The Aluminum Association

Scrap the Exports, Save U.S. Supply: Treating Aluminum Scrap as a Strategic Asset

1. Introduction and Policy Rationale

Aluminum shapes our world. From the cans in the fridge to the cars on the road, this metal touches almost every part of daily life. Aluminum is also a key part of our national security and infrastructure – one of only 11 mineral commodities included on every government critical materials list. Yet, few realize how important aluminum scrap – especially used beverage containers (UBCs) and other mill-ready scrap – has become for U.S. supply chains.

Scrap is discarded aluminum material from either the manufacturing process or end-of-life products like cans, cars, building materials or appliances. Given that aluminum can be recycled repeatedly without losing any of its fundamental properties, aluminum scrap is a key part of U.S. metal supply. Primary aluminum is also an essential component of U.S. supply. Importantly, primary metal is often used for national security purposes – from electrical infrastructure to fighter jets to tanks and armor. Today about two-thirds of the primary aluminum the United States uses each year is imported from Canada. As the United States works to build more primary aluminum smelting capacity, keeping and recycling the scrap metal the country already has access to is one relatively easy and cost-effective way to increase supply chain security and self-sufficiency.

This white paper articulates why keeping more scrap aluminum at home matters for our economic and national security.

The U.S. aluminum industry depends heavily on recycled scrap to make new products. Recycling aluminum requires only about 5% of the energy needed to make new, or primary, metal. That saves money, reduces energy demand and helps keep costs down for manufacturers. Today, around 85% of the aluminum made in the United States is “secondary” aluminum that uses recycled scrap as a main material/metal input. This compares to 20% to 30% U.S. secondary production in the 1980s – a shift driven by the closure of domestic smelters and increased recycling.

Meanwhile, the aluminum industry is investing heavily in new plants and capacity in the United States – growing the need for scrap and other sources of aluminum. Over the past decade, the U.S. industry has invested more than $11 billion in new and expanded operations, including two, new multi-billion-dollar aluminum rolling mills for the first time since 1980. These rolling mills will consume an enormous amount of scrap aluminum and keeping this material at home will support these investments.

UBCs are among the most valuable types of scrap since they are easy to collect and readily recycled. UBCs are a subset of mill-ready scrap – or scrap that is most easily able to meet the specific requirements of aluminum mills. Using this scrap is also critical to the industry, as it is generally the highest quality and therefore most ready to be melted directly into new products.

Despite the clear benefits of aluminum recycling, the United States exports a large amount of aluminum scrap each year – about 2 million metric tons. (It is important to note that the Aluminum Association has previously identified potential inaccuracies in official government scrap export reporting, underscoring the need to improve data collection and reporting.) Much of these exports are of lower quality scrap the industry cannot currently consume until the technology development matures. Nonetheless, using official government data, if U.S. industry was able to recycle this 2 million metric tons of scrap compared to making or importing primary aluminum could save America around 31 billion kWh of energy, the same power used by ~3 million U.S. homes or the city of Chicago in a given year.

Currently much of the scrap we export ends up in non-market economies such as China, either directly or through third countries, before it becomes new products that unfairly compete with American-made goods. When scrap leaves the country, it weakens our supply chains and puts jobs at risk. It also means the United States must rely more on imported primary aluminum, which is both costly and energy-intensive to produce. Trading away critical material, for profit or convenience, weakens every sector of our economy.

The global aluminum scrap market is moving fast. China, for example, has more than doubled its scrap imports since 2020 following the removal of a scrap import ban. China's "14th 5-Year Plan for the Circular Economy" set a target of more than 15 million metric tons of recycled aluminum production by 2027. The Chinese government backs its aluminum industry extensively, including its new recycling facilities, with enormous government subsidies and policies that give it a leg up in the world market. Building up its aluminum scrap recovery market is just the latest example of Chinese industrial policy attempting to corner a critical sector of the global economy. This uneven ground makes it harder for the U.S. aluminum sector to grow.

