

County of Butler

Board of Commissioners

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COUNTY URGES U.S. GOVERNMENT TO AMEND STEEL TARIFFS

The Butler County Board of Commissioners is urging the U.S. Department of Commerce to address unfair trade practices adversely affecting AK Steel in Butler by amending Section 232. Foreign companies based overseas are intentionally circumventing national security tariffs due to a loophole impacting electrical steel laminations and cores.

In a letter to U.S. Secretary of Commerce Wilbur L. Ross, Jr., the Butler County Commissioners stated AK Steel is the only American manufacturer of this type of energy-efficient electrical steel. To address the issue, Secretary Ross would have to submit a proclamation for President Donald Trump to sign.

The letter stressed without an annex to Section 232 including electrical steel laminations and cores, the last North American producer of the steel used in transformers critical to our nation's power grid would be lost. AK Steel, a subsidiary of Cleveland-Cliffs Inc., employs 1,500 people at facilities in Butler and Zanesville, Ohio. The Butler plant generates nearly \$110 million in payroll annually, so its closure would have a devastating economic impact.

The objective is to stop the increase in imports of downstream products from China and other countries into the United States through Mexico and Canada to avoid the tariffs.

The Butler County Commissioners have been in contact with William F. Crozer, Special Assistant to President Trump/Deputy Director of the White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs and Anthony Foti, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs at the Office of Legislative Affairs in the U.S. Department of Commerce.