

Bitcoin Miners Rushed to Beat Tariff Deadline After Trump's Trade Move

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When President Donald Trump announced steep tariff increases in April, it triggered a race against the clock. In just one week, U.S.-based Bitcoin mining firms scrambled to fly in tens of millions of dollars' worth of mining equipment before new duties took effect. The urgency saw private jets and chartered cargo planes used to outmaneuver the Trump administration's import taxes.

The tariffs 25% levies on Chinese-made crypto mining gear were announced on April 17 and scheduled to take effect on April 25. That gave businesses just seven days to act.

“Speed became the single most valuable asset,” said Adam Sullivan, CEO of Core Scientific, in a recent statement. The Texas-based miner booked air freight as soon as the tariff list was confirmed. “We were working phones 24/7.”

Core Scientific flew 800 mining machines from Malaysia into Chicago on a chartered aircraft operated by Emirates. Those machines are now humming away in facilities across Texas and North Dakota.

Riot Platforms, another major player, brought in 4,000 units on two separate flights from Asia. Industry sources say costs soared as demand for air freight capacity surged, but the math still made sense. Paying a premium on shipping beats paying Trump-era tariffs revived by the current administration.

Many industry insiders are skeptical about the strategic goals behind the tariff implementation, viewing it more as a political signal than sound economic planning.

“It’s a rushed, reactionary policy,” said an executive from a U.S.-based logistics firm involved in the operation. “And it created chaos in the supply chain.”

Despite the scramble, some shipments didn’t make it in time. One delivery of Antminer rigs reportedly arrived at the port just hours after the tariff deadline, resulting in a 25% import charge costing the buyer nearly \$1.5 million in extra fees.

Bitcoin miners have been expanding rapidly across conservative-led states such as Texas and Wyoming, taking advantage of favorable regulations and cheap power. This latest tariff move has only highlighted the tension between the American energy strategy and the administration’s regulatory approach to blockchain and digital assets.

As of early August, U.S. Customs data shows a sharp drop in mining hardware imports, a likely result of both the tariffs and firms having accelerated deliveries ahead of time.

While the dust settles, miners are reviewing future procurement plans. Several executives hinted that they are exploring non-Chinese hardware alternatives, although China remains dominant in mining equipment manufacturing.

“The U.S. needs to build its supply chain resilience,” Sullivan added. “Relying on overseas suppliers while facing unpredictable trade policy puts us in a vulnerable position.”