# Free Trade Buletin



November 2, 2018 | Number 72

## The "Protectionist Moment" That Wasn't

American Views on Trade and Globalization

By Scott Lincicome

he United States' recent implementation of protectionist tariff and trade policies has not been driven by intense public demands for such policies. In fact, recent public opinion polling uniformly reveals that, first, foreign trade and globalization are generally popular, and in fact more popular today than at any point in recent history; second, a substantial portion of the American electorate has no strong views on U.S. trade policy or trade agreements; third, and likely due to the previous point, polls on trade fluctuate based on partisanship or the state of the U.S. economy; and, fourth, Americans' views on specific trade policies often shift depending on question wording, especially when the actual costs of protectionism are mentioned.

These polling realities puncture the current conventional wisdom on trade and public opinion—in particular, that Americans have turned en masse against trade and globalization, and that President Donald Trump's economic nationalism reflects the bottom-up policy demands of a silent majority of American voters. Instead, numerous surveys show that Trump's protectionism *drives* (and is not itself driven by) the opinions of a significant portion of the electorate—an electorate that, when confronted with the actual implications of Trump's policies (i.e., higher prices, harmed businesses, or foreign retaliation), moves toward the freer trade position. Such facts provide important insights into the origins of America's current "protectionist problem" and how policymakers and trade advocates can better overcome it.

### THE AMERICAN PUBLIC INCREASINGLY SUPPORTS GLOBALIZATION AND TRADE

Contrary to conventional wisdom, the United States is not experiencing a "protectionist moment." Indeed, recent polls show Americans' support for trade and globalization at or near all-time highs. For example, in the last year:

- Pew (May 2018) found that American support for free trade agreements rebounded to pre-2016 levels, only a couple percentage points off its all-time high in 2014.<sup>1</sup>
- WSJ/NBC News (March 2018) found "Americans overwhelmingly think trade is more of an opportunity to boost the economy than it is a threat to it... by a 66%– 20% margin. And that feeling transcends party lines, as Republicans, independents and Democrats agree that foreign trade is an opportunity for economic growth."<sup>2</sup>
- Gallup (March 2018) found that "[a] strong majority of U.S. adults (70%) see foreign trade as an opportunity for U.S. economic growth through increased exports rather than a threat to the economy from foreign imports (25%)"—down from an all-time high in 2017 of 72 percent. Before that, "no more than 58% had held the positive view of trade."<sup>3</sup>
- Monmouth (June 2018) found that 52 percent and 14 percent, respectively, of Americans in 2018 think that "free trade agreements are good or bad for the United States" up dramatically from 24 percent good and 26 percent bad in November 2015.<sup>4</sup>

Scott Lincicome is an international trade attorney, Cato Institute adjunct scholar, and adjunct professor at Duke University Law School. The views expressed are his own.

The Chicago Council (mid-2017) found that voters by a widest-ever 65 percent to 31 percent margin believe that "globalization, especially the increasing connections of our economy with others around the world is mostly good . . . for the United States." The "mostly good" percentage had remained at its all-time high since 2014; the "mostly bad" percentage was at its lowest level since 2002.<sup>5</sup> The same poll found record support for "international trade" being "good" for the U.S. economy (72 percent), U.S. consumers (78 percent) and U.S. job creation (57 percent).<sup>6</sup> In 2018, the "international trade" numbers moved even higher: 82, 85 and 67 percent, respectively.<sup>7</sup>

#### AMERICANS DO NOT PRIORITIZE TRADE POLICY

Despite strong public support for trade in general, polls also show that the issue is not a priority for most American voters, even during the height of the 2016 election season when then-candidate Trump made "bad trade deals" a centerpiece of his campaign. One poll taken right after the 2016 Republican National Convention asked respondents, "How do you feel about rolling back free-trade agreements?" and revealed that half of them had no opinion ("neither favor nor oppose") on the question—a far higher share than the eleven other issues polled. (The second-highest "neither" score was Medicare vouchers at only 29 percent.) Moreover, "[i]f we add up those who were either indifferent or said they weakly support or oppose rolling back free trade, fully 67 percent of Americans don't care very much either way"—again, the most disinterest in an issue by a large margin.

