**Fiscal Facts: Wisconsin’s Shifting Import Economy**

Wisconsin consumers and businesses purchased $38.9 billion worth of imported goods in 2024, with machinery, pharmaceuticals, and vehicles among the top imports by value. Since 2016, the inflation-adjusted value of the state’s imports has grown 32.4%.

In recent weeks, new U.S. tariffs were imposed in an effort to boost domestic manufacturing. However, their cost -- and retaliation by major trading partners -- raise concerns about potential inflation, decreases in product availability, and unintended impacts to state manufacturers.

With higher U.S. tariffs imposed on the state’s major trade partners, and the end of the Trump administration’s 90-day pause on reciprocal tariffs looming, now is a critical time to review the state’s import activities.

This brief complements our earlier report on Wisconsin’s exports by examining the state’s import trends, and what types of goods flow into the state from international markets. To do so, we use imports data from the International Trade Administration within the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Wisconsin’s top import sources have been relatively stable since 2018, though imports from certain trade partners have shifted considerably. China, Canada, and Mexico are the state’s biggest trade partners.

The inflation-adjusted value of state imports from China have fallen by 37.3%, from $10.2 billion in 2018 to $6.4 billion in 2024. Wisconsin businesses and consumers purchase a diverse range of goods from China, with heavy machinery ($1.4 billion), electric appliances ($1.0 billion), and electronic devices ($0.9 billion) leading the way.

Canada ranks as the state’s second largest source of imported goods at $6.3 billion. Wisconsin imports a wide variety of goods from Canada, including paper ($856.9 million), chemicals ($559.4 million), and processed foods ($563.6 million). The value of state imports from Canada has remained relatively consistent since 2018.

Imports from Mexico have grown dramatically, from $3.5 billion in 2018 to $5.9 billion in 2024 (68.6%). Vehicles and vehicle parts are by far the largest category of state imports from Mexico, with those goods valued at $2.1 billion in 2024, or 35.6% of imports from that country.

Over the past two months, the Trump administration has imposed new tariffs on goods from around the world. The value of imports to Wisconsin has grown over the last decade, but U.S. tariffs may change that trend. Though the tariffs are meant to support U.S. manufacturing, they could also spur higher prices and interest rates, limit the availability of certain goods, and slow economic growth.

Local and state policymakers have limited options and resources to affect the powerful effects of these federal policies and global market forces. However, they may wish to consider both ways to help consumers and businesses cope with this changing environment even as they try to harden their budgets against the risk of economic turbulence.

*This information is a service of the Wisconsin Policy Forum, the state’s leading resource for nonpartisan state and local government research and civic education. Learn more at* [*wispolicyforum.org*](https://wispolicyforum.org/research/state-tax-burden-up-but-overall-burden-still-falling/)*.*