

NAMM President delivers Statement on Impact of Global Tariffs



The National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) has issued the oral testimony that was delivered by NAMM President and CEO John Mlynczak (pictured above) before the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) Section 301 Committee in Washington, D.C., on Friday, May 8. Mlynczak's oral testimony delivered a powerful narrative on the impact of tariffs on American businesses, music education, and consumers of musical instruments. This message enhances the case and data already provided in NAMM's previously submitted written comments. The USTR selected 151 associations and companies to provide in-person testimony to support the 811 written comments received. NAMM joined other well-established associations, such as Consumer Technology Association, Consumer Brands Association, and United Auto Workers Association, to name a few.

In his testimony, Mlynczak underscored the unintended consequences of current tariff policies on the U.S. music products industry, particularly as the Administration considers additional actions under Section 301 authority. NAMM continues to advocate for evidence-based trade remedies that do not disproportionately harm American manufacturers, retailers and students. "Tariffs are tilting the playing field against American businesses and the millions of students who rely on affordable access to musical instruments," Mlynczak said. "Our industry depends on a global supply chain built over generations. Policies that increase costs without expanding domestic capacity ultimately reduce participation in music education and weaken long-term U.S. competitiveness."

Announced on March 17, the Administration has indicated it may use the results of the Section 301 investigations into 16 countries relating to structural excess capacity and production to restore tariff levels previously imposed under the

International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA). NAMM submitted formal comments on April 15th calling on USTR to ensure that any trade remedies are precisely calibrated to the practices under investigation - and do not impose collateral harm on an industry that depends on open global trade to serve American students, schools, and musicians.

NAMM submitted oral testimony on April 28th and testified in the Section 301 excess capacity hearing on May 8th, outlining the industry's concerns and answering questions for the USTR Section 301 Committee. Following the hearings from May 5-8, USTR is expected to propose specific remedies, triggering a second public comment period. NAMM will remain actively engaged throughout the process and will notify members when the next opportunity to provide input opens.

In his remarks, Mlynczak emphasized:

- The U.S. music products industry represents \$9 billion of a \$19.5 billion global market, with NAMM representing more than 10,000 companies. Global supply chains for musical instruments rely on specialized materials and craftsmanship that cannot be replicated domestically. Tariffs are increasing costs for American manufacturers while giving foreign competitors pricing advantages. Entry-level instruments - critical for music education - are disproportionately affected, with imports of wind instruments down 27% and pianos down 20% in 2025. Reduced access to beginner instruments threatens the pipeline that sustains U.S.-made professional instruments and the broader music ecosystem.

NAMM is urging USTR to implement an exclusion process for musical instruments, components and materials for products under HTS Chapter 92 should they recommend tariffs. "Music education and music-making are fundamental to American culture and economic vitality," Mlynczak added. "We respectfully ask policymakers to ensure trade actions support - not hinder - the students, businesses and communities that power this industry."

www.namm.org