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June 13, 2018

The Honorable Wilbur Ross
Secretary, U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20230

The Honorable Robert E. Lighthizer
United States Trade Representative
600 17th Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20508

RE: Investigations 701-TA-584 and 731-TA-1382

Dear Secretary Ross and Ambassador Lighthizer:

I write today to express my deep concerns related to the Commerce Department's preliminary determination in the antidumping and countervailing duty investigations of the import of uncoated groundwood paper from Canada. As the investigation unfolds, I urge you to cautiously weigh potential consequences that would prove crippling to the U.S. paper manufacturing industry.

As I hope your investigations have determined, the U.S. newspaper publishing and commercial printing industry employs more than 600,000 Americans across the country, many of which are residents of Texas's 23rd Congressional District. The petitioner company, which has sought improper government intervention to corner the market in its favor, employs only 260 individuals at its sole mill. These actions by an individual company have put the livelihood of thousands of Americans, especially in rural areas, in jeopardy.

The majority of U.S. newsprint manufacturers, and the American Forest and Paper Association, oppose this petition. While I believe that American prosperity is the underlying goal for both the Department of Commerce and USTR, it's critical to acknowledge that this market-distorting duty has throttled the ability of small scale papers to survive.

As the newspaper industry continues to move forward into the digital age, we must continue to protect the most vulnerable publishing companies, many of whom simply lack the resources needed to move to a digital business model. Many of my constituents, who are still without adequate internet access, rely on their local newspapers as a daily source of news. Unfortunately, these tariffs have already forced some newspapers to reduce paper delivery to only once a week rather than every day. This particular case poses serious economic strains for newspapers across the United States, and the 23rd Congressional District of Texas. I urge the Department of Commerce to properly assess the toll that unnecessary duties on uncoated groundwood paper could have on hundreds of thousands of jobs and local newspapers across the country.

Sincerely,



WILL HURD
Member of Congress

CC: Chairman Rhonda K. Schmidlein, U.S. International Trade Commission