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Trump Faces Pressure from Scotland to Lift Tariffs on Popular U.S. Import: Scotch Whisky

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American consumers and importers may soon see relief on a beloved premium spirit as Scotland's First Minister John Swinney pushes President Donald Trump to exempt Scotch whisky from U.S. trade tariffs. The 10% duty on UK exports is costing Scotland's whisky sector an estimated \$5.2 million each week, and U.S. businesses and drinkers are feeling the squeeze.

Swinney is making the case during Trump's five-day private visit to Scotland, where the former president has been golfing at his Turnberry resort and preparing to open a new course in Aberdeenshire. In a *BBC* interview, Swinney stressed that Scotch whisky, a protected geographic product that can only be produced in Scotland, should not be lumped in with broader tariff regimes.

"The U.S. has long been one of our most vital markets," said Swinney. "These tariffs not only hurt our distilleries, they restrict American access to a product they value highly."

The tariffs are part of a wider U.S. trade policy posture that has targeted key European goods, but the impact on Scotch whisky has drawn sharp criticism from both sides of the Atlantic. U.S. importers, distributors, and bars have reported higher costs, lower margins, and disruptions in supply, especially among premium single malts.

Industry experts say the push to lift the tariff could benefit American consumers and retailers by lowering prices and restoring steady access to top-selling Scottish brands. "Scotch isn't just a Scottish export, it's a fixture in American bars, a staple in collections, and a major part of the high-end spirits market," said a U.S. beverage trade analyst.

Swinney's lobbying effort also comes at a politically sensitive moment, with the U.K.'s post-Brexit trade policies under scrutiny and the Labour government facing domestic pressure over economic management. While the White House has not commented on the request, Swinney is expected to press the issue directly.

Trump's visit has attracted attention for more than just trade talks. Security costs for the largely private trip are still being calculated, according to Swinney, who said policing was being coordinated between Scottish and U.K. authorities. Demonstrations have taken place throughout the visit, but Swinney emphasized that safety and free expression have both been upheld.

As discussions unfold, the U.S. spirits market will be watching closely. For Scotch whisky producers, lifting the tariff could restore momentum in a key export market. For American consumers, it could mean one thing: more whisky, at better prices.