

US Senator Maria Cantwell

Remarks at Port of Seattle Press Conference on Tariffs

April 16th, 2025

[\[AUDIO\]](#) [\[VIDEO\]](#)

Sen. Cantwell: Well, thank you Molly. And I want to thank all our speakers for being here today and for their unbelievable contributions to our economy.

“I am glad to visit Seattle once more, this beautiful city and great seaport, on the one hand facing the Orient, with its great future significance in the life of the world, and on the other hand, Alaska, our own Alaska, with its needs and its possibilities.”

Obviously, that wasn't me. I'm reading a quote from Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who visited Seattle September 20, 1932, to basically say how disastrous reciprocal tariffs would be on a global economy, and instead advocated for building alliances.

How much we've forgotten in 90 years, but these businesses here today are reminding us what we already should know: that this kind of tariff policy disrupts an integrated economy, hurts small businesses and basically disrupts what is an important opportunity for the United States to grow more jobs for the future.

I want to thank the co-chair of the Seaport Alliance, and Sam Cho, Commissioner McCarthy Gordon Bluechel, Chris Stone, Blas Alfaro, Jeff Damir, Barry Barr, Joe Fugere, and Molly for their unbelievable stories of persevering in incredible times of uncertainty. I think all of them told you what the impacts would be to Washington businesses if this trade tariff idea, [which] as Molly said changes every few minutes, continues to wreak havoc on their abilities to plan for the future.

That is why Senator Grassley and I introduced the Trade Review Act of 2025 to say that Congress needs to get back in the game of making sure that a policy so dramatic to affect so many businesses has to be approved and reviewed by Congress before it can fully take place.

In the last Trump administration, we saw that retaliatory tariffs on apple growers impacted our apple economy, and we went to work to relieve those tariffs so that we could help restore that market. But now, are we saying that these same markets will be disrupted again, at a time when our farmers need more certainty and more predictability? And, why all of these manufacturers need to have the certainty of growing markets on an international basis, instead of now saying to themselves, “Maybe it's a time for retraction.”

I think the stories about Canada, our closest ally being impacted -- I want you to know that I helped get British Columbia to put more Washington wine on their shelves. And so, it's very -- we found out many years ago that people in British Columbia drank a lot of wine. Who knew? But they drank a lot more than Washingtonians did.

So, we went up there, and the only wine that they were selling was a little bit, a little bit of California wine, and the rest an international market. But we were successful working in trade

negotiations with British Columbia to get Washington wine on the shelf. So now to think we're at this point where Washington wine isn't even going to be on those important store shelves is such a tremendous loss, nonsensical at a time when we should be doing more to increase our opportunities.

Building alliances and basically strengthen our innovation economy is what we should be doing. The fact that alliances would help us, as we did in showing with India that we could reopen the apple market and work together collectively, is what we need to be doing. I want to thank everybody who was here today because now, my colleagues -- who I hope are on the same journey in their home states listening to their constituents -- will listen to the fact that this unpredictability is too disruptive, and that Congress needs to step in and help focus the attention that trade has been a benefit and that future trade can be even more beneficial to the US economy. Thank you very much.