

## Governor Whitmer Urges President to Ease Tariffs Threatening Michigan Auto Jobs

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Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer met with President Donald Trump at the White House to raise concerns about the impact of tariffs on the state's vital auto industry. During the meeting, Governor Whitmer urged the president to consider the long-term effects of these tariffs on Michigan's workforce and economic stability.

In a report by the Associated Press, the governor presented data outlining the challenges these tariffs pose to manufacturers, workers, and the broader economy, emphasizing the urgency of revisiting trade policies to protect thousands of jobs.

She shared comprehensive information with the White House team for further review, but left without any immediate commitments from the administration. This interaction reflects ongoing tensions between state officials and federal trade policy aimed at protecting domestic industries while managing complex international relations.

The tariffs in question include a 50% tax on steel and aluminum imports, a 30% tariff on Chinese auto parts, and tariffs of up to 25% on goods from Canada and Mexico, which are key trading partners for Michigan. Since 2020, Michigan has seen more than \$23 billion in investments linked to trade with Canada and Mexico. However, the state has experienced a notable loss of manufacturing jobs, around 7,500, since President Trump's administration reinstated these tariffs.

Governor Whitmer's efforts to engage directly with the White House highlight the importance of state-level advocacy in shaping federal decisions that affect local economies. With the 2026 midterm elections on the horizon, discussions about trade and manufacturing jobs are poised to become central themes in political debates nationwide.

The stakes are particularly high in Michigan, where the automotive industry is not just a business sector but a community lifeline.

The automotive sector remains a cornerstone of Michigan's economy, supporting nearly 600,000 jobs directly or indirectly. Governor Whitmer

stressed the risk that these tariffs could drive more manufacturers to move operations abroad or reduce domestic investment. Major automakers such as Ford and General Motors have reported significant financial strains tied to these tariffs, raising concerns about their ability to maintain or expand U.S.-based manufacturing.

Additionally, many workers and their families depend on the health of the auto industry for financial security, and any disruption could ripple through entire communities. The governor's appeal to the president underscores the delicate balance between protecting domestic jobs and navigating the realities of global trade.

This meeting also exemplifies the broader challenge facing policymakers who must weigh the benefits of tariffs as leverage in trade negotiations against their potential costs to American workers.

While the administration has defended tariffs as necessary for national economic security, the dialogue with Governor Whitmer reveals the complexity of their impact on specific industries and regions. The lack of immediate resolution points to ongoing debates within the government about the best path forward.

In summary, Governor Whitmer's White House visit brought critical attention to the consequences of current trade policies on Michigan's automotive sector. Her appeal for tariff relief highlights the urgency of protecting manufacturing jobs that are essential to the state's economy and American industry as a whole.