The poll also showed that, unlike issues such as Medicare vouchers, immigration levels, or war with Iran, the number of respondents did not significantly increase as the intensity of the response increased—it stayed flat. The authors therefore conclude that, even in the summer of 2016, "trade is more prominent in campaign rhetoric than in most voters' minds" (see Figure 1).<sup>8</sup>

Other surveys from 2016 reveal similar results—an April 2016 Gallup poll, for example, found 43 percent of Americans had no opinion on U.S. withdrawal from the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), while only 28 percent supported or opposed

#### Figure 1 American disinterest in trade



Source: Tobias Konitzer, Sam Corbett-Davies, and David Rothschild, "Who Cares About Free Trade? Not Many Americans, It Turns Out," *Washington Post*, July 29, 2016.

it—consistent with Gallup's previous findings that "trade is not top-of-mind to Americans when they are asked to name the most important problem facing the country or the most important priorities for the next president."<sup>9</sup>

More recent polls show the same thing:

- Harvard-Harris (March 2018) found that only 11 percent of voters viewed "renegotiating trade deals" as the "international problem" that "should be the highest priority for President Trump."<sup>10</sup>
- Pew (January 2018) found that voters ranked "global trade" last among issues that are a "top priority for Trump and Congress." Historically, Pew noted that "[d]ealing with global trade issues has been among the lowest-ranked priorities over the past two decades." Only 38 percent of voters saw trade as a top priority in 2018, up slightly from 32 percent in 2010.
- Gallup (June 2018) found that only I percent of Americans believe that "foreign trade/trade deficit" is "the most important problem facing the country today."<sup>12</sup>

For the vast majority of Americans, trade is simply not a priority—an understandable position given that the United States trades less than many major economies;<sup>13</sup> most Americans work in non-traded services, representing the bulk of the U.S. workforce; and that few Americans know someone affected by import competition.<sup>14</sup> Believing (rightly or wrongly) that global trade does not directly impact their daily lives, many Americans choose to remain rationally ignorant about its costs, benefits, and complexities.

As shown next, this ambivalence has important implications for U.S. polling on trade policy issues.

#### TRADE POLICY VIEWS FLUCTUATE BASED ON PARTISANSHIP AND THE ECONOMY

Long-term polling from several organizations indicates that many U.S. voters' views on trade issues change from year-to-year, depending on politics and the economy. As shown below in Figure 2, polls from Gallup, Pew, and the Chicago Council on trade agreements, foreign trade, and globalization show similar trends:

 First, significant bipartisan shifts in support for trade coincide with the state of the U.S. economy, with support for trade collapsing during the Great Recession and rebounding over the last several years of recovery. The connection between trade and the economy is neither new nor surprising: Americans anxious about the economy understandably sour on new foreign competition.

Second, and more importantly, significant shifts in self-identified Democrat and Republican views on trade coincide with who is president or campaigning for the job. When, for example, President George W. Bush was pushing several free trade agreements but was opposed by congressional and campaigning Democrats-including both Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton-between 2006 and 2008, Republican views on trade were more positive and Democrat views were more negative. During the later Obama years (when he was pushing the Trans-Pacific Partnership) and the Trump campaign, on the other hand, these views flipped, with Democrats embracing trade and Republicans becoming trade skeptics. As with most things involving Trump, this latter shift was more intense than the former-reinforcing the assumption that current views are not based on personal experience or reasoned analysis but rather partisanship and emotion. This trend only intensified after Trump took office."

The role of partisanship in shaping Americans' views on trade is even starker when examining the recent trade and tariff policies championed by Trump. On tariffs, polls taken between March and July 2018—right as Trump implemented tariffs on steel and aluminum imports as well as other goods from China-reveal strong partisan differences: Republicans (typically supporters of small government and low taxes) mostly support the tariffs, while Democrats (usually more trade-skeptical) overwhelmingly oppose them. Pew, for example, found in July 2018 that 73 percent of Republicans thought increased tariffs between the U.S. and some of its trading partners will be good for the U.S.-up from 58 percent just two months prior.<sup>17</sup> Democrats, on the other hand, moved the opposite way: 77 percent thought tariffs would be bad for the U.S.-an increase of 14 percentage points over the same period.

