailing progress on the completion of issuing refunds of IEEPA duties paid with interest to CIT.

April 13: Deadline to submit comments to the ITC in its investigation concerning economic impacts of revoking China's PNTR status.

April 15: Deadline to submit comments and requests to testify to USTR in the section 301 investigations concerning structural excess capacity and production in manufacturing sectors and concerning the section 301 investigations into forced labor prohibitions and enforcement.

April 26: Deadline for President to decide whether to act in the section 232 investigation concerning commercial aircraft and jet engines.

May 10: Commerce Department to send the President its findings in its section 232 investigation concerning wind turbines by this date.

May 11: Deadline to request to appear at ITC's public hearing in its investigation concerning China's state support and pricing practices in the biotechnology sector.

May 17: The ITC holds a public hearing in the ITC's investigation concerning China's state support and pricing practices in the biotechnology sector.

May 30: Commerce Department to send the President its findings in its section 232 investigations concerning robotics and concerning industrial machinery and PPE, medical consumables, and medical equipment, including devices by this date.

If you have questions, please contact Blake Harden (blake.harden@ey.com) or Evan Gieseemann (evan.gieseemann@ey.com).

Washington Council Ernst & Young

Washington Council Ernst & Young (WCEY) is a group within Ernst & Young LLP that combines the power of a leading professional services organization with on-the-ground knowledge, personal relationships and attention to detail of a boutique policy firm. We provide our clients with timely, relevant Washington insight and legislative advisory services customized to their needs. To learn more, contact wcey@ey.com.