



BY RCIS GOVERNMENT RELATIONS DIRECTOR JEFF SANDS

WHAT'S GOING ON?

CONGRESSIONAL UPDATE

RCIS Team Joins the Crop Insurance and Reinsurance Bureau (CIRB) in DC

Last week, RCIS Head Dalynn Hoch joined other CIRB members gathered in Washington, D.C. for the Spring Executive Committee Meeting and Fly-In. Executive Committee members and participants in the Emerging Leaders Program had the opportunity to visit with more than 40 congressional offices. CIRB members also met with USDA officials, including RMA Administrator Pat Swanson, RMA Associate Administrator Heather Manzano, and FPAC Deputy Under Secretary Brooke Appleton. Throughout the fly-in, CIRB advocated for investments in the Federal Crop Insurance Program as a critically important component of the farm safety net for farmers and ranchers across the country. These conversations included Congress and were inclusive of support for an inflation adjustment to Administrative and Operating expenses and increased support of loss adjustment expenses in high loss ratio areas, as was passed in the House 2024 Farm Bill.

In addition, the 2024-2025 Emerging Leaders Program participants, Jon Clarke (RCIS Area Claims Manager-VA) and Sandy Johnson (RCIS Field Service Rep-MN) officially graduated from their yearlong experience where they had the opportunity to network with other industry professionals, interact with the CIRB Executive Committee, and advocate on behalf of the crop insurance program. We are proud of Jon and Sandy and look forward to seeing how they use their experience and newfound perspective to better the industry.



Dalynn Hoch, Head of RCIS, was joined by RCIS team members, Jon Clarke and Sandy Johnson (R), for the Crop Insurance Reinsurance Bureau's Fly-in to Washington, D.C., last week. Jon and Sandy graduated from CIRB's Emerging Leaders Program during the visit.

House Clears Budget Resolution

The House approved a budget resolution last Thursday, by a vote of 216-214. With passage of this resolution, the reconciliation process can now be used to pass legislation that will further President Trump's legislative agenda, namely extension of the "Trump tax cuts," investments in the military, energy policy and border security.

The passage of this resolution, in essence, starts the work ahead. The House and Senate are quite far apart in terms of their instructional number to achieve savings, with the Senate recommending \$1 billion in cuts and the House mark at \$230 billion dollars. From this point, designated committees will undertake their tasks to identify savings, including the Agriculture Committees, which will also begin reviewing program cuts to support these administrative priorities.

ADMINISTRATION UPDATE

USDA Reduction in Force

USDA, like other agencies, is continuing to focus on reducing their workforce. A second "deferred resignation" or "buyout" was recently offered, and while it is unclear how many employees took the buyout, expectations are that additional cuts will be announced in the coming weeks.

Notably, Agriculture Committee leadership, specifically House Chair GT Thompson (R-PA) and Ranking Member Angie Craig (D-MN), have expressed concern regarding losing critical staff at the Department. RCIS will continue to closely monitor the situation at Risk Management Agency (RMA) and within the Farm Production and Conservation (FPAC) mission area and share relevant updates.

TRADE POLICY/TARIFF UPDATE

Administration Hints at Potential Producer Relief Due to Trade Policies

There have been recent statements from the Trump Administration, through President Trump and Cabinet Officials, that there is potential for economic assistance for agricultural producers with regards to disparate impacts resulting from ongoing trade policy, as was the case in the first Trump Administration with the *Market Facilitation Program*. The Trump Administration has acknowledged the impact certain tariff actions are having on farmers and ranchers and has asked that the agricultural community “bears with him” as they execute these policies.

At this point, it is important to note that these are statements – as of current, no actions have been taken to execute such a trade assistance program for farmers and ranchers. Sec. Rollins has indicated that while they will work to support farmers, they need the “dust to settle” as they work to develop new trade agreements with these countries. Additionally, the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) and the utilization of Section 32 Authority within that program to execute such payments, would be dependent on a replenishment of the funds available in that account if the program was to resemble the previous assistance provided to producers in the first Trump Administration. Some members of Congress have noted this and cited potential political challenges in doing so.

The current trade policies and resulting actions from Congress are very fluid at the moment. RCIS will keep you apprised of this developing situation as new actions are taken.

Greer Testifies before Senate Finance

U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer testified in front of the Senate Finance Committee last week. The testimony put a focus on agricultural trade interests. Greer emphasized the need to expand global market access for American farmers and ranchers, stating that U.S. producers are highly competitive but face significant barriers abroad, such as high tariffs in India (39%) and Turkey (nearly 40%). He argued that the U.S. has repeatedly opened its markets while other countries have not reciprocated and committed to using all available tools to open foreign markets for American ag exports.

Senators from both parties pressed Greer on the importance of boosting agricultural exports to address the record agricultural trade deficit and to support rural economies. Greer pledged to defend American producers from unfair trade practices and highlighted the urgency of negotiating new trade agreements that prioritize agricultural market access. He also acknowledged concerns about potential retaliation from trading partners if tariffs are used but maintained that a level playing field is essential for U.S. agriculture to thrive. More on this hearing can be found [here](#).