Other recent tariff polls show a similar partisan divide and mentioning Trump in the poll question seems to exacerbate the issue.<sup>18</sup> Politico, for example, found that "[w]hile there is no overall difference between mentioning Trump and omitting his name, it has some impact on the partisan divide. Republicans mostly support the tariffs: 60 percent in the non-Trump sample back them, and that ticked up to 64 percent among respondents who were told Trump announced the tariffs. The percentage of Democratic voters



Source: Author's calculations based on data from Pew, Gallup, and the Chicago Council on Global Affairs.

who support the tariffs decreases, from 22 percent in the non-Trump sample to 14 percent in the sample that got the Trump question."<sup>19</sup> A June 2018 Monmouth poll, discussed more below, showed similar trends.

There is also substantial evidence that the current partisan divide on trade is not, as is often claimed, a result of a major shift in party identification among the U.S. electorate—in particular, trade skeptics gravitating to the Republican party and free traders becoming Democrats. Pew, for example, in May 2018 asked voters about both tariffs and free trade agreements and found that Republican support for trade agreements had rebounded dramatically, even though support for tariffs (which free trade agreements eliminate) was also high (see Figures 3 and 4).<sup>20</sup>

These results indicate that GOP voters are taking their trade policy cues from Trump: now that "their guy" is in office, the same trade deals that were a bad thing in 2016 are a good thing in 2018. International trade is also good again: a 2018 Chicago Council poll showed a 31 point increase (from 51 percent to 82 percent) among Republicans who say international trade is "good for the U.S. economy."<sup>21</sup> Meanwhile, many of these very same voters also support Trump's

tariffs (which thwart trade and are eliminated by free trade agreements).

A June 2018 Monmouth poll reiterates these trends: Republicans supporting both free trade agreements *and* tariffs by wide margins (see Table 1).<sup>22</sup>

Such views are not those of a solidly protectionist electorate taking over the GOP, but rather three distinct subsets of voters within the party: free traders, protectionists, and a "malleable middle" whose views depend on the political moment. We also again see in this poll a polarized electorate, with Democrats and Independents now opposed to protectionism and doing so more intensely when Trump's name is attached to it, as well as significant shares of voter ignorance or ambivalence.

#### VIEWS ON TRADE OFTEN CHANGE WHEN CONSEQUENCES ARE CONSIDERED

Finally, Americans' views on a trade policy also change when faced with its consequences. That voters' opinions vacillate based on a poll question's wording is a standard tenet of political science,<sup>23</sup> but this dynamic appears to be especially

4

#### Figure 3 Pew poll on tariffs

#### Stark partisan divide on proposed tariff increases on imports of steel and aluminum

% who say ...



Source: Bradley Jones, "Americans are Generally Positive about Free Trade Agreements, More Critical of Tariff Increases," Pew Research Center, May 10, 2018.

#### Figure 4 Pew poll on free trade agreements

pronounced when it comes to trade, significantly increasing or decreasing public support for trade depending on the question at issue.

For example, in 2016 Bloomberg asked, "Generally speaking, do you think U.S. trade policy should have more restrictions on imported foreign goods to protect American jobs, or have fewer restrictions to enable American consumers to have the most choices and the lowest prices?" which generated overwhelmingly protectionist responses. However, respondents were given a false choice between protecting American jobs and ambiguous consumer benefits, and they were not provided any information about the export side of trade policy. Given this question, the poll results were unsurprising-something Gallup's Frank Newport discussed shortly after the poll was released.<sup>24</sup> (The same Bloomberg poll, it should be noted, once again showed that voters ranked trade last among their policy priorities.<sup>2</sup>)

On the other hand, polling reveals much different views among the American electorate when specific, real-world costs of protectionism-either increased costs for everyday essentials or foreign retaliation against U.S. exports-are included in a poll question, or when respondents are asked about their actual behavior.



Source: Bradley Jones, "Americans are Generally Positive about Free Trade Agreements, More Critical of Tariff Increases," Pew Research Center, May 10, 2018.

