

If Canada became a state, Canadians would have 'much better' health coverage, says Trump

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Donald Trump says Canadians would get a 'tremendous' tax cut and have 'much better' health coverage if Canada became the 51st state.

U.S. President Donald Trump says Canadians would have "much better" health coverage if Canada became the 51st state.

He made the remarks during a briefing in North Carolina, where he toured areas struck by Hurricane Helene on Friday.

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"I would love to see Canada be the 51st state," he said. "The Canadian citizens, if that happened, would get a very big tax cut -- a tremendous tax cut -- because they are very highly taxed."

"They'd have much better health coverage. I think the people of Canada would like it," said the president.

'No tariffs' under Canadian statehood

Trump has floated imposing sweeping 25 per cent tariffs on Canadian exports starting Feb. 1.

If the U.S. were to acquire Canada, Trump would "let business go to Canada routinely. And then, there would be no tariffs," he added.

He made the remarks shortly after railing on the U.S.-Canada trade relationship -- as he has repeatedly done for weeks -- and said again that his country does not need Canada's cars, lumber and food products. He says the U.S. makes "the same products on the other side of the border."

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Some \$3.6 billion in goods cross the border every day, according to the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. Canada's [total forestry exports](#) alone were valued at \$45.6 billion in 2022, according to Statistics Canada.

The U.S.-Canada trade relationship is directly related to [3.7 million jobs](#) between the two countries.

Responding to a question on tariffs generally, Trump responded, "We are going to be a rich, rich country very soon ... The word tariff is one of the most beautiful words in the dictionary."



President Donald Trump greets supporters upon his arrival at Asheville Regional Airport in Fletcher, N.C., Friday, Jan. 24, 2025. (AP Photo/Mark Schiefelbein)

Fanning the flames

Trump's tariff comments have set a fire under Canada's political class.

It is the purported driver behind [Ontario Premier Doug Ford's early election call](#), which he confirmed during a Friday morning press conference that Ontarians will head to the polls on Feb. 27. Ford, who is not only the leader of Canada's most populous province, leads the [premiers' united front against tariffs](#) as chair of the Council of the Federation.

A prerequisite for the next Liberal leader – who will also be prime minister until the next election – will be the appearance of someone who can stand up to Trump. Reaction among Canada's political leaders to Trump's threats has been, unsurprisingly, cold.

Ottawa is prepared to unleash a barrage of counter-tariffs on key industries in Republican states, among other measures.

A senior source [told to CTV News last week](#) that the retaliation will happen in three rounds. The first phase would require no consultation and immediately slap tariffs on a list of items, including Florida orange juice and Kentucky bourbon. The prime minister would also explicitly tell Canadians not to purchase those items.

Canada vs. U.S. health care

Health-care coverage looks different in Canada and the United States.

Canada's Medicare system is publicly funded. Each province and territory has its own insurance plan, which is paid for and administered by various levels of government.

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In theory, all Canadian residents have access to hospital and physician services without having to pay out-of-pocket. In practice, 17 per cent of Canadians aged 18 and older said they did not have access to a regular health-care provider in 2023, according to the [Canadian Institute for Health Information](#).

Universal health care does not exist in the United States. Instead, most people are covered under private insurance through their employer, school, or through the [federal Medicare program](#), which is available to people over 65 or those with certain health conditions. Some low-income Americans are eligible for Medicaid or The State Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).


The average U.S. consumer spent around US\$5,300 on health insurance and medical services in 2023, according to the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#).


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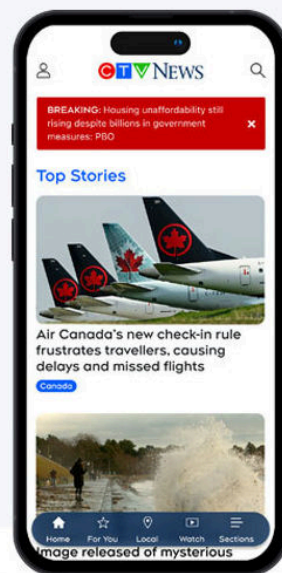
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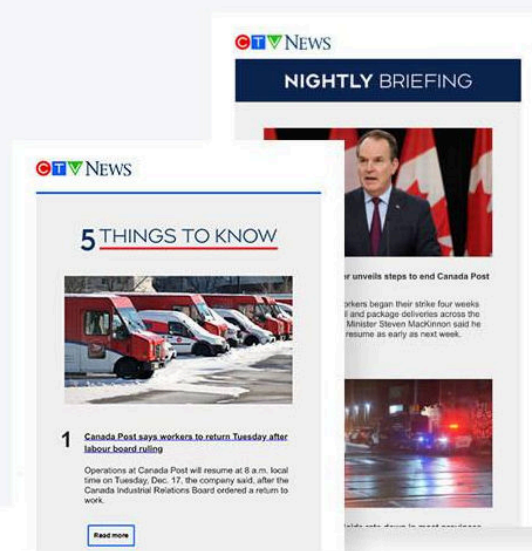
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