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February 2025 Newsletter



USMCA

Part Three: What to Do about Joint Review

By: [Adrienne Braumiller](#), Managing Partner, Braumiller Law Group, and Gavin Andersen, Law Clerk, BLG

“It’s a big club and you ain’t in it!”

The United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) joint review process is scheduled to begin on July 1, 2026, but the time to prepare is now. Embedded trade compliance professionals should

already be doing scenario analysis—pulling data, calculating the supply chain impacts of

potential changes, and helping their companies to strategize accordingly. Readers who wish to pursue their interests through formal channels may submit written materials to the government during the public comment period, which should open no later than October 1, 2025. United States Trade Representative (USTR) Jamieson Greer will consider public comments as he drafts his joint review recommendations, due to Congress by the end of December.

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Chinese Industrial Parks in Mexico Mexico, a Growing Hub for Chinese FDI (And BYD)

By **Bob Brewer**, Braumiller Law Group

As of now, the start of 2025, there are several Chinese industrial parks in Mexico, with notable examples including the Hofusan Industrial Park near Monterrey, which hosts manufacturing plants for ten Chinese companies. When one is considering how to navigate the U.S. import tariffs, for many Chinese manufacturers, pulling the trigger on nearshoring is the right move. Honorable mention industrial parks are Vynmsa Industrial Park in Nuevo León, where companies like CFMoto and Lingong Machinery Group are significant new developments. These parks are big wins for the Mexican government, as we all know, incentives are one thing, and logistics and infrastructure is another, and if the infrastructure isn't up to par with Chinese standards, they will make it so. The Belt and Road Initiative in Spanish, can you say "Iniciativa de la Franja y la Ruta." (Remember to roll the "r's")



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Is Coercion the Best Approach to North American Trade?

By **James Holbein** Of Counsel, Braumiller Law Group PLLC

Use of Tariffs to Resolve a Crisis. The Trump Administration has demonstrated a willingness to apply new tariffs to goods entering the U.S. as a viable tactic under its America First strategy to achieve greater fairness in its dealings with other

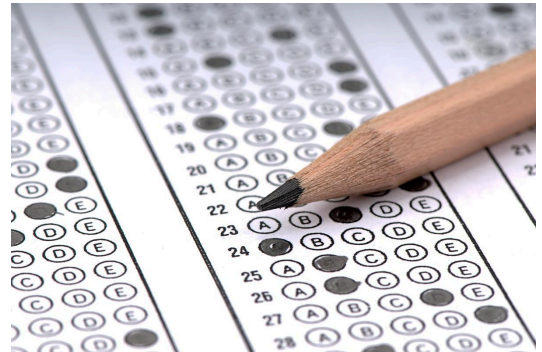
countries. The application of tariffs is authorized under a number of standard legal procedures, such as trade remedy investigations to mitigate dumping of goods at less than fair value into the U.S. market or eliminating the unfair price advantages of government subsidies, and use of section 301 duties to respond to unfair trade practices by other countries. However, the broad-brush use of tariffs to coerce our trading partners to make concessions in non-trade areas to resolve a domestic crisis is relatively new.

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The U.S. Customs Broker License Exam: Tips and Perspectives

By Mike Smiszek, Senior Trade Advisor,
Braumiller Consulting Group

Imagine walking into a room to take an exam that you will likely fail, where the odds of success are stacked, at best, more than 3-to-1 against you? Is it madness to willingly put yourself in that situation? And yet, twice each year, hundreds of optimistic test-takers try to beat these long odds when they sit for the U.S. Customs Broker Licensing Exam (CBLE). What is this thing called a customs broker license, why is it so challenging to obtain, and why is it so coveted within the trade compliance community.



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China's Growing Influence in Latin America: Infrastructure Investments and Implications for the Panama Canal

By Victoria Holmes, Braumiller Law Group

China has significantly expanded its economic and geopolitical footprint in Latin America, particularly through the acquisition and development of critical infrastructure such as ports, airfields, and railways.

This strategic move has raised questions about the long-term implications for regional sovereignty, global trade routes, and the future of the Panama Canal, a linchpin of international maritime commerce.

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Should we Expect More Tariffs in the Future? Understanding Trump's America First Trade Policy

By [Brandon French](#), Senior Associate Attorney, and [Olivia Van Pelt](#), Law Clerk, BLG

As one of his first official acts as President, Trump released his memorandum on America First Trade Policy. The policy offers insight into the new administration's trade priorities and calls for a review of current trade-related policies. President Trump says his goal is to establish “a robust and reinvigorated trade policy that promotes investment and productivity, enhances our Nation’s industrial and technological advantages, defends our economic and national security, and — above all — benefits American workers, manufacturers, farmers, ranchers, entrepreneurs, and businesses.”



