

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 10, 2025

The Honorable Howard Lutnick
Secretary of Commerce
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Lutnick,

We write to request clarification regarding the scope of the Department of Commerce's ongoing Section 232 investigation into the national security implications of imports of commercial aircraft and jet engines, and parts for commercial aircraft and jet engines, initiated on May 1, 2025.¹

This investigation, initiated under Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962, purportedly aims to assess whether these imports threaten the national security of the United States. In recent days, you have indicated that the Department expects to complete its investigation soon.² Given the significance of this investigation—and its potential implications for trade policy and national security—it is essential that the process be conducted transparently.

In light of this, we ask whether the aircraft reportedly being acquired by President Trump from Qatar will be evaluated as part of the Department's ongoing investigation. While the aircraft is understood to be a Boeing 747-8 jetliner originally manufactured in the United States, its recent use by a foreign government and its reentry into the U.S. as a privately acquired aircraft raise serious national security concerns.³ It also raises questions about how such a case is categorized under the Section 232 framework.

The aircraft, reportedly valued at \$400 million, would represent one of the largest foreign gifts ever accepted by a former U.S. president—or by the U.S. government more broadly—if acquired at little or no cost.⁴ This transaction potentially conflicts with the Constitution's Emoluments Clause,⁵ as well as the Foreign Gifts and Decorations Act.⁶ Members of Congress have written to the Department's Inspector General and introduced a resolution⁷ and legislation⁸ addressing these concerns. While these constitutional and statutory questions are significant and pressing, we raise

¹ Federal Register Notice, BIS-2025-0027

² Alicia Diaz and Jamie Tarabay, *Lutnick Says He Expects Tariff Review on Aircraft Parts Soon*, Bloomberg (June 4, 2025), <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2025-06-04/lutnick-says-he-expects-tariff-analysis-on-aircraft-parts-soon>

³ A Martinez and Nia Dumas, *Trump Accepting a Plane from Qatar Could Be a National Security Risk. Here's How*, National Public Radio (May 14, 2025), <https://www.npr.org/2025/05/14/nx-s1-5395734/trump-qatar-plane-national-security-risk>

⁴ Maggie Haberman, Eric Schmitt, and Glenn Thrush, *Trump Is Posed to Accept a Luxury 747 From Qatar for Use as Air Force One*, The New York Times (May 11, 2025), <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/05/11/us/politics/trumpqatar-jet-gift-air-force-one.html>.

⁵ U.S. Constitution, Art. 1, Section 9, Clause 8.

⁶ 5 U.S.C. § 7342.

a different query. Specifically, we seek clarity on whether and how this transaction is being considered and factored into the Department's ongoing national security investigation into the import of commercial aircraft.

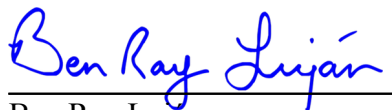
Given President Trump's repeated emphasis on curbing foreign influence in U.S. supply chains and reducing reliance on foreign-owned assets, it would be inconsistent for a high-profile foreign acquisition of this nature to go unexamined, especially as the Department of Commerce is actively analyzing the national security implications of such imports. The public deserves clarity on whether and how this transaction will be factored into your department's review.

Accordingly, we request answers to the following:

1. Will the Boeing 747-8 previously owned by the Qatari royal family and gifted to President Trump be considered within the scope of the Department's ongoing Section 232 into the national security implications of imports of commercial aircraft?
2. If not, what criteria or exemptions govern that determination?
3. Does the aircraft's prior foreign government ownership affect its classification or relevance under the investigation?

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We appreciate your commitment to completing this important review in a transparent manner.

Sincerely,



Ben Ray Lujan
United States Senator



Peter Welch
United States Senator



Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



Angela Alsobrooks
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator

⁷ Senate Resolution 218, 119th Congress, 1st Session <https://www.congress.gov/119/bills/sres218/BILLS-119sres218is.xml>

⁸ S. 1804, Presidential Airlift Security Act of 2025 <https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/senate-bill/1804>