#### Table 1 Monmouth poll on free trade agreements and tariffs

Question	Republican (%)	Independent (%)	Democrat (%)
In general, do you think that free trade agreements with other countries are good or bad for the United States, or are you not sure?	Good 46	Good 52	Good 57
	Bad 20	Bad 13	Bad 9
	Not sure 27	Not sure 30	Not sure 31
In general, do you think that imposing tariffs on products imported from other countries is good or bad for the United States, or are you not sure?	Good 57	Good 34	Good 19
	Bad 16	Bad 39	Bad 50
	Not sure 22	Not sure 19	Not sure 26
Do you think President Trump's decision to impose tariffs on a	Help 47	Help 26	Help 7
range of products imported from our trading partners will help	Hurt 14	Hurt 43	Hurt 61
or hurt the U.S. economy, will it have no impact either way, or	No impact 11	No impact 8	No impact 4
are you not sure?	Not sure 28	Not sure 23	Not sure 23

Source: Monmouth University Poll, "National: Mixed Reviews on G-7 Summit; Putin Seen as Trump's Best Pal," June 15, 2018.

On protectionism and U.S. consumers, polling reveals that Americans have a decisive change of heart when real-world costs accompany import restrictions:

- Associated Press-GfK<sup>26</sup> (2016) asked respondents "[s]ay that you were buying a new pair of pants, and had the option to purchase one made in another country for \$50, or one that was made in the United States for \$85. Which would you be more likely to purchase?" and found the cheaper import winning 67 percent to 30 percent over the more expensive American competitor. Furthermore, lower prices were preferred by wealthy and lower-income Americans alike, and "[n]early three in four say they would like to buy goods manufactured inside the United States, but those items are often too costly or difficult to find . . . [and a] mere 9 percent say they only buy American."<sup>27</sup>
- Reuters<sup>28</sup> (2017) asked "How important is \_\_\_\_ when you are buying products," and buying American consistently lost out to price and quality among Republicans and Democrats alike (see Table 2). Most respondents also were unwilling to pay much of a premium for American-made goods, even though 70 percent said it is "very important" or "somewhat important" to buy them: 53 percent said they would pay no more than 5 percent extra for American-made goods (37 percent refused to pay any premium), and another 21 percent said they'd pay up to 10 percent more.
- Morning Consult<sup>29</sup> (2017) found the same results, asking, "As you may know, many everyday products that Americans use like smartphones, laptops, light bulbs,

televisions, batteries and many children's toys are manufactured almost exclusively in other countries and imported to the United States. Knowing this, how much more would you be willing to spend for everyday products such as these if they were subject to a border adjusted tax?"; Americans were overwhelmingly opposed to spending more (see Table 3).

By contrast, the aforementioned 2016 Bloomberg poll simply asked "[a]re you willing to pay a little more for merchandise that is made in the U.S., or do you prefer the lowest possible price?" and had 82 percent pick the former while only 13 percent picked the latter.<sup>30</sup> When protectionism's costs remain ambiguous, Americans tend to vote with their hearts; when the costs become real, their heads take over.

These results are consistent with Americans' actual behavior (i.e., when the pollsters aren't looking): a November 2017 paper from Jeffrey Kucik and Krzysztof Pelc compared state electoral and poll results to actual import consumption trends in those same areas and found that "[d]espite the shift in voters' self reported beliefs, we find no perceptible change in market behavior. Support for Trump does not correlate with any shift in U.S. states' imports.... In short, we uncover no evidence of trade patterns following the sudden change in views about trade among Trump supporters."<sup>31</sup> These results lead the authors to issue a warning to policymakers:

The findings encourage greater caution when interpreting the polls. Rapidly changing beliefs are probably more evanescent and, therefore, less likely to translate into behavior. . . . But for now, we find little evidence

#### Table 2 Reuters poll on Americans' preference for buying American-made products Very Important

		Very Important			
	Total (%)	Republican (%)	Democrat (%)	Independent (%)	
Total price	69	71	68	69	
Quality	77	79	78	74	
Made in the USA	38	41	35	35	

Source: Ipsos/Reuter Poll Data, "Ipsos Poll Conducted for Reuters," June 1, 2017.

#### Table 3

Morning Consult poll on Americans' willingness to pay more for American-made products

Amount	Share of respondents (%)
5% more	17
10% more	12
15% more	6
20% more	4
Over 20% more	3
I would not be willing to spend any more	45

Source: Morning Consult (January 2017). http://usconsumers.org/news/ consumertaxpoll/, https://twitter.com/scottlincicome/status/822856935997317121.

that Trump's economic nationalist rhetoric, which has been credited for shifting minds, has similarly affected demand.

