

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States of America
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

August 19, 2025

Dear President Trump:

I write to express my deep alarm at the damage your reckless tariffs are inflicting on American families as they prepare to send their kids back to school. You promised to lower costs on “day one.” But as summer comes to a close, many parents are facing astronomical costs on everything from school supplies to groceries. Too many families are struggling to make ends meet. And families in Colorado and across the country are begging for relief. You must prioritize lowering costs and the impact of these tariffs as students return to school.

Let’s be clear: tariffs are a tax hike on the American people. When a company has to pay a fee to import a product into the United States, they pass that cost directly to the consumer. The result has been made painfully clear as families buy the school supplies their children need —¹ over a third of parents with kids in school say they are unable to afford back-to-school shopping this year. Even more concerning, almost half of these families plan to take on debt to do so.² Additionally, 85% of Americans are concerned about rising prices due to these tariffs and more than half plan to sacrifice necessities in order to buy school supplies.³ All of these numbers are up from 2024. Families are literally being pushed to the brink of bankruptcy in order to prepare their children to go back to school.

As a mom, I know how stressful back to school shopping can be. For many parents in my district, the rising costs have forced them to make hard choices about where and how they spend their money.⁴ In addition, almost two thirds of Americans have already begun school shopping in July due to tariff anxiety, which is earlier than ever.⁵ Families are scrambling to pick up essentials before being slammed with high prices and we must take their needs into consideration.

You are breaking promises by not lowering prices for American families and the middle class is shouldering the burden. Lowering prices for American families must be a top priority. That is

¹ Cochran, Lexi. “Parents hit back-to-school shopping with eye on Trump tariffs” *The Hill*. 2025.

² “Back-to School 2025: Financial Stress, tariff worries, and Labubu dolls” *Credit Karma*. 2025.

³ Ocasio, Adriana. “Survey: 85% of Americans Concerned About Rising Back-to-School Prices Due to Tariffs” *U.S. News Money*. 2025.

⁴ Martini, Natalie et al. “2025 Deloitte Back-to-School Survey” *Deloitte*. 2025.

⁵ Dickler, Jessica. “Trump Tariffs, inflation have some parents worried about back-to-school shopping costs”. *CNBC*. 2025.

why I urge your administration to prioritize them and thoughtfully consider the impact of your tariffs on their lives. I sincerely hope that you will act to lower costs and stress for millions of hard-working parents, and I look forward to hearing from you. Working families can't afford any more broken promises.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Brittany Pettersen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Brittany" being more prominent than the last name "Pettersen".

Brittany Pettersen
Member of Congress