At the same time, President Trump is pushing for more domestic self-sufficiency in the aluminum supply chain. Currently, the U.S. industry faces an ~4 million metric ton "metal supply gap" of imported ingot/raw (primary) aluminum. Through a combination of increased recycling, better sorting technology and scrap export controls, the United States could fill ~25% - 50% of that gap using scrap aluminum that we already generate.

Exporting U.S. scrap aluminum undermines our national security. Aluminum is used in many defense products – from fighter jets to battle armor to tanks. The United States requires a healthy aluminum industry to meet defense and security manufacturing needs. To produce specialized aluminum products for America's defense, we must also ship every day, high-volume products that come from the same facilities and supply chains. Making aluminum used in defense requires the same industrial capabilities as making cans, cars and building materials.

Amidst these challenges and opportunities, the Aluminum Association is calling for action to protect our domestic supply of aluminum scrap. One simple idea that we could enact quickly is the implementation of export restrictions or bans on key scrap streams. This could be done immediately for UBCs as other mill-ready scrap is identified for further action. Keeping these materials in the United States would support American manufacturers and cut our need for foreign imports.

By retaining more scrap domestically through scrap export controls, the industry will secure a vital resource and reduce its exposure to global supply chain disruptions. This stability is especially critical for national security–related sectors, where a reliable aluminum supply is essential.

This paper explains why aluminum scrap is a strategic asset and why smart policy steps are needed now to retain more of this material domestically. By understanding how supply chains work, the role of scrap in U.S. manufacturing and the pressures of the global market, we see why protecting this resource is key to America's economic strength and security.

2. U.S. Aluminum Scrap Market Overview

Aluminum scrap is more than just leftover metal—it's a key resource for the U.S. economy and a driver of our national security. To see why, it's important to first understand how much scrap the United States produces, how it's used and where it ends up.

Production and Consumption Volumes

In 2024, the United States aluminum industry consumed about 5.6 million metric tons of aluminum scrap. Most U.S. aluminum producers depend on this recycled metal to keep up with demand. Around 85% of U.S.-made aluminum uses recycled scrap as an input, helping save energy and cut costs. Even with strong demand, much of the aluminum scrap available for use leaves the country, creating significant challenges for the industry and stressing domestic supply chains.

Export Trends and Market Flows

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the United States exported around 2 million metric tons of aluminum scrap (U.S. Harmonized Tariff Schedule code 7602.00) last year, increasing more than 17% over the previous year. Much of this scrap goes to Asia, including China, where it is turned into new aluminum products. India, Thailand, Malaysia, South Korea and Hong Kong are the leading export markets for U.S. aluminum scrap with China also importing significant volumes. More than a quarter of U.S. scrap generated each year leaves the country.

Here's how the numbers break down:

Scrap Availability	Volume (Million Metric Tons)	Percentage of Total Scrap
Consumed Domestically	5.6	74%
Exported	2.0	26%

This split demonstrates that a large share of U.S. scrap supports supply chains overseas, helping companies that compete with American manufacturers.

Also of note, the United States is a net exporter of scrap, importing around 680,000 metric tons compared to 2 million metric tons of exports. Recent tariff policy changes have made the United States a more attractive market for scrap aluminum imports and imports are currently trending at a decades-long high. However, these shifts may prove temporary.

The Aluminum Association has previously identified inaccuracies in the Census Bureau's data reporting on scrap exports, underscoring the need to improve these tracking systems. Nevertheless, the direction is clear – the United States exports an enormous amount of aluminum scrap we could otherwise utilize for domestic manufacturing.

Importance of UBC and Mill-Ready Scrap

UBCs are prized for their purity and ease of recycling. Their high quality and unique alloy composition makes them perfect for turning back into new cans in as few as 60 days. UBCs alone generated about 1.4 million metric tons of scrap in 2023 – less than half of which is currently recycled. Such a demand exists for UBCs that the United States actually imports a substantial quantity of this material (around 183,000 metric tons worth in 2023), especially from Canada and Mexico. All of this underscores the importance of increasing aluminum recycling rates in America, which currently lag global averages. Keeping the UBCs we do collect at home saves energy and supports a closed-loop system in which old cans become new cans over and over again.

