

WisOpinion Poll: Do you agree with Harley-Davidson's plan to offshore production to avoid retaliatory tariffs?

Posted on Monday, Jul 2, 2018

Harley-Davidson announced plans to shift some production overseas in response to retaliatory tariffs from the European Union after the Trump administration imposed tariffs on foreign products such as aluminum and steel.

The plans have drawn the ire of President Trump, who accused the company on Twitter of using tariffs “as an excuse” and blasting the Milwaukee icon for quitting.

Trump tweeted the company had waved “the White Flag” and threatened to tax the company “like never before.”

“A Harley-Davidson should never be built in another country-never!” Trump tweeted. “Their employees and customers are already very angry at them. If they move, watch, it will be the beginning of the end – they surrendered, they quit! The Aura will be gone and they will be taxed like never before!”

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In March 2017, Harley-Davidson announced plans to build a Thailand factory to serve the southeast Asia market and avoid that country's up to 60 percent tariff on imported motorcycles. The company already has plants in India and Brazil.

In January, before the tariffs were imposed, the company announced it would move ahead with plans to close a Kansas City factory, cutting 800 jobs there, and moving the work to its facility in York, Pa., adding 400 jobs there. The company has said there's no connection between the Kansas City move and opening the Thailand

plant, though Harley-Davidson unions have questioned that.

Despite the company's past statements, Trump also wrote Harley-Davidson was moving "much of their plant operations in Kansas City to Thailand" long before the tariffs were announced and the company was "just using Tariffs/Trade War as an excuse."

Assembly Majority Leader Jim Steinke, R-Kaukauna, defended Harley-Davidson.

"What Harley Davidson is doing is an absolutely predictable response to what the President has done, and other countries' response to it," he wrote on Twitter. "Business decisions are made with the long term sustainability of the business in mind."

U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson, R-Oshkosh, said the manufacturer's announcement confirms his "concerns and is a far too predictable outcome of policies that give companies like Harley-Davidson incentives to make their products elsewhere.

And U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin, D-Madison, tweeted, "I support better trade deals, not trade wars. Tariffs against our trading partners in Europe do not fix our trade problems, and President Trump's haphazard approach on tariffs with our allies will hurt Wisconsin's manufacturing and agriculture economy."

Read more on the issue [here](#).

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