

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 9, 2026

The Honorable Howard Lutnick  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Ave NW  
Washington, DC 20230

The Honorable Lori Chavez-DeRemer  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Labor  
200 Constitution Ave NW  
Washington, DC 20210

Dear Mr. Lutnick and Mrs. Chavez-DeRemer:

We write to express our deep concern regarding the announced closure of Conn-Selmer's manufacturing facility in Eastlake, Ohio and the company's decision to offshore production to China.<sup>1</sup> President Trump has repeatedly stated that his trade policies would revive American manufacturing and level the playing field with China. Yet good-paying American manufacturing jobs are still being eliminated and sent overseas. We are concerned that this administration is not adequately considering the impact of its trade policies on working people and manufacturing communities. We are also concerned that the administration has no clear plan to support workers who are victimized by trade policies that allow companies to offshore production.

For more than 60 years, workers in Eastlake have produced brass musical instruments that helped build Conn-Selmer into the largest manufacturer of band and orchestra instruments in the United States. The facility currently employs 148 members of UAW Local 2359 who earn family-sustaining wages and possess highly specialized manufacturing skills.<sup>2</sup> Facilities like this one have long served as the backbone of American manufacturing communities, supporting local economies and sustaining generations of skilled workers. Conn-Selmer's decision to close the Eastlake plant by June 30, 2026, will eliminate these jobs and disrupt a community that has supported the company for decades.

The closure of this facility raises serious questions about the administration's stated goals to level the playing field with China and bring manufacturing jobs back to American communities. So far, this administration's policies have failed to elicit meaningful changes in

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<sup>1</sup> "Conn Selmer Announces Tentative Decision to Close Eastlake, Ohio Manufacturing Plant." *Conn Selmer*, 7 Jan. 2026, <https://connselmer.com/news/tentative-decision-to-close-eastlake>.

<sup>2</sup> "MAGA billionaire who blasted offshoring now ships 150 Ohio jobs to China." *The Daily Overview*, Feb. 2026, <https://thedailyoverview.com/maga-billionaire-who-blasted-offshoring-now-ships-150-ohio-jobs-to-china/>.

China's nonmarket behavior or revitalize U.S. manufacturing. Manufacturing employment is down 100,000 and manufacturing construction has fallen 12 percent.<sup>3</sup> Further, many companies are still free to enjoy economic incentives to relocate production to China, where manufacturers benefit from significantly lower costs and a state-directed industrial system designed to scale production and dominate global markets. Over the past several decades, these dynamics have contributed to widespread deindustrialization in the United States, hollowing out domestic manufacturing capacity and displacing American workers. It remains cheaper for companies to offshore production to low-cost Chinese manufacturers and import those products back into the United States. That is exactly what Conn-Selmer is doing with the Eastlake plant. This is only made possible by Chinese state subsidies, low labor costs, low environmental standards, and a manufacturing economy that is led by the Chinese Communist Party's goal of controlling global manufacturing.

The circumstances surrounding this closure are particularly troubling given the role of Conn-Selmer's owner, billionaire investor John Paulson. Mr. Paulson has publicly supported the administration's trade policies and has argued that the United States must protect American manufacturing and prevent the hollowing out of the nation's industrial base.<sup>4</sup> Yet a company owned by Mr. Paulson is now closing a long-standing American manufacturing facility and relocating production to China.

At the same time, workers who lose their jobs because production is moved overseas currently lack access to critical federal support programs. The Trade Adjustment Assistance program—which historically provided training, income support, and reemployment services to workers displaced by global trade—has expired. Congress has failed to reauthorize this program due in large part to opposition from members of the President's own party. As a result, workers who lose their jobs because their work is offshored to other countries are left with no support to help them find new, good-paying jobs.

The closure of the Eastlake facility underscores the need for a coherent strategy that both addresses unfair foreign competition and ensures that American workers are supported when jobs are lost due to offshoring. To better understand how the Departments of Commerce and Labor are approaching these issues, we respectfully request answers to the following questions no later than April 23, 2026:

1. What steps are the Departments of Commerce and Labor taking to address the continued offshoring of American manufacturing jobs to China?
2. How is the administration evaluating whether current trade policies are effectively discouraging companies from relocating production overseas?

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<sup>3</sup> All Employees, Manufacturing. Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/MANEMP>.; Total Construction Spending: Manufacturing in the United States. Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/TLMFGCONS>.

<sup>4</sup> "Billionaire investor John Paulson: Trump's tariff plans are 'well-founded'." *YouTube*, uploaded by CNBC Television, 24 Sep. 2024, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XMz6g8xsIqs>.

3. What actions are being taken to address China's non-market economic practices that place American manufacturers at a disadvantage?
4. Has the Administration found evidence that firms that offshore production from the United States to China are exploiting loopholes in current U.S. trade enforcement, customs enforcement, or country-of-origin rules? If so, how is the Administration addressing this trade cheating?
5. Given the expiration of the Trade Adjustment Assistance program, what resources are currently available to support workers who lose their jobs as a result of trade-related plant closures?
6. What steps is the administration taking to work with Congress to ensure that workers displaced by offshoring receive adequate training, income support, and reemployment assistance?

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



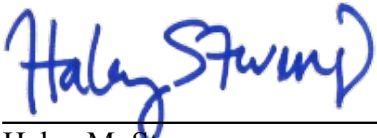
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Ro Khanna  
Ranking Member



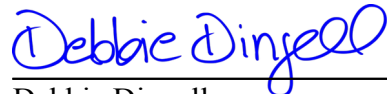
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Shontel M. Brown  
Member of Congress



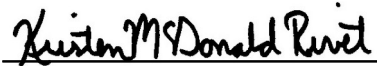
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Haley M. Stevens  
Member of Congress



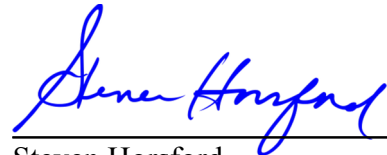
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Debbie Dingell  
Member of Congress



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Kristen McDonald Rivet  
Member of Congress



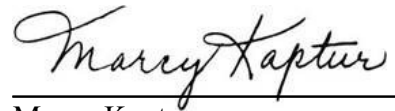
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Steven Horsford  
Member of Congress



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Raja Krishnamoorthi  
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Val Hoyle  
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