



June 18, 2025

The Honorable Scott Bessent  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Treasury  
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Secretary Bessent:

As Members of the Democratic Women's Caucus, we write to express our concern regarding the disproportionate financial harm that the Trump administration's tariff policies have on women. Women pay on average three percent more in tariffs than men for the same or similar products, including razors and clothing. These additional costs can add up quickly, especially for working mothers and families. Now, as President Trump attempts to impose sweeping tariffs and launch trade wars against our trading partners, it is even more important that we understand how higher tariffs will raise costs for everyone, and women in particular. We urge the Treasury Department to analyze the tariff system's impact on women and work to address these existing financial inequities immediately.

The United States is one of the few remaining countries in the world that charges gender-based tariffs on apparel, which makes up about three-fourths of all U.S. tariff burdens.<sup>1</sup> A 2018 staff paper from the U.S. International Trade Commission found that tariff rates average about 12 percent for men's clothing and about 15 percent for women's clothing.<sup>2</sup> For example, a men's anorak coat is subject to an 8.5 percent tariff whereas a similar women's coat is subject to a 14 percent tariff.<sup>3</sup> These archaic, gender-based tariff rates already disproportionately cost women in the United States a collective \$2 billion a year more than men.<sup>4</sup> In addition, the United States imports 98 percent of its consumed apparel—25 percent of which comes from China, a major target of President Trump's tariffs.<sup>5</sup> The Trump administration's tariff policies have already started to drive up everyday costs for Americans and will only further exacerbate these existing

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<sup>1</sup> Binkley, C. (2024, December 5). *'Pink tariffs' plague US fashion*. Vogue Business. <https://www.voguebusiness.com/story/fashion/pink-tariffs-plague-us-fashion>

<sup>2</sup> U.S. International Trade Commission (2018, August 15) Gender and Income Inequality in United States Tariff Burden [https://www.usitc.gov/publications/332/working\\_papers/gender\\_tariff\\_1.html](https://www.usitc.gov/publications/332/working_papers/gender_tariff_1.html)

<sup>3</sup> Martinez, M. (2025, March 11). *Women's clothing is often more expensive — and it's partly due to tariffs*. The 19th News. <https://19thnews.org/2025/03/pink-tariff/>

<sup>4</sup> Gresser, E., & Wei, E. (2023, December 6). *U.S. clothing tariffs are unfair to women*. Progressive Policy Institute. <https://www.progressivepolicy.org/ppis-trade-fact-of-the-week-u-s-clothing-tariffs-are-unfair-to-women/>

<sup>5</sup> Binkley, C. (2024, December 5). *'Pink tariffs' plague US fashion*. Vogue Business. <https://www.voguebusiness.com/story/fashion/pink-tariffs-plague-us-fashion>

tax inequalities, especially for working women and families already struggling to make ends meet.

Research has shown that tariff rates on U.S. consumer goods are systematically regressive and hit low-income families the hardest, with higher tariffs imposed on cheaper, everyday goods than on pricier, luxury items. Single-parent families in particular shoulder more of this burden, spending about 40 percent of their income purchasing goods, such as clothes, shoes, groceries, and home goods, compared to about 20 percent spent by the most wealthy.<sup>6</sup> Notably, 80 percent of single-parent families are headed by single moms, who have far diminished spending power under the current tariff system due to pink tariffs.<sup>7</sup> In addition, the increase in tariffs and reduction in taxes for billionaires proposed by the Trump Administration will only further shift the financial burden from upper-class billionaires onto low-income, single-parent families. To better understand this intersectional impact, we urge the Treasury Department to conduct a report on how these escalated tariffs will affect women-headed households.

All mothers deserve to afford basic needs such as groceries and clothing for their children. All women should be able to purchase a coat without worrying the price is higher because of the coat's gender classification. Our country's own tariff system should not financially punish women for purchasing goods. During these uncertain economic times, we must uplift women and working families, not further financially burden them.

Secretary Bessent, we urge you to investigate these pink tariffs and provide a report on their impact on women and women-headed households. It is crucial that the Treasury Department finally address the existing inequities of our tariff system which, compounded by President Trump's tariff policies, fall most heavily upon women and working families.

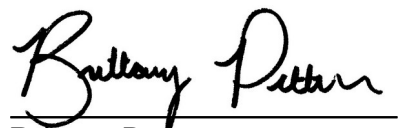
We request a detailed response on what actions are being taken at the Treasury Department to address these matters within 60 days of receipt of this letter. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



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Lizzie Fletcher  
Member of Congress



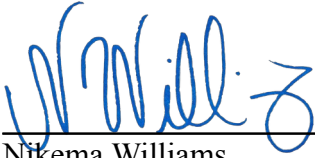
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Brittany Pettersen  
Member of Congress

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<sup>6</sup> Spencer, E. (2025, April 2). *How Trump's new tariffs will hurt women's wallets*. Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/erinspencer1/2025/04/02/how-trumps-new-tariffs-will-hurt-womens-wallets/>

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. (2024, March 21). *National Single Parent Day: March 21, 2024*. <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/stories/single-parent-day.html>



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Nikema Williams  
Chief Whip  
Democratic Women's Caucus



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Deborah K. Ross  
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Policy Task Force  
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Julia Brownley  
Member of Congress



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Rashida Tlaib  
Member of Congress



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Nanette Diaz Barragán  
Member of Congress



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Debbie Wasserman Schultz  
Member of Congress



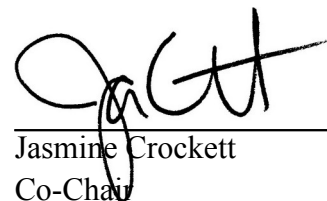
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Veronica Escobar  
Member of Congress



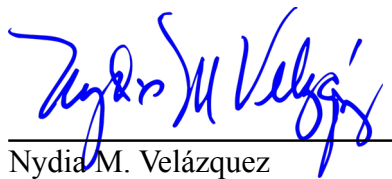
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Laura Friedman  
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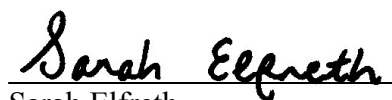
Valerie P. Foushee  
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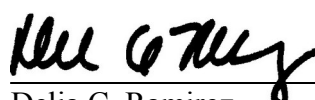
Bonnie Watson Coleman  
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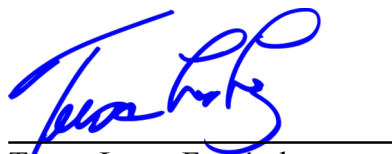
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