



Trump's 50% Canada tariff threat rattles Michigan auto makers and workers near Detroit

The CEO of a Sterling Heights wheel manufacturer and workers outside a Stellantis plant are voicing concern over a proposed 50% tariff on Canadian auto parts

By: Simon Shaykhet

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Dale Hadel, CEO of CITIC Dicastal, operates out of Sterling Heights and deals in global wheel manufacturing. Many of the wheels his company produces are made from Canadian aluminum.

"Looking at wheels like these, how many are aluminum? All of them," Hadel said.

For Hadel, the proposed tariff increase raises serious questions about the future of a trade relationship he says has long been mutually beneficial.

"Two of them not being able to work out something is cause for concern," Hadel said.

His company supplies wheels to customers across the auto industry, including major manufacturers on both sides of the border.

"We supply a lot of wheels into Canada for various customers. Japanese, Toyota, Honda, Ford, GM," Hadel said.

Canada has vowed to respond with retaliatory tariffs of its own, and the tension from that is being felt by workers outside a Stellantis stamping plant on Mound Road. Darrin Evans, who works at the plant, expressed worry about what the tariffs could mean for jobs.

"It affects people out here buying cars and us right away. Who knows, we could suffer layoffs or whatever," Evans said.

Derhonda Johnson, a former auto worker who was previously laid off due to earlier tariffs, echoed that concern.

"Hope they resolve it quickly. The economy is already bad," Johnson said.

Auto industry expert Alex Austin says the proposed tariffs will add to inflation and cause car buyers to think twice about major purchases.

"If there's a pullback in purchasing, if consumers pull back, that can impact the plant level. Plants can shut down or have more furloughs," Austin said.

For Hadel, the stakes go beyond his own business. He says he hopes an agreement is reached before tariffs escalate in January and before the relationship between the two countries suffers lasting damage.

"It's hard for me to see that this is a one-sided relationship," Hadel said.

Ford and Stellantis have declined to comment. General Motors has not yet responded to a request for comment.