

**U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA)**

**Senator Cantwell on Face the Nation**

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**Margaret Brennan:** Welcome back to "Face the Nation." We turn now to the top Democrat on the Commerce Committee, Washington State Senator Maria Cantwell. Good to have you here.

**Sen. Cantwell:** Thank you so much for having me.

**Brennan:** So, Senator, you heard the Senate Whip talk about your effort to claw back some control over trade. He said it will have a thorough hearing, and we'll see where it goes from there. Do you have any indication of momentum among some of your Republican colleagues?

**Sen. Cantwell:** Well, the first [two days] of introduction, we signed up seven Republicans. So, usually you don't get a first introduction and get so many people on board, but I think it shows the anxiety that people have. I'm sure if they listen to their constituents, consumer challenges are already starting to surface, and certainly the stock market's impact on retirement income is shaking a lot of people. So, I'm sure my colleagues will hear from them.

Today, consumer groups are announcing, and retailers, the fact that they want Congress to take this action up. And so, I think we're hearing from a big segment of the economy that consumer spending is a big part of GDP, and they are worried.

**Brennan:** So you've got, what, six Republicans at this point?

**Sen. Cantwell:** Seven.

**Brennan:** Seven. And now you are saying retailers, like, you have CEOs who are onboard or industry groups?

**Sen. Cantwell:** Industry groups, like the Retailers Association, the outdoor industry, the consumer electronics groups, Main Street Alliance, organizations who know their bread and butter comes from consumer spending, which is a big part of our economy. And so, they are very anxious about a plan -- listen, I listened to your segment. I never heard so much about fuzzy math in my life. And the notion that that chart is getting so much national attention, the letters in Greek Alphabet, all the stuff that makes no sense, that's what people, consumers, are saying, "How is this helping me in a time of inflation? You are adding to my costs with a tax on my consumer goods." And so, I think that's why we are gaining support from these organizations today.

**Brennan:** So, Canada and China are among your state's largest export markets. Both have already announced retaliatory tariffs. I know you said previously that the first Trump Administration and the more limited tariffs still, to this day, have an impact on your state.

So how much wiggle room do we have with time here? Because you heard the Commerce Secretary say that basically these aren't a negotiating ploy, that they are staying in place. That's what he says. So how long before damage?

**Sen. Cantwell:** Well, we have seen damage from the first Trump tariffs on things like apples, and markets closed. And what you do is you end up then losing farm family economies. You don't necessarily lose farmland, some big corporation might buy it, but you lose family farms.

So our objective should be to help farmers open up doors to these overseas markets. The United States' goal here should be to make great manufactured products and grow great agricultural products and get those markets opened up.

But what the president is doing, is instead of building those alliances, he basically is getting into a trade war that is having unbelievable impact. When his last tariffs on India, we reopened with the apple market and we went to India and said, let's get rid of it, and we were successful. And that's the kind of action we want to see today.

**Brennan:** So your state is one of the top five unionized states in the country. You have the world's largest plane manufacturer, Boeing, in Washington. So I wonder if those union workers are as supportive of the tariffs as the auto industry workers have been. They are not against them, even though some are Democrats. In fact, they think some of them, including on this program, like Shawn Fain, have been very supportive.

**Sen. Cantwell:** Well, we're seeing -- you could get the letter from the Machinists International. They don't support the president on this.

And that is because they understand how much the United States and Canada have become an integrated supply chain. That helped us lower the cost of U.S. manufacturing for cars and for airplanes. And lowering that cost means that we are even more competitive.

So they don't like the uncertainty. And what they would like to see instead is the continuation of investment from the last administration. So when you think of CHIPS and Science, and you think of the Inflation Reduction Act that made investments in next generation technology, the sectors that have a lot of employees want to win on innovation. They know that investment in innovation will help us outpace our competition, not a tariff that makes the product more expensive.

**Brennan:** So Boeing's CEO testified 80% of the planes they deliver are to markets outside of the U.S., 80% of the content of those airplanes are manufactured here. They have a vested interest in clearing the decks for themselves here. What are they telling you about their conversations with the administration?

**Sen. Cantwell:** Well, everybody's concerned that the administration might retaliate against them, that -- they are not front and center in this debate, but they are clear that they are being hurt. I think people are saying that their strategy is, if there is a demand for 40,000 airplanes and we could increase 1,000 more planes being sold, it would have a huge impact on the trade deficit.

So they are trying so say, "Mr. President, don't cut the innovation and investment. Don't make semiconductors more expensive. Don't make the parts more expensive. Make it cheaper." And

the United States bet on the American worker, and they will do the rest when it comes to the innovation that's required for America to build the best products.

So I think the president's math is wrong. I think he doesn't know the calculus is going to be so devastating to American consumers, and that's why those groups are joining us today.

**Brennan:** Senator Cantwell, thank you for your time today.

**Sen. Cantwell:** Thank you.