



April 22, 2025

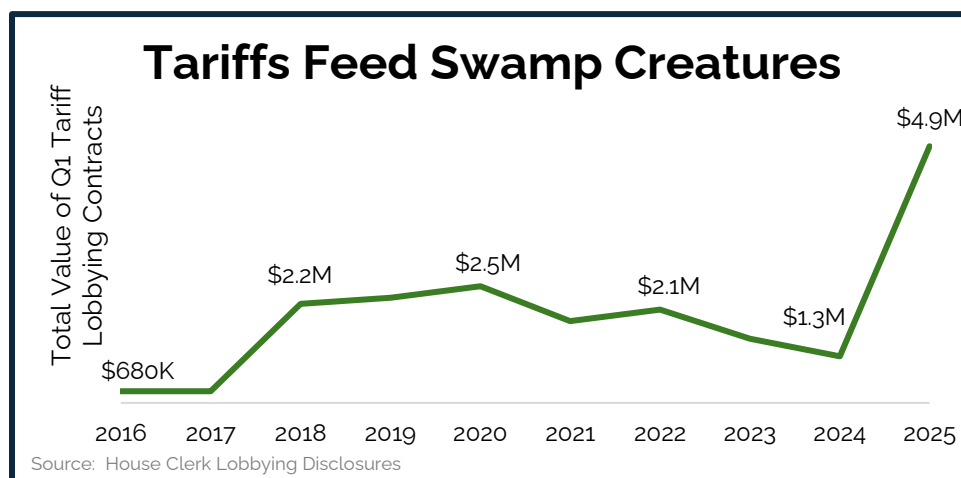
ADVANCING AMERICAN FREEDOM FOUNDATION

Why The Swamp Loves Tariffs

TOPLINE: An arbitrary tariff exclusion process allows lobbyists to petition Washington bureaucrats for tariff exemptions for certain products. Small businesses that can't get out from under heavy-handed tariffs lose out, while the lobbyists on K Street are doing better than ever.

K STREET COLLECTS:

- **277% increase** in tariff lobbyist spending in Q1 2025 compared to Q1 2024.
- **138% increase** in registered tariff lobbying disclosures in Q1 2025 compared to Q1 2024.
- **21% increase** in average tariff lobbying contract in Q1 2025 compared to Q1 2024.



- During his first term, Trump's Office of the United States Trade Representative received more than [50,000](#) requests for tariff exemptions related just to China.
- The Commerce Department received almost 500,000 exclusion requests related to steel and aluminum tariffs.
 - **READ MORE:** [AAF Fellow Joel Griffith - WEX - Lobbyists love our swampy tariff exclusion process](#)

MAIN STREET SUFFERS:

- **16 percent fewer** small business owners [expect](#) the economy to improve, as of March.
 - **This is the largest monthly decline in confidence since December 2020.**
- **7% of small business owners** fear that they will have to close in the next 2 years.
- The NFIB Small Business Optimism [Index](#) has plummeted 8 points since February.
 - **READ MORE:** [AAF MEMO - Spoiling America's Golden Age: Tariffs Could End America's Golden Age Before it Begins](#)

BOTTOM LINE: President Trump was elected to correct the Biden economy. Unfortunately, the Trump Tariff Tax has sown uncertainty among American businessmen and in the world's economy. Today, 53% of Americans believe that their personal financial situation is getting worse, 58% expect the stock market to continue to go down over the next 6 months, and 42% of Americans believe that we are in a recession, according to the latest [Gallup Poll](#).



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