

# Publications

July 31, 2025 • Updates

## New Section 232 Tariffs Formalized on Copper Imports

### Key Takeaways

- **New 50% Tariffs on Copper Imports:** Starting August 1, 2025, the U.S. will impose 50% tariffs on certain semi-finished and copper-intensive derivative products due to national security concerns.
- **Additional Measures and Exemptions:** The Secretary of Commerce will establish a process by October 28, 2025, to expand the list of affected products, while items also covered by auto-related Section 232 tariffs will be exempt from the copper tariffs.
- **Future Domestic and Import Controls:** Plans include phased duties on refined copper beginning in 2027 and domestic sales requirements plus export controls on copper scrap under the Defense Production Act.

On July 30, 2025, President Trump issued a Proclamation directing new 50% tariffs on certain semi-finished copper products and copper-intensive derivative products imported into the U.S. from all countries on or after August 1, 2025. The list of impacted import classification codes have been issued by Customs as an attachment to the agency's message to the importing community implementing the Proclamation. However, that list is not set in stone: as with the tariffs imposed on steel and aluminum products under Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962 (Section 232), the Secretary of Commerce is directed to establish a process for including additional derivative copper products within the scope of this action. Certain tariffs that have already been announced, including reciprocal tariffs subject to change on August 1, are also applicable to the copper products covered by this Proclamation.

The President directed new tariffs in the wake of the Secretary of Commerce's findings that the present quantities and circumstances of copper imports threaten to impair U.S. national security. The Proclamation declares that copper is essential to the U.S. national and economic security as a necessary input in a range of critical infrastructure sectors and defense materials including aircraft, submarines and missiles. President Trump noted that U.S. copper production has plummeted despite the U.S. having been a world leader in copper production for most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; meanwhile, global smelting capacity has become concentrated in China, thereby making the U.S. "dangerously dependent" on foreign imports of copper products.

### Related People

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### Related Capabilities

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**Content-Based Applicability:** Based on the finding of threat to U.S. national security, the Proclamation directs 50% tariffs on **the copper content** of semi-finished copper products and intensive copper derivative products, as set forth in an Annex which has yet to be released. As to the **non-copper content** of the copper products subject to this Proclamation, the reciprocal tariffs and “any other applicable duties” will apply, including those imposed to address the flow of illicit drugs from Canada, China and Mexico. CBP is directed to issue guidance regarding compliance with declaration requirements for copper content.

However, products subject to both this Proclamation and the Section 232 tariffs on automobiles and automobile parts will be subject only to the latter tariffs, not the copper tariffs imposed under this Proclamation. As with the other Section 232 tariffs, no drawback is available for the tariffs on copper products implemented in this Proclamation.

**Inclusions Process:** Within 90 days of this Proclamation (*i.e.*, by October 28, 2025), the Secretary of Commerce shall establish a process for including additional copper products within the scope of this Proclamation.

**Refined Copper:** By June 30, 2026, the Secretary of Commerce is directed to update the President on domestic copper markets to enable the President to determine whether imposing a “phased universal import duty” of 15% on refined copper on January 1, 2027, and 30% starting on January 1, 2028.

**Defense Production Act (DPA):** The Proclamation also found that copper input materials and high-quality copper scrap meet the criteria specified in Section 101(b) of the DPA, 50 U.S.C. 4511(b), as a scarce and critical material essential to the national defense. The Secretary of Commerce is directed to take all appropriate action to implement a domestic sales requirement for copper input materials starting at 25% in 2027, a domestic sales requirement of 25% for high-quality copper scrap, and export controls for high-quality copper scrap.

If your business needs strategic legal guidance or anticipates potential impacts resulting from these announcements, contact Deanna Okun, Lydia Pardini, Polsinelli’s Executive Action Working Group or your Polsinelli contact.