

Trump Administration Directs Federal Trade Commission to Prioritize Made in USA Enforcement

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March 23, 2026

On March 13, 2026, President Donald Trump issued an [executive order](#) directing the Chairman of the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to prioritize enforcement of Made in USA claims. According to the executive order, the Trump administration is concerned that foreign manufacturers may misrepresent the origin of products in order to pass their foreign-made products to “patriotic consumers” in the U.S. The executive order also states that the administration prioritizes accurate claims because U.S. businesses “are entitled to the undiluted branding benefits that come with supporting the American economy.”

This statement of administration policy is an endorsement of the FTC’s longstanding scrutiny of Made in USA claims. The agency requires manufacturers or marketers making an unqualified “Made in USA” claim to have substantiation that supports that the product is “all or virtually all” made in the United States. In 2021, the FTC finalized its “Made in USA Labeling Rule,” which codified the “all or virtually all” standard and subjects businesses to civil penalties of up to \$53K per violation.

Interestingly, the White House’s action comes after a year in which the FTC has been relatively quiet in its enforcement of Made in USA issues. Since FTC Chairman Andrew Ferguson took the helm at the agency, the FTC has not announced a major Made in USA [enforcement action](#). The FTC has also seemingly suspended its [closing letter](#) program, in which the agency issues a closing letter to businesses that have corrected erroneous Made in USA claims. In 2024, by contrast, the FTC announced two enforcement actions and issued 10 closing letters as part of its Made in USA enforcement program.

The FTC has not dialed back its stated prioritization of Made in USA enforcement, however. Last year, Chairman Ferguson designated July 2025 as “Made in USA” month, to coincide with the July 4 holiday. The FTC also sent warning letters to four companies [reminding](#) them of their obligations to comply with Made in USA requirements.

The FTC has also signaled it is [focused](#) on ensuring that online marketplaces like Amazon.com work with third-party sellers to require the use of accurate Made in USA claims. In a nod to this effort, the White House’s executive order directs the FTC to “consider” regulations that “the failure of an online marketplace to ‘establish procedures for verifying country-of-origin claims’” by sellers would violate the FTC Act.

The White House’s action acknowledges that the FTC is not the only agency with oversight of country-of-origin labeling requirements. U.S. Customs and Border Protection is responsible for

enforcement of the Tariff Act, which requires many imported goods to be marked with the foreign country of origin. Also, the Buy American Act requires government agencies to preference Made in USA products in government procurement. Along these lines, the executive order directs “all agencies with oversight of country-of-origin labeling” – and not just the FTC – to consider new regulations that “promote voluntary country-of-origin labeling” for products made or manufactured in the U.S. Also, the executive order emphasizes that businesses that provide products or services to the government may face audits of their Made in USA claims.

What should you do if you receive an inquiry letter from the FTC?

The executive order directs the FTC to ramp up its enforcement of Made in USA claims. Companies making any type of origin designation claims in advertising, including those passed on from a vendor or supplier, should audit those claims. Businesses that receive an inquiry from the FTC regarding Made in USA claims, including a civil investigative demand or access letter, should understand that the FTC is prioritizing enforcement in this area and may seek penalties where it identifies non-compliance with advertising substantiation requirements. Companies can work with FTC counsel to respond to an investigation as well as to assess if any claims should be qualified or discontinued in accordance with FTC guidance.