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Nova Scotia

Premier also announces higher tolls for commercial U.S. drivers

CBC News

Posted: February 01, 2025

Last Updated: February 02, 2025

Nova Scotia Premier Tim Houston responded to U.S. president Donald Trump's tariff increase on Saturday. (CBC)

Nova Scotia Premier Tim Houston has outlined his response to tariffs imposed on Canada by U.S. President Donald Trump.

On Saturday, Trump signed an executive order that imposes a 25 per cent tariff on Canadian goods entering the U.S., including a 10 per cent tariff on oil and gas.

In a press release sent just hours after the tariffs were confirmed, Houston said that as of Monday, tolls at the Cobequid Pass will double for commercial vehicles entering from the U.S.

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He said the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation will be directed to remove all U.S. alcohol from store shelves effective this Tuesday. That totals more than 400 products, including beer, wine, spirits and coolers.

For the 2023-24 fiscal year, sales of U.S. products imported from the U.S. totalled \$18 million of the NSLC's \$753 million in sales on alcohol, said a liquor corporation spokesperson. These products made up seven per cent of the NSLC's number of alcohol listings.

CBC News asked the NSLC on Sunday to define an American product, what will become of the American products removed from shelves, and will more Canadian products be added, among other questions.

The NSLC responded with a statement to say it's still working through the details surrounding the decision.

Business deals with the U.S. will also be curtailed.

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"We will look for opportunities to cancel existing contracts and will maintain the option to reject bids outright because of President Trump's unlawful tariffs."

Houston also said the province will limit access for provincial procurement for American businesses.

He said going forward the province will focus on "finding new markets here at home with programs like Nova Scotia Loyal, focus on developing our own resources, eliminate inter-provincial trade barriers and, finally, of course, look for international diversification."

The statement also said it's remarkable to "find ourselves at odds with our best friend and neighbour."

Federal government plans

The province's actions came ahead of [the response outlined by the federal government](#).

To start, Canada will slap 25 per cent tariffs on \$30 billion worth of American goods coming into Canada as of Tuesday. The tariffs will then be applied to another \$125 billion worth of American imports in three weeks' time.

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Effect on farmers

Alicia King, president of the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture, runs a seventh-generation farm with her husband in Antigonish, N.S.

She said the biggest export impact will be felt by apple, blueberry, Christmas tree and beef cattle farmers.

"Those would be a few that rely quite heavily on the U.S. export market," she said. "They're one of our largest trading partners and it's an easy market access for us to get. We're neighbours."

King is encouraging people to support local farmers whenever they can. Besides shopping at farmers' markets and checking product origins at grocery stores, people can also stop by farm stands or join community-shared agriculture programs.

Impact on lobster industry

Geoff Irvine, the executive director of the Lobster Council of Canada, said there's not a lot of fishing and production going on at this time of year, so the impacts of the tariffs are muted.

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"If it's a short-term thing, the impact won't be as bad as if it lasts a long time," he said. "If it lasts into the spring season, which really begins in the middle of April, that's when we'll see the real impacts."

Irvine spoke to CBC News from Rome, where he's part of a delegation of 14 companies on a 12-day trade mission to promote Atlantic Canadian seafood in Europe.

The United States is Canada's second biggest export market for live lobster, but first for frozen lobster. (Brian Snyder/Reuters)

He said exports for live lobster are biggest in May, June and December, and the live lobster market is most relevant to Nova Scotia.

The United States is the second biggest export market for live Canadian lobster, after China, said Irvine.

For frozen lobster, Irvine said that's a bigger deal for New Brunswick, where the United States is the biggest export market.

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"We kind of knew this was coming, so most people with frozen inventory, have already moved [most of] it into the U.S.," he said.

Opposition reaction

In a statement, Nova Scotia's Liberal Party welcomed the measures planned by the provincial government.

"The U.S. tariffs announced today threaten jobs, industries, and livelihoods across Nova Scotia, hitting our rural resource sectors the hardest," said the statement.

NDP Leader Claudia Chender also welcomed the measures announced by the province. In a statement issued Sunday morning, she called them a good first step.
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