Expanding Protections for Tariff-Impacted Workers

The Ontario government announced that in response to the United States' newly enacted section 338 tariffs on a range of Canadian imports, the province will be immediately broadening eligibility for the Protect Ontario Financing Program (POFP) to protect impacted Ontario workers and businesses. Working in tandem with the province's existing tariff-relief measures, the expansion will ensure businesses whose exports are impacted by this new 50 per cent spike, as well as those businesses still subject to the existing section 232 tariffs on steel, aluminum, copper and automotives, are equipped to withstand mounting operational pressures and keep workers on the job.

"Our government will do whatever it takes to stand up for Ontario workers and protect their jobs and paycheques as we face down this latest economic attack from President Trump," said Premier Doug Ford. "Now more than ever, Team Canada needs to deliver on our shared commitment to build the most competitive and resilient economy in the G7, so we can attract investment, create jobs and protect workers and their families for decades to come."

Ontario has been clear that unjustified U.S. tariffs hurt workers, businesses and families on both sides of the border by disrupting integrated supply chains, undermining investor confidence and raising costs for American consumers who ultimately bear the cost of U.S. tariffs on Canadian products. As part of its plan to protect Ontario, the government continues to adapt and use all available tools to mitigate the impacts of U.S. tariffs, including retaliatory restrictions on U.S. alcohol and procurement, and safeguard critical supply chains and workers from closures and layoffs.

"As President Trump's tariffs continue to target our province's key industries and the world-class workers behind them, our government remains unwavering in its commitment to protect Ontario," said Vic Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade. "By broadening eligibility for the Protect Ontario Financing Program and advocating for a fair deal, we will ensure Ontario's economy can remain competitive and resilient for generations to come, while advancing meaningful, immediate relief for our businesses and their workers today."

First launched in August 2025, the POFP provides up to $1 billion in financial support in the form of loans to Ontario-based businesses facing tariff-related working capital challenges, including payroll, lease payments and utility payments. The program is part of Ontario's broader $30 billion tariff relief and support plan, which is comprised of a suite of tactical response measures and initiatives to build long-term resiliency and prosperity, including:

The $150 million Ontario Together Trade Fund, which helps small and medium-sized enterprises affected by U.S. tariffs make near-term investments to reach new international and interprovincial markets, strengthen competitiveness and re-shore critical supply chains. To date, the program has supported 89 companies, whose projects amount to nearly $1 billion in total investments that will protect and create more than 10,000 good-paying jobs across the province.

The $40 million Trade-Impacted Communities Program, which helps communities and local industries disproportionally impacted by U.S. tariffs strengthen their economic resilience by reducing reliance on U.S. markets and navigate new export partnerships. To date, the government has announced seven projects valued at $5.6 million, that have created and protected 1,605 good-paying jobs.

The Ontario Made Manufacturing Investment Tax Credit, which offers tax relief for capital investment in buildings, machinery and equipment used in manufacturing or processing in Ontario and helps protect and create good-paying manufacturing jobs. The credit is expected to provide an estimated $2.7 billion in income tax support over five years and has been an important tool in the government's ongoing work to support Ontario businesses and workers through the ongoing period of trade disruption.

"Our government is taking decisive action to protect Ontario workers, businesses and communities from U.S. tariffs taking direct aim at our economy," said Peter Bethlenfalvy, Minister of Finance. "Our government will continue to provide targeted support for our trade-impacted sectors and invest in strategic priorities to ensure Ontario remains resilient and well-positioned to navigate global uncertainty and seize new opportunities for long-term growth."

Ontario remains steadfast in advocating for the province's world-class workforce and key industries, reinforcing the longstanding benefits of the deeply integrated Canada-U.S. economic relationship while also underscoring the importance of diversified export markets. In the face of economic uncertainty, Ontario will continue to lower taxes, cut red tape and attract historic investments, delivering on the government's plan to build the most competitive and resilient economy in the G7.

Section 232 of the U.S. Trade Expansion Act, 1962 authorizes the U.S. President to place tariffs (among other actions) on goods from other countries if those imports are deemed to threaten national security. Using section 232, the U.S. has placed tariffs on Canadian steel, aluminum, copper and autos, threatening Ontario jobs and businesses.

Section 338 of the U.S. Tariff Act, 1930 authorizes the U.S. President to impose additional duties of up to 50 per cent on imports from countries deemed to discriminate against U.S. commerce. Using section 338, the U.S. has announced new 50 per cent tariffs on a broad range of Canadian goods, effective as of 12:01 a.m. Eastern time on August 22, 2026