

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3603

April 20, 2020

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

Dear Secretary Ross,

I write in response to your March 23, 2020 letter to me regarding my request for an investigation into the excessive dumping of crude oil by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Russian Federation. I appreciate that the administration is taking this situation seriously, but I remain concerned about the continued flooding of oil by Russia and Saudi Arabia. Despite recently agreed to production cuts by Russia, Saudi Arabia and members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), the global oil market is still well oversupplied as the price of oil has failed to stabilize. It remains clear that the Saudis and Russians continue to flood the global oil market in what I view as an effort to crush American oil and gas producers and capture their market share. These actions are hindering our economic and national security. Given these unfortunate circumstances, more must be done. I continue to believe the Trump administration must utilize all of its authorities, including tariffs on imported oil from Saudi Arabia and Russia, to punish this unacceptable behavior.

President Trump has long been a champion for American workers and has fought for American interests when previous administrations have folded. The American oil and gas industry, including its thousands of workers, have been severely damaged by Russia's and Saudi Arabia's anti-competitive behavior. I believe the administration should utilize all of its tariff authorities, including those used to solve other trade imbalances like the Chinese steel and aluminum imports. Tariffs on imports of Russian and Saudi oil would place significant pressure on those governments to act to better stem the global flow of crude which would create stability for the oil market.

For most of this year, the price of oil has been at or near eighteen year lows which has resulted in layoffs and significantly reduced investment in America's energy infrastructure. This reduction in investment is of dire concern as America's energy independence is threatened. When our energy independence is threatened, our national security is threatened; therefore, I urge you to take further action and utilize your existing authorities, including your national security related Section 232 authorities, to place tariffs on imported oil from Saudi Arabia and Russia, to punish them for their destructive behavior.

I greatly appreciate the continued efforts of President Trump and his administration for putting America first. Thank you for your attention to this request and I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,



James M. Inhofe
United States Senator