Trump may have affected Americans' responses in trade polling, but he has not changed their actual behavior.

Americans' support for protectionism also wanes when poll questions reference foreign retaliation (which is now widespread) or trade wars:

 CBS News<sup>32</sup> (June 2018) asked respondents about "Donald Trump's decision to impose new tariffs on steel and aluminum imports" and found overall disapproval by a margin of 48 to 36 percent, but Republicans approving by a 71 to 17 percent margin. However, voter preferences—even among Republicans—turned negative when pollsters subsequently asked, "Some countries have said that if the U.S. puts tariffs on steel and aluminum, they will put their own new tariffs on U.S. products, an exchange some have labeled a trade war. If there is a trade war between the U.S. and other countries, do you feel the U.S. economy would come out better in the long run, worse in the long run, or would that make no difference in the long run?" Overall opposition intensified to 51 percent (worse) versus 25 percent (better), with a similar drop in Republican support—only 50 percent choosing better, 16 percent choosing worse, and 27 percent choosing "no difference."

- CNN that same month asked voters what they viewed as more important—"imposing tariffs on imports from foreign countries to protect certain U.S. industries, or maintaining good relations with countries that have been close allies of the U.S. for many years"—and found the latter winning by a 63-25 percent margin.
- WSJ/NBC News<sup>33</sup> (2018) asked three questions about Trump's trade policy and tariffs, and the responses became more negative when specific consumer costs and retaliation were considered. Voters initially disapproved of Trump's "handling trade between the United States and foreign countries" by a 45–38 margin. When turning to specific policies and their implications, however, that disapproval increased (see Table 4). Disapproval intensified a bit more when foreign retaliation was added (see Table 5).
- Gallup<sup>34</sup> (2018) asked about tit-for-tat tariffs between the United States and China, and once again found voters leery as retaliation was considered (see Table 6).
- The aforementioned Monmouth Poll asked respondents, "If we do get into a trade war, how concerned are you that this would hurt the local economy in your area: very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too

#### Table 4 WSJ/NBC poll on protectionism

Do you think raising tariffs and barriers to imports from other countries will do more to—			
Protect American jobs/help economy	25%		
Raise the costs of goods/hurt economy	49%		
Not have much impact one way or the other	16%		

Source: Hart Research Associates/Public Opinion Strategies, "NBC News/Wall Street Journal Survey," July 15–18, 2018, study #18570.

#### Table 5 WSJ/NBC poll on protectionism (plus retaliation)

President Trump recently imposed tariffs which will make some products made in other countries and sold in the U.S. more expensive. In return, some of these countries have imposed their own tariffs on some U.S. products. Do you support Trump's actions and think they will help the average American, or do you oppose Trump's actions and think they will hurt the average American, or do you think Trump's actions on this issue will not have much impact one way or the other?

Support Trump's actions/will help	26%	
Oppose Trump's actions/will hurt	53%	
Actions on this issue will not have much impact one way or the other	17%	

Source: Hart Research Associates/Public Opinion Strategies, "NBC News/Wall Street Journal Survey," July 15–18, 2018, study #18570.

#### Table 6 Gallup Poll on tit-for-tat tariffs

As you may know, the U.S. has imposed new tariffs on many products and materials made in China and sold in the U.S., and in return China has imposed new tariffs on products and materials from the U.S. sold in China. So far, have these new tariffs helped, not had an effect, or hurt each of the following?

	Helped (%)	No effect (%)	Hurt (%)	No opinion (%)
The U.S. economy	16	36	38	11
Your employer's financial situation	8	67	17	8
Your family's financial situation	6	72	17	5

Source: Jeffrey M. Jones, "Americans Say U.S.-China Tariffs More Harmful Than Helpful," Gallup, July 26, 2018.

concerned, or not at all concerned" and found far more voters concerned (34 percent very / 30 percent some-what) than not (17 percent not too / 18 percent not at all).

These results suggest that American voters' support for protectionism is affected, and often outweighed, by the actual harms arising from those policies—that is, higher prices and foreign retaliation.

