

Dept. of Justice: AG Kaul sues Trump administration to stop latest round of illegal tariffs

Posted on Thursday, Mar 5, 2026

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MADISON, Wis. – Attorney General Josh Kaul today is joining a coalition in filing a lawsuit to block President Trump’s latest efforts to impose illegal tariffs on American consumers and businesses. The case challenges President Trump’s most recent efforts to increase tariffs worldwide without congressional approval.

“At a time when so many people are concerned about affordability challenges, President Trump’s tariffs have made the situation worse,” said AG Kaul. “The unlawful use of tariffs should stop.”

For more than a year, President Trump has inflicted chaos on the American economy by imposing tariffs without the legal authority to do so. Most recently, President Trump has attempted to rely on a law that has never been used before — Section 122 of the Trade Act of 1974 — and announced 15 percent tariffs on most products worldwide, seemingly to address trade deficits. But Section 122 does not apply. That law authorizes tariffs in limited circumstances, including when there are “large and serious balance-of-payments deficits.” Notably, a trade deficit is not a balance-of-payment deficit, meaning that once again the President is acting unlawfully.

A recent analysis by researchers at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York concluded that nearly 90 percent of the costs of tariffs in 2025 were paid by American consumers and businesses.

Today’s lawsuit challenges this latest round of tariffs. The complaint contends that these actions by the Trump Administration violate the law, upend constitutional

separation of powers, and violate the Administrative Procedure Act.

Joining AG Kaul in filing the lawsuit are the attorneys general of Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, and Washington, as well as the Governors of Pennsylvania and Kentucky.

View this press release on the [DOJ website](#).