Mill-ready scrap – or scrap that is clean, processed and ready to be melted – is just as important. This type of scrap needs little sorting or cleaning making it a low-cost, high-value feedstock for aluminum producers. Keeping more mill-ready scrap in the United States helps supply key industries like transportation, packaging and construction. Currently, only UBCs are defined and segregated as a stand-alone product in trade data. The Aluminum Association needs other mill-ready scrap to be defined and tracked in trade data so that we can better understand how much of this metal is being exported.

But not all scrap is created equal. While some types of domestic scrap can be immediately and fully consumed domestically, other types of scrap are more difficult or costly to consume due to the current cost or capacity of additional shredding, sorting or processing capacity. As such, some of these scrap types (while in part are consumed domestically) continue to have significant volumes exported. The industry is actively working on solutions to remedy these issues to effectively consume all types of currently exported scrap.

Zorba is a scrap stream common in automotive and other end-of-life shredding that typically contains 70% and 90% aluminum along with copper, stainless steel, brass, nickel and other metals. Zorba requires additional separation and processing to become furnace ready Twitch – high-quality shredded aluminum scrap with contaminants like steel and plastic removed. While there are opportunities to upgrade infrastructure to make Zorba processing easier and more economical, this material would not be included under currently proposed export controls. In the near term, doing so could simply lead to the stockpiling of unused, co-mingled scrap that would ultimately be sent abroad anyway.

Work is underway to invest in new sortation technology that would increase domestic processing of Zorba. Zorba is the best example of a scrap stream that should not be restricted from export though there are others. The Aluminum Association is advocating that restrictions be placed on UBC exports today and solutions to identify and restrict other high quality mill ready scrap be explored, but that Zorba, Twitch and other scrap streams remain unrestricted until the recycling industry can better handle them domestically.

Improved infrastructure and technology will allow domestic aluminum users to more efficiently sort and process other lower quality scrap material domestically. For now, the industry's focus is to restrict the export of critical materials like UBCs and mill-ready aluminum scrap that can and will be recycled today. Restricting products like Zorba and Twitch will prevent the trade that generates the revenue required to invest in new domestic scrap sortation technology.

Challenges in Scrap Classification and Tracking

Tracking scrap is difficult because current trade classifications in Schedule B and the U.S. Harmonized Tariff Schedule (USHTS) lump many types of aluminum scrap into broad groups. Beyond UBCs, these expansive categories make it difficult to see how much other high-value scrap is leaving the country. (Current UBC export data published by the Census Bureau has also been shown to be inaccurate in recent years.) Without clear and accurate data, it is difficult if not impossible to shape smart policies or monitor exports.

The Aluminum Association is working with government partners to improve these codes. For instance, in a recent request to the government, the association asked for a new breakout for industrial scrap "in the form of wrought products," thereby enabling an additional distinction to be made for mill-ready scrap. Increased visibility into the true nature of aluminum scrap trade flows would allow industry and policymakers to see a fuller picture and identify scrap classifications that are mill-ready. Better data will help everyone make informed choices and keep more valuable scrap in domestic supply chains.

3. Strategic Risks of Exporting Aluminum Scrap

The risks of sending scrap overseas are significant. Aluminum scrap is a valuable resource, but shipping large amounts abroad -- especially to strategic competitors with their own industrial goals -- can leave America open to supply gaps and weaken our economic and national security. In some cases, Americans export scrap metal, then buy finished or partly finished aluminum products back at higher prices. This cycle hurts U.S. manufacturing and jobs, while helping foreign rivals with access to cheaper inputs.

What's more, aluminum is energy. The volume of aluminum exported annually represents around 31 billion kWh, the same power used by ~3 million American homes or the city of Chicago in a given year. Particularly during a time of acute energy demand from AI centers and other projects, it is more important than ever to keep the energy we do have for use here at home.

