

# Cal Dalton: Trump administration's tariffs and trade war risk turning Wisconsin blue in November

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The first half of 2020 has been rough for Wisconsin's economy. The outbreak of COVID-19 forced us to take considerable action that, while important to keeping our state healthy, took a heavy toll on businesses and employers across the state. However, COVID-19 wasn't the only culprit slowing down our economy. The tariffs implemented as part of President Trump's trade war with China also had a negative impact on our business owners and farmers.

Ever since President Trump kicked off his campaign in 2016, the pursuit of a fair trading relationship with China has been one of his main policy goals. This, unfortunately, has led to a drawn-out trade war with both the U.S. and China implementing a broad suite of tariffs to try and bolster their negotiating position. While those negotiations did ultimately result in the Phase One Deal with China, a considerable amount of harm has been done to Wisconsin in the process.

The Trump Administration has always claimed that tariffs were a way to hold China accountable and help American companies. However, the simple truth is that tariffs are a tax on American businesses and consumers, which has further exacerbated the economic struggles brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

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Trade is vital to sustaining Wisconsin's economy. Businesses here have international reach, and many rely on supplies they obtain from China to run their

business. By placing tariffs on those goods – many of which cannot be purchased in the United States – the trade war has resulted in increased costs for companies all over the state. Unfortunately, as these costs pile up, Wisconsinites risk losing their jobs, as well as family farms and agribusinesses.

Agriculture is at the economic heart of America's Dairyland, causing it to bear the brunt of the tariff burden. To stay competitive, Wisconsin's farmers need access to high-end agricultural equipment. Tariffs, however, have made that equipment more difficult and expensive to acquire. Without relief from the tariffs in place, Wisconsin's farmers risk falling further behind financially, worsening the wave of farm bankruptcies that have [battered Wisconsin in recent years](#).

As he seeks Wisconsin's support in the 2020 Election, President Trump must carefully consider the negative effects his trade war and its tariffs have had on our state. China needs to step up and fulfill its obligations on trade. Their [slow progress](#) toward meeting its agricultural purchase commitments has not, by any means, made up for the damage that has already been done. Wisconsin can no longer afford to wait for the trade war to pay off. The damage has been too great.

That's why, for the sake of businesses and farmers both here and in the rest of the U.S., President Trump needs to repeal all tariffs that remain in place. As long as there are tariffs, businesses and farmers will continue to pay an unsustainable tax on the goods they need. It's time for President Trump to abandon this failed policy in order to kickstart Wisconsin's economy and show that he is committed to his promise of fostering a strong economy and providing good jobs for hardworking Wisconsinites.

In 2016, President Trump turned Wisconsin red – something that hadn't happened in more than 30 years. However, if he keeps his tariffs in place, there is a strong possibility that the state flips blue once again on November 3<sup>rd</sup>.

*-Cal Dalton is a grain and beef farmer from Endeavor, Wisconsin.*