8

#### CONCLUSION

Two conclusions may be gleaned from the analysis above. First, to the extent there is a protectionist problem in the United States, it originates in our political class, not the American electorate. Most Americans generally support freer trade, globalization, and even oft-maligned trade agreements, but the understandable disinterest of many voters means that isolated polls on specific trade policy issues-the Trans-Pacific Partnership or steel tariffs, for example-more likely reflect partisan cues or broader macroeconomic conditions than actual support for or opposition to the trade measure at issue." As a result, protectionist policies emanating from the United States government today are most likely a response not to a groundswell of popular support for protectionism but instead to discrete interest group lobbying (e.g., the U.S. steel industry) or influential segments of the U.S. voting population (e.g., steelworkers in Pennsylvania). Protectionism therefore remains a classic public-choice example of how concentrated benefits and diffuse costs can push self-interested politicians into adopting polices that are actually opposed by most of the electorate.

Second, and by contrast, public polling on trade reveals how free traders can build public opposition to protectionism—a

necessary effort given that the polls also show how U.S. trade policy is susceptible to uninformed demagoguery (as our current moment makes clear). A winning message on trade starts with the simple fact that the vast majority of Americans currently support international trade and globalization, and see these forces as good for themselves, the U.S. economy, and our strategic alliances. The message follows by proactively attacking the only alternative to free trade—protectionism "fair trade"—with real-world examples of its failures. Americans do care about how protectionism hurts their family budgets, their fellow workers, U.S. farmers and exporters. Voters are further motivated by actual examples of the harms of U.S. protectionism—examples that are today plentiful due to Trump's tariffs and the inevitable foreign retaliation they have caused.

Indeed, the president's own messaging over the past eight months—first justifying tariffs on protectionist grounds but later defending them as a short-term path to freer trade reveals the potency of a pro-trade message steeped in the actual pain that protectionism causes. This new and unfortunate history might therefore contain a small silver lining for depressed U.S. trade advocates, helping them craft a better message in the future.

#### NOTES

1. Bradley Jones, "Americans are Generally Positive about Free Trade Agreements, More Critical of Tariff Increases," *Pew Research Center*, May 10, 2018, http://www.pewresearch. org/fact-tank/2018/05/10/americans-are-generally-positive -about-free-trade-agreements-more-critical-of-tariff-increases/ ft\_18-05-10\_trade-tariffs\_positive\_views/.

2. Joshua Jamerson, "Support for Foreign Trade Transcends Party Lines, WSJ/NBC News Poll Finds," *Wall Street Journal*, March 23, 2018, https://blogs.wsj.com/washwire/2018/03/23/ capital-journal-fri-3/.

3. Jeffrey M. Jones, "In U.S., Positive Attitudes Toward Foreign Trade Stay High," *Gallup*, March 1, 2018, https://news.gallup. com/poll/228317/positive-attitudes-toward-foreign-trade-stay -high.aspx?g\_source=link\_NEWSV9&g\_medium=TOPIC&g\_ campaign=item\_&g\_content=In%2520U.S.%2c%2520Positive%2 520Attitudes%2520Toward%2520Foreign%2520Trade%2520Sta y%2520High.

4. Monmouth University Poll, "National: Mixed Reviews on G-7 Summit; Putin Seen as Trump's Best Pal," June 15, 2018, https://www.monmouth.edu/polling-institute/documents/monmouthpoll\_us\_061518.pdf/.

5. Dina Smeltz, Ivo Daalder, Karl Friedhoff, and Craig Kafura, "What Americans Think about America First," *The Chicago Council on Global Affairs*, June 27, 2017–July 19, 2017, p. 19, https:// www.thechicagocouncil.org/sites/default/files/ccgasurvey2017\_ what\_americans\_think\_about\_america\_first.pdf.

6. Smeltz, Daalder, Friedhoff, and Kafura, "What Americans Think about America First," p. 18.

7. Dina Smeltz and Craig Kafura, "Record Number of Americans Endorse Benefits of Trade," *The Chicago Council on Global Affairs*, August 27, 2018, https://www.thechicagocouncil.org/publication/ record-number-americans-endorse-benefits-trade(showingGOP "good" response moving from 51 percent in 2016 to 82 percent in 2018).