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Trade War and the Madman Theory: A Personal Reflection

By [Kerry Wang](#), Senior Associate Attorney, Braumiller Law Group

As a trade attorney born in China and now practicing in the United States, I find myself caught between two worlds. Growing up, I saw firsthand how China’s rise as a manufacturing powerhouse shaped global trade. Now, working in the U.S., I help businesses navigate the very policies that govern this relationship. The latest wave of tariffs announced by President Trump on February 1, targeting Mexico, Canada, and China, has only added to the uncertainty. It has also made me reflect on how shifting trade policies impact businesses and the people caught in between.

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China's Belt and Road Initiative, Building Global Infrastructure Regarding Trade, It's a Major Competition



By **Bob Brewer**, Braumiller Law Group

In 2024, China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) saw significant financial engagement. Preliminary data indicates that China invested approximately \$92.4 billion in various projects across the 149 countries involved in the BRI. China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) encompasses numerous large-scale infrastructure projects across the globe. Here are some of the most significant ones:

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Chemical Classification, It Matters, Now More Than Ever-To Most

By **Becky Urbanek**, Senior Trade Advisor,
Braumiller Consulting Group

If you have a company that imports chemicals - whether they are used as raw materials or components for onward manufacturing, or finished goods containing chemical components - you have been facing significant challenges over the last half-dozen years. Some of these challenges include the trade wars with China (I'm looking at you, Section 301) and the disruptive impact of COVID-19 to global supply chains. In response to these challenges, you have maybe modified your supply chain to reduce your dependence on Chinese chemical imports. Or perhaps your supply chain was not largely affected by Section 301 tariffs (if so, consider yourself lucky - and may your luck hold!)

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The External Revenue Service: A Bureaucratic Overreach or Necessary Reform?

By **Victoria Holmes**, Braumiller Law Group

President Donald Trump made headlines when he announced an External Revenue Service (ERS) agency to collect tariff incomes. The announcement sparked a heated debate among trade experts, economists, and business leaders. But, what exactly would be the purpose of the agency? Well, we can take the words spoken from his inauguration address as an answer:



Instead of taxing our citizens to enrich other countries, we will tariff and tax foreign countries to enrich our citizens. For this purpose, we are establishing the External Revenue Service to collect all tariffs, duties, and revenues.

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The Future of IMMEX: Navigating U.S.-Mexico Trade Challenges and Opportunities

By **Brenda Cordova**, Mexico Legal Counsel,
Braumiller Law Group

Recent announcements by former U.S. President Donald Trump regarding the potential imposition of import duties on goods from Mexico have created uncertainty for many companies dealing with the

IMMEX program.^[1] Trump first threatened to impose a 25% import duty on all goods, and then on steel and aluminum from Mexico. The concern for IMMEX is that if the U.S. imposes import duties on Mexican goods entering the U.S. for consumption, the advantages of IMMEX could be significantly reduced. Although companies may continue benefiting under IMMEX in Mexico, they would still face Trump's additional duties in the U.S. Furthermore, Mexican President-elect Claudia Sheinbaum has indicated that Mexico would respond with retaliatory measures, potentially triggering an extended or endless trade conflict that could impact businesses on both sides of the border.

[1] As we have discussed in other articles, IMMEX ("Industria Manufacturera, Maquiladora y de Servicios de Exportación") is a Mexican government program that facilitates the importation of materials into Mexico for the production of goods that are subsequently exported. Companies complying with the program's legal requirements, statutory time limits, and certification processes benefit from reduced import duties (IGI), exemption from value-added tax (VAT), and lower Merchandise Processing Fees (DTA) in Mexico.

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**Partnerships International Inc. 24th Annual Conference
Updates on Export Regulatory Compliance
March 11th-13th, Orlando FL
Information/registration: <https://conta.cc/4hlyE2R>**

**We, BLG Attorneys, and BCG Trade Advisors will be speaking in Orlando at the
ICPA Annual conference March 9th - 13th
Information and registration: [Home - 2025 ICPA Annual Conference - Orlando](#)**

**ICPA-Braumiller Consulting Group webinar-Chemical Classification with Senior
Trade Advisor Becky Urbanek March 18th
Information and registration: <https://conta.cc/42BLSUO>**

**Nasbite International Annual Conference
April 8th - 10th, Robert Stein, VP of Braumiller Consulting will be speaking at the
event Information: [Keynote Highlights](#)**

Look for us monthly throughout 2025 in the Tuesday Trade Talks with ICPA



If you are so inclined and have a moment, or two, or ten, check

out our podcasts and videos regarding all things in International Trade Compliance

Podcasts: [BLG Podcast - Braumiller Law Group](#)

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