

LED Secretary Susan Bourgeois talks Trump tariffs

By Dillon Lowe



President-elect Donald Trump has promised to impose sweeping tariffs on U.S. trade partners like China, Mexico and Canada on his first day in office.

Tariffs were a cornerstone of Trump's presidential campaign. He's suggested that such measures would create domestic manufacturing jobs and shrink the national deficit, among other aims.

But as tariffs effectively function as taxes that U.S. importers pay on foreign goods, some economists have cautioned that Trump's proposals would only serve to raise prices for U.S. consumers as businesses pass on their higher costs.

So, how would Louisiana be affected if the tariffs come to pass?

Louisiana Economic Development Secretary Susan Bourgeois tells *Daily Report* that it's too early to tell.

"We're paying attention to it, needless to say," she says. "But right now, all of this is living in the hypothetical. We'll see in the application what it means."

Even so, Bourgeois says she does have "complete confidence" that Louisiana's interests will be well represented in Washington thanks to the influence of House Speaker Mike Johnson and House Majority Leader Steve Scalise as well as Gov. Jeff Landry's strong personal and political relationship with the president-elect.

"I have no fear whatsoever that the incoming administration is going to make decisions that are harmful to Louisiana that we can't go moderate. ... I'm 1,000 percent comfortable in our ability as a state to do that," she says. "So, are we worried about it? No. Are we paying attention to it? Of course."

On the campaign trail, Trump floated 60% tariffs on Chinese goods in addition to 10 or 20% blanket tariffs on all other goods coming into the U.S. In recent weeks, he has also proposed 25% tariffs on products from Mexico and Canada. And late last week, he threatened the European Union with "tariffs all the way" unless the bloc ramps up its purchases of U.S. oil and gas.

In 2023, Louisiana's two largest import origins were Mexico (\$5.82 billion) and Canada (\$3.23 billion), [according to the World Trade Center of New Orleans](#).

For now, it's unclear how many of Trump's tariff proposals will ultimately come to fruition, as some analysts have theorized that at least some of his aggressive rhetoric is intended to serve only as a jumping-off point for future trade negotiations.

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