

New Action Plan to Protect Workers from Tariffs and Strengthen Ontario Industries

The world is changing rapidly. In the face of U.S. tariffs and growing global uncertainty, Canada is focused on what we can control. We are building our strength at home, diversifying our trading relationships abroad and making strategic investments to build a stronger, more independent and more resilient economy. “Working in partnership to protect Canadian workers, Ontario and Canada are fortifying our industrial base and securing the good-paying jobs of the future,” said the Hon. Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario. “The agreement we are announcing today is the next step in our ongoing partnership to provide tariff-impacted workers the certainty and stability they deserve, while unlocking Ontario’s vast supply of critical minerals and building a more competitive and resilient economy that can stand up to anything that comes our way.”

Ontario is crucial to Canada’s industrial economy. The province has world-class automotive and steel industries and vast deposits of critical minerals. It has the workers, expertise and resources to drive Canada’s economic transformation. By working together, the federal and provincial governments are protecting good jobs, attracting investment and ensuring Ontario’s industries remain competitive.

“From mine to mill to assembly line, Canada and Ontario are protecting jobs today and making bold investments that will build a stronger, more resilient, more independent Canadian economy for tomorrow,” said the Rt. Hon. Mark Carney, Prime Minister of Canada. “Today’s action plan is cooperative federalism in action. Canada is strong. Canada is united. Canada is working.”

To that end, Premier Ford and Prime Minister Carney today announced investments of \$8.7 billion and new measures to strengthen strategic industries, support workers and businesses impacted by U.S. tariffs and drive long-term economic growth.

Through this new action plan, the Government of Ontario and the Government of Canada will:

Protect Ontario’s steel industry by:

Establishing a new Joint Steel Action Fund with five-year funding commitments of \$3.55 billion from Canada and \$1.67 billion from Ontario to diversify production, prepare Canadian steel firms to support emerging and growing Canadian industries such as defence, advanced manufacturing and energy and trade infrastructure, and open up new overseas markets for Canadian steel.

Leveraging the Buy Canadian Policy and the Buy Ontario Policy to prioritize Canadian steel in public procurement and strengthen domestic demand.

Strengthening protections against foreign steel dumping and unfair subsidising through enhanced enforcement by the Canada Border Services Agency and tighter trade remedy practices and compliance

measures.

Establishing a Canada-Ontario Steel Task Force to provide strategic advice and guidance on the implementation of measures to support the steel sector and improve its competitiveness. Its first priority will be identifying ways to reduce steel shipping costs and recommending new measures as needed, including the effectiveness of trade measures and recent import trends.

Fortify Ontario’s automotive industry by:

Investing an additional \$2.5 billion over two years in capital projects to enable manufacturers to invest in modern machinery and upgraded production lines to build the connected and electric vehicles of the future. This funding is comprised of \$1.5 billion from the federal government and \$1 billion from Ontario.

Maintaining Canada’s greenhouse gas emissions standards for new light-duty vehicles at 2026 levels through the 2029 model year — with annual increases resuming in the 2030 model year, in line with Canada’s 2035 electric vehicle target set out in Canada’s new Auto Strategy.

Establishing a Canada-Ontario Automotive Task Force to support the industry’s

transition and better coordinate the implementation of new measures.

Build out Ontario’s critical mineral supply chain by:

Advancing essential road infrastructure to support critical mineral development in Northern Ontario’s Ring of Fire region by the Canadian government matching the provincial government’s initial investment of up to \$1 billion over three years.

Establishing a coordinated process for provincial and federal permitting to help streamline approvals and further speed up building.

Identifying priority projects that could benefit from federal funding initiatives, including the Canada Critical Minerals Accelerator, the First and Last Mile Fund, investment tax credits, cost-sharing arrangements and federal and provincial support measures to get projects moving faster.

Establishing a working group to support meaningful engagement with First Nations, identifying economic and community development opportunities. The work of this group will also include studying options for conservation and/or Indigenous protected areas as development in the Ring of Fire region moves forward.

Together, Ontario and Canada are fortifying our industrial base, strengthening domestic manufacturing and opening new markets for Canadian-made goods. Today’s action plan demonstrates cooperative federalism in action. At a time of growing uncertainty, Ontario and Canada are working together to protect Canadian workers, diversify our export partners and get major projects moving. We are taking care of our own — and building big again.

The Government of Canada has provided over \$25 billion in support to Canadian workers and businesses affected by U.S. tariffs and announced a further \$7.5 billion in new and enhanced measures in August 2026. This package includes:

\$1.5 billion through the Regional Tariff Response Initiative (RTRI) to help small and medium-sized enterprises, including liquidity supports to manage the pressures related to tariffs.

A \$500 million liquidity stream under the Business Development Bank of Canada’s Pivot to Grow program to help businesses manage immediate cash-flow pressures in addition to targeted programs for the forestry, steel and aluminum sectors.

Broadened access to the

Business Development Bank of Canada’s tariff-related programs by lowering the minimum revenue requirement for applicants to \$1 million.

\$2 billion provided through the new Canada Strong Diversification Fund to support tariff-affected businesses with shovel-ready projects that support ongoing capital maintenance.

\$3.5 billion in Rapid Response Supports for workers and employers to help workers access income support through extended and additional EI temporary flexibilities and support their transition into new opportunities.

Canada’s automotive sector supports over 120,000 direct jobs and contributes over \$16 billion annually to Canada’s GDP:

In February 2026, the Prime Minister launched a new strategy to transform Canada’s automotive industry, protect Canadian auto workers and businesses, accelerate investment in domestic automotive manufacturing and position Canada as a global leader in electric vehicle production.

The strategy allocates \$3 billion from the Strategic Response Fund and up to \$100 million from the RTRI to help the industry adapt, grow and diversify into new mar-

kets. It also committed to maintaining counter-tariffs on auto imports from the United States to ensure a level playing field for Canadian automotive manufacturers in the domestic market.

Canadian steel is essential to the country’s economy, supplying the materials needed to build major infrastructure projects, homes, vehicles and energy facilities, while supporting domestic manufacturing and supply chains:

Canada’s steel industry supports over 23,000 direct jobs and is integral to the 172,000 jobs in fabricated metals.

Since March 2025, the federal government has announced significant measures to protect and transform Canada’s steel industry, including \$1 billion to support investments in domestic steel production, \$150 million through the RTRI and \$70 million for worker training and income supports. These investments have been complemented by stronger protections against unfair trade practices, including tariff rate quotas for both free-trade and non-free trade partners, and the Buy Canadian Policy, which prioritizes Canadian steel in federal procurement and infrastructure investments.

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