8. Tobias Konitzer, Sam Corbett-Davies, and David Rothschild, "Who Cares About Free Trade? Not Many Americans, It Turns Out," *Washington Post*, July 29, 2016, https://www. washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/07/29/ who-cares-about-free-trade/. 9. Frank Newport, "Americans Split on Idea of Withdrawing from Trade Treaties," *Gallup*, April 28, 2016, https://news.gallup.com/ poll/191135/americans-split-idea-withdrawing-trade-treaties. aspx?utm\_source=twitterbutton&utm\_medium=twitter&utm\_ campaign=sharing. See also Bloomberg Politics National Poll, "Poll Questions," *Bloomberg*, March 19–22, 2016, http://assets. bwbx.io/documents/users/iqjWHBFdfxIU/rXX28ED96saU/vo (ranking trade last among polled issues).

10. "Monthly Harvard-Harris Poll," March 27–29, 2018, p. 23, http:// harvardharrispoll.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Final\_HHP\_ March2018\_RegisteredVoters\_Xtabs\_LR\_Approval.pdf.

11. Pew Research Center, "Economic Issues Decline Among Public's Policy Priorities," January 25, 2018, http://www. people-press.org/2018/01/25/economic-issues-decline-among -publics-policy-priorities/?utm\_content=buffer649b7&utm\_ medium=social&utm\_source=twitter.com&utm\_campaign =buffer.

12. Gallup, "Most Important Problem," https://news.gallup.com/poll/1675/most-important-problem.aspx.

13. The U.S. had a trade-to-GDP ratio 26.6% in 2016—well below the world average of 56.2%. See: The World Bank, "Trade (% of GDP)," https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NE.TRD.GNFS. ZS.

14. AP-GfK poll on trade, March 2016, no longer online but excerpted at Scott Lincicome, "Two AP Poll Qs Show the BIG Difference bt Trade Rhetoric and Trade Reality," Twitter, April 15, 2016, 7:00 a.m., https://twitter.com/scottlincicome/ status/720975037801455617. (Question TRADE6, showing that only 18 percent of respondents "personally have a close friend or relative who has lost a job because it was moved overseas.")

15. Jeffrey M. Jones, "Americans More Negative Than Positive About Foreign Trade," *Gallup*, February 18, 2009, https:// news.gallup.com/poll/115240/Americans-Negative-Positive -Foreign-Trade.aspx?g\_source=link\_NEWSV9&g\_medium=&g\_ campaign=item\_&g\_content=Americans%2520More%252 oNegative%2520Than%2520Positive%2520About%2520F oreign%2520Trade; and Jonathan Rothwell, "Globalization: Scapegoat for Economic Problems," *Gallup*, February 27, 2017, https://news.gallup.com/opinion/gallup/204317/globalization -scapegoat-economic-problems.aspx?g\_source=link\_ NEWSV9&g\_medium=TOPIC&g\_campaign=item\_&g\_

#### 10

content=Globalization%3a%2520Scapegoat%2520for%2520Eco nomic%2520Problems.

16. Derek Davidson, "The Trump Effect: 'America First' Loses Support," *Lobe Log*, October 2, 2017, http://lobelog.com/ the-trump-effect-america-first-loses-support/.

17. John Laloggia, "As New Tariffs Take Hold, More See Negative than Positive Impact for the U.S.," *Pew Research Center*, July 19, 2018, http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/07/19/as-new -tariffs-take-hold-more-see-negative-than-positive-impact-for -the-u-s/.

18. Jeffrey M. Jones, "Americans Say U.S.-China Tariffs More Harmful Than Helpful," *Gallup*, July 26, 2018, https://news.gallup. com/poll/238013/americans-say-china-tariffs-harmful-helpful. aspx?utm\_source=twitter&utm\_medium=o\_social&utm\_ term=&utm\_content=&utm\_campaign; Monmouth University Poll, "National: Mixed Reviews on G-7 Summit; Putin Seen as Trump's Best Pal," https://www.monmouth.edu/polling-institute/documents/ monmouthpoll\_us\_061518.pdf/; and PollReport.com, "International Trade/Global Economy," http://www.pollingreport.com/trade.htm.

19. Steven Shepard, "Poll: Few Voters Think Tariffs Will Help U.S. Economy," *Politico*, June 6, 2018, https://www.politico.com/story/2018/06/06/poll-tariffs-us-economy-trump-628586.

