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## GOP lawmakers want India to lower cotton tariffs in trade deal

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The U.S. should negotiate the “permanent reduction or elimination” of India’s tariffs on American cotton as it finalizes the terms of an interim trade agreement struck last month, a group of House Republicans said this week.

Led by House Ways & Means Committee trade subcommittee member Rep. Jodey Arrington (R-TX), the group is calling on U.S. trade officials to press New Delhi for deeper market access for American cotton, highlighting frustrations among U.S. agricultural producers as negotiations with India progress.

In a **Feb. 25 letter** ([/sites/insidetrade.com/files/documents/2026/mar/wto2026\\_0247a.pdf](/sites/insidetrade.com/files/documents/2026/mar/wto2026_0247a.pdf)) to U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer, which was released publicly on Tuesday, Arrington and 11 colleagues described the tariffs as a significant barrier that hinders U.S. producers’ ability to compete in what they say should be a lucrative market. The signatories include fellow trade subcommittee member Greg Murphy (R-NC) as well as Reps. Rick Crawford (R-AR), Austin Scott (R-GA), Pat Harrigan (R-NC), Michael McCaul (R-TX), Michael Cloud (R-TX), Earl Carter (R-GA), Julia Letlow (R-LA), Ronny Jackson (R-TX), Vince Fong (R-CA) and August Pfluger (R-TX).

“As you finalize the details of this Interim Agreement and any subsequent agreements with India, we urge you to negotiate a permanent reduction or elimination of India’s trade barriers to American cotton exports,” the letter states, calling the negotiations a “critical moment” for U.S. agriculture.

India, one of the world's largest textile producers, imposes 11 percent tariffs on American cotton – a measure that U.S. producers argue shuts their products out of the Indian market.

Under the recently announced framework for the **interim trade pact** (</node/185549>) between the two countries, the U.S. said it would reduce its tariffs on Indian goods from 50 percent – including 25 percent duties linked to India’s purchases of Russian oil – to 18 percent, in exchange for commitments from India on purchases of American goods and other pledges. Teams from both sides are still **vetting the language of the deal** (</node/185474>).

The House group’s letter argues that lifting the tariff would benefit U.S. cotton farmers who have endured several years of low demand and challenging growing conditions and assist the Indian textile industry by expanding its raw

material supply options.

### **A statement on the letter**

**(/sites/insidetrade.com/files/documents/2026/mar/wto2026\_0247b.pdf)** says the American Cotton Shippers Association “strongly supports [House Budget Committee] Chairman Arrington’s leadership in urging USTR to eliminate India’s 11% tariff on U.S. cotton, which impedes access for U.S. cotton into this critical market.”

“ACSA appreciates USTR’s continued efforts to expand market access for our industry and looks forward to working together to strengthen the U.S. cotton industry at this critical time,” the group’s president and CEO, Buddy Allen, said.

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