Recent Congressional Action on Trump Administration Trade Policy

Rep. Linda Sanchez (D-CA), the top Democrat on the House Ways and Means Committee’s Trade Subcommittee, [introduced](#) the Stopping a Rogue President on Trade Act. Doesn’t appear that it’s posted on congress.gov yet, so there’s no bill number. All other Ways and Means Democrats cosponsored the bill, which

would end the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) emergencies for Canada/Mexico and reciprocal/universal tariffs and require Congressional approval for new tariff actions by the President.

Sens. Ron Wyden (D-OR), the top Democrat on the Senate Finance Committee, and Rand Paul (R-KY) [introduced](#) a bill to end the IEEPA emergency for the reciprocal/universal tariffs. Doesn't appear this one's posted on congress.gov yet either, so no bill number.

Reps. Don Bacon (R-NE), Josh Gottheimer (D-NJ), Jeff Hurd (R-CO), and Gregory Meeks (D-NY) [introduced](#) H.R. 2665, the Trade Review Act. This isn't a new bill per se – it's the House companion to a Senate bill introduced by Sens. Chuck Grassley (R-IA) and Maria Cantwell (D-WA) that would subject certain Presidential tariff actions to a resolution of disapproval in Congress. A dozen House Republicans are [reportedly](#) considering cosponsoring.

There was a thought earlier in the week that Meeks might [force](#) a vote to end the IEEPA emergency for reciprocal/universal tariffs, but that didn't end up happening. Tariffs have (with [some exceptions](#)) [provided](#) a rallying point for Democrats in Congress.

Another lawsuit was [filed](#) against the IEEPA tariffs, this one by Montana tribal members against the universal tariffs. And the U.S. [invoked](#) the “essential security” exception in defending the IEEPA tariffs at the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Current Trade Actions – **Current rates and functions as of 4/11/25. These are subject to rapid and significant change and are provided first and foremost as a reference to you.*

Trade Actions in Effect

As of	Who	What	Rate	Authority
2/4/25	China	All imports	20% (10% from 2/4/25-3/3/25)	IEEPA
3/4/25	Canada	Non-USMCA-compliant imports	25%	IEEPA
3/4/25	Mexico	Non-USMCA-compliant imports	25%	IEEPA
3/12/25	All countries	Steel products and derivatives	25%	Section 232
3/12/25	All countries	Aluminum products and derivatives	25% (was 10%)	Section 232
Delivered 4/1/25	N/A	USTR, Treasury, Commerce report to the President	N/A	America First Trade Policy Memorandum
4/2/25	Countries importing	All imports	25%	IEEPA

	Venezuelan oil (currently none)			
4/3/25	All countries	Autos	25%	Section 232
4/4/25	All countries	Beer and empty aluminum cans	25%	Section 232
4/5/25	All countries (minus Canada, Mexico, Cuba, North Korea, Russia, Belarus)	Universal tariff	10%	IEEPA
Effective 4/9/25	China	Reciprocal tariff	125% (was 84% on 4/9/25)	IEEPA

Upcoming Trade Actions

Status	Who	What	Rate	Authority
Due 4/17/25 (hearings 3/24/25 & 3/26/25)	China	Ships servicing U.S. ports	A suite of fees of up to \$1.5 million	Section 301
Due 4/30/25	N/A	OMB report on foreign impacts on federal procurement	N/A	America First Trade Policy Memorandum
Effective 5/2/25	China, Hong Kong	No more de minimis	N/A	IEEPA
Effective 5/3/25	All countries	Auto parts	25%	Section 232
Comments due 5/7/25 (report due 12/27/25)	All countries (probably)	Pharmaceuticals & pharmaceutical ingredients	TBD	Section 232
Comments due 5/7/25 (report due 12/27/25)	All countries (probably)	Semiconductors & semiconductor manufacturing equipment	TBD	Section 232
Due 5/10/25	All countries	Inclusion process for steel derivatives	25%	Section 232
Due 5/10/25	All countries	Inclusion process for aluminum derivatives	25%	Section 232
Due 6/24/25	All countries	Inclusion process for auto parts	25%	Section 232
Suspended until ~7/9/25	57ish countries (minus China)	Reciprocal tariff	Variable	IEEPA
Due 11/25/25 (comments due 4/1/25)	All countries (probably)	Copper, scrap copper, and derivative products	TBD	Section 232

Due 11/25/25 (comments due 4/1/25)	All countries (probably)	Timber, lumber, and derivative products	TBD	Section 232
Due 12/10/25 (hearing was 3/11/25)	China	Semiconductors	TBD	Section 301
TBD (no current deadline)	Canada	USMCA- compliant imports	25%	IEEPA
TBD (no current deadline)	Mexico	USMCA- compliant imports	25%	IEEPA
TBD	TBD	Critical Minerals	TBD	Section 232 (likely)

Source: US House of Representatives, US Senate, Various News Outlets

Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions or comments. I can be reached at jeffrey.sands@rcis.com.

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