Domestic Supply Vulnerabilities

In an era of surging energy demand, recycling is a major part of the aluminum supply chain solution. Making new aluminum uses about 20 times more energy than making secondary aluminum from recycled scrap. The Aluminum Association advocates for many policies to combat low consumer aluminum recycling in the United States, which will help increase scrap aluminum inputs for manufacturing.

In the meantime, we should not compound the problem by exporting aluminum that we could readily process domestically. Right now, the U.S. aluminum industry faces a supply gap of about 4 million metric tons of raw aluminum each year. This shortfall means manufacturers must rely more on imported primary and other upstream aluminum, which costs more and uses far more energy to make than recycled material.

Further, the United States does not have nearly enough primary aluminum capacity to meet current let alone future demand – and becoming self-sufficient would take many years, billions of dollars and access to an enormous amount of affordable energy. Exporting nearly half of our

scrap only makes this gap wider and our domestic supply challenge worse. Every pound that leaves the country is one less pound for U.S. mills and manufacturers to recycle and use, making it harder to meet demand at home.

This is even more concerning as demand for aluminum grows in key areas like cars, planes and packaging. Our industry's future depends on a steady, affordable supply of scrap metal. When we export high-value streams like UBCs and mill-ready scrap, we leave less material for U.S. production. That can slow investment in new aluminum facilities and make it tougher for U.S. manufacturers to compete.

This issue is especially acute given recent U.S. investment. Over the past decade, the U.S. aluminum industry has invested more than $11 billion in plants and operations in the United States, primarily in mid-and-downstream production especially reliant on scrap inputs. This includes two brand-new, multibillion dollar aluminum rolling facilities for the first time since 1980. As these new mills come online in the coming months, the need for domestic scrap supply will only grow.

Aluminum is also a critical material for many defense applications. Planes, drones, missiles, even satellites require a highly specialized form of aluminum meaning they rely heavily on primary aluminum inputs. Aluminum is also used in body armor, tanks and fighter jets that directly supports our national security. While these products rely disproportionately on primary aluminum as a main input they are made within the same supply chain as consumer recycled products. Increasing the domestic scrap supply would free up more primary aluminum to support the American warfighter.

A final consideration – as scrap gets harder to find here (and given the shortage of domestic primary aluminum production), America must fill the gap with imported primary aluminum. This dependence opens us up to supply chain shocks, price swings and geopolitical challenges.

Strategic Implications of Supplying Competitors

China's growing role in the global aluminum scrap market shows what's at stake. In recent years, China has relaxed scrap quality import standards; more than doubled its scrap imports; and dramatically expanded aluminum recycling capacity.

According to industry reporting, this new recycling capacity in China is expected to come online over the next three years (using state support and industrial policies) all to promote "the high-quality development of the recycled metal industry."

China's "14th 5-Year Plan for the Circular Economy" set a target of more than 15 million metric tons of recycled aluminum use by 2027. According to a report by Harbor Aluminum for European Aluminium, China has or will commission some 22 million metric tons of secondary aluminum capacity expansion projects between 2022 and 2026. For comparison purposes, the United States currently produces around 5 million metric tons of secondary aluminum each year.

These developments give China a clear edge in making recycled aluminum at scale and at lower cost – a goal the United States is effectively making easier with its current scrap export policies. China will become a magnet, attracting scrap from the rest of the world to monopolize global production.

The lessons of the past several decades are clear. China can and will swamp large sectors of the industrial economy if given the opportunity. From the year 2000, the United States went from 24 primary aluminum smelters to just 4 today. U.S. jobs in the primary aluminum sector have declined by nearly 70% over the past decade while overall industry jobs held mostly steady as they shifted downstream. The decline in U.S. primary aluminum production was driven in large part by unfairly subsidized overcapacity in China. We cannot allow history to repeat itself in the aluminum recycling and mid/downstream production sector.

When we export scrap to China and its allies, we supply the raw materials that help their industries grow and compete (often unfairly) with U.S. manufacturers. This undercuts our own industrial goals and national security.

Economic and National Security Concerns

