

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 21, 2025

Ambassador Jamieson Greer
U.S. Trade Representative
Office of the U.S. Trade Representative
600 17th Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20508

Chair Amy Karpel
U.S. International Trade Commission
Office of the U.S. International Trade
Commission
500 E Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20436

Ambassador Greer and Chair Karpel,

We write to thank you, the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR), and President Trump for your continued efforts to rebalance our trade relationships, defend American producers and manufacturers, and, above all, put America first. Your leadership at USTR has already delivered meaningful progress for countless industries that are vital to both Utah and our Nation as a whole. We are especially grateful for your commitment to ensuring that trade policy reflects both fairness and the long-term strength of American workers, farmers, and manufacturers.

However, we also write to express our grave concern over the looming and potentially catastrophic collapse of the domestic sheep industry. In October 2023, members of Congress urged USTR to open a safeguard investigation under Section 201 of the Trade Act of 1974 to address this very issue. Unfortunately, the previous administration failed to act, and the challenges facing American sheep producers have only worsened. However, sheep producers in our State are now working collaboratively to submit a new Section 201 petition to the USITC. We respectfully urge you to give their petition full and fair consideration once it is filed.

Imports of lamb and mutton, that come primarily from Australia and New Zealand, have surged by more than 500% in volume and over 2,000% in value since 1994, following the elimination of the National Wool Act. In 2024 alone, the U.S. imported over 309 million pounds of lamb which is a nearly 30% increase from the prior year. As a result, over 70% of lamb consumed in the U.S. now comes from foreign sources, while domestic production has dropped by over 60%.

We hope that USTR will immediately examine trade remedies that can restore fair market conditions for American sheep producers. Specifically, we respectfully request that your office negotiate or impose a Tariff Rate Quota (TRQ) on lamb meat imports from Australia and New

Zealand. This policy would provide a desperately needed lifeline allowing U.S. sheep producers to rebuild market share and sustain long-term growth.

This issue is especially pressing in Utah, which is ranked third in total sheep production. We regularly hear from multigenerational sheep ranchers fighting every day to preserve their family farms and way of life. These producers are under mounting pressure such as soaring input costs, stagnant market prices, lack of access to risk management tools, persistent labor costs and shortages, and reduced access to federal grazing lands.

Furthermore, the ability of American farmers to export ovine products has come under significant strain. Historically, U.S. wool and sheepskins have been major value-added exports, but trade restrictions in key markets, particularly China, have severely impacted this sector. In 2024 alone, more than 80% of U.S. sheepskin exports and nearly four out of every five pounds of raw wool were destined for China. Unfortunately, ongoing trade disruptions, tariffs, and other barriers have devastated these markets, leaving U.S. producers with unsold stockpiles and depressed prices. We greatly appreciate the efforts USTR and President Trump are taking to hold China accountable for their egregious trading practices, and look forward to seeing these export barriers addressed.

Producer organizations and industry stakeholders have consistently raised the alarm about these challenges and stand ready to work with your team to provide the data and insights necessary to develop effective solutions. We urge you to work with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the U.S. International Trade Commission, and other relevant agencies to assess the full scope of market disruption and economic injury, and to pursue all available remedies, including implementation of a TRQ, to preserve this vital part of the American culture and agriculture industry.

We appreciate your consideration on this matter as well as your diligent efforts to strengthen American trade policy that protects our farmers and ranchers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "B. Owens", written over a horizontal line.

Burgess Owens
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Celeste Maloy", written over a horizontal line.

Celeste Maloy
Member of Congress