20. Bradley Jones, "Americans Are Generally Positive About Free Trade Agreements, More Critical of Tariff Increases," *Pew Research Center*, May 10, 2018, http://www.pewresearch.org/fact -tank/2018/05/10/americans-are-generally-positive-about-free -trade-agreements-more-critical-of-tariff-increases/.

21. Smeltz and Kafura, "Record Number of Americans Endorse Benefits of Trade."

22. Monmouth University Poll, "National: Mixed Reviews on G-7 Summit; Putin Seen as Trump's Best Pal," https://www.monmouth. edu/polling-institute/documents/monmouthpoll\_us\_061518.pdf/.

23. Pew Research Center, "The Public, the Political System and American Democracy," April 26, 2018, http://www.people -press.org/2018/04/26/5-the-electoral-college-congress-and -representation/.

24. Frank Newport, "American Public Opinion on Foreign Trade," *Gallup*, April 1, 2016, https://news.gallup.com/opinion/

polling-matters/190427/american-public-opinion-foreign-trade. aspx?g\_source=trade&g\_medium=search&g\_campaign=tiles.

25. Bloomberg Politics National Poll, "Poll Questions," http://assets.bwbx.io/documents/users/iqjWHBFdfxIU/ rXX28ED96saU/vo.

26. AP-GfK poll on trade, March 2016 (no longer online but excerpted at Scott Lincicome, "Two AP Poll Qs Show the BIG Difference bt Trade Rhetoric and Trade Reality," Twitter, April 15, 2016, 7:00 a.m., https://twitter.com/scottlincicome/ status/720975037801455617).

27. Tribune News Services, "Poll: Americans Prefer Low Prices to Items 'Made in the USA'," *Chicago Tribune*, April 14, 2016, http://www.chicagotribune.com/business/ct-americans-prices-vs -made-in-usa-20160414-story.html.

28. Ipsos/Reuter Poll Data, "Ipsos Poll Conducted for Reuters," June 1, 2017, http://fingfx.thomsonreuters.com/gfx/rngs/USA -TRUMP/01005016034/2017%20Reuters%20Tracking%20-%20 Buy%20America%20Poll%206%201%202017.pdf.

29. Scott Lincicome, Twitter post, January 21, 2017, 9:22 a.m., https://twitter.com/scottlincicome/status/822856935997317121.

30. Bloomberg Politics National Poll, "Poll Questions," http://assets.bwbx.io/documents/users/iqjWHBFdfxIU/ rXX28ED96saU/vo.

31. Jeffrey Kucik and Krzysztof Pelc, "Political Rhetoric as Trade Barrier: Trump's 'Buy American' Campaign and U.S. Demand for Imports," Cato Institute Research Briefs in Economic Policy no. 113, May 16, 2018, https://www. cato.org/publications/research-briefs-economic-policy/ political-rhetoric-trade-barrier-trumps-buy-american.

32. PollReport.com, "International Trade/Global Economy," http://www.pollingreport.com/trade.htm.

33. Hart Research Associates/Public Opinion Strategies, "NBC News/Wall Street Journal Survey," July 15–18, 2018, study #18570, https://www.wsj.com/public/resources/documents/NBCWS JJulyPoll.pdf?mod=article\_inline.

34. Jones, "Americans Say U.S.-China Tariffs More Harmful Than Helpful."

35. Smeltz and Kafura, "Record Number of Americans Endorse Benefits of Trade."

36. David Morgan and Roberta Rampton, "Trump's Tariff Threat May be Timed for Pennsylvania U.S. House Race," *Reuters*, March 5, 2018, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa -election-pennsylvania-trade/trumps-tariff-threat-may-be -timed-for-pennsylvania-u-s-house-race-idUSKBN1GIooL

37. William H. Kaempfer, Edward Tower, and Thomas D. Willett, "Trade Protectionism for the *Encyclopedia of Public Choice*," ed. Charles K. Rowley, June 11, 2002, http://public.econ.duke.edu/ Papers/Other/Tower/Protectionism.pdf.



The views expressed in this paper are those of the author(s) and should not be attributed to the Cato Institute, its trustees, its Sponsors, or any other person or organization. Nothing in this paper should be construed as an attempt to aid or hinder the passage of any bill before Congress. Copyright © 2018 Cato Institute. This work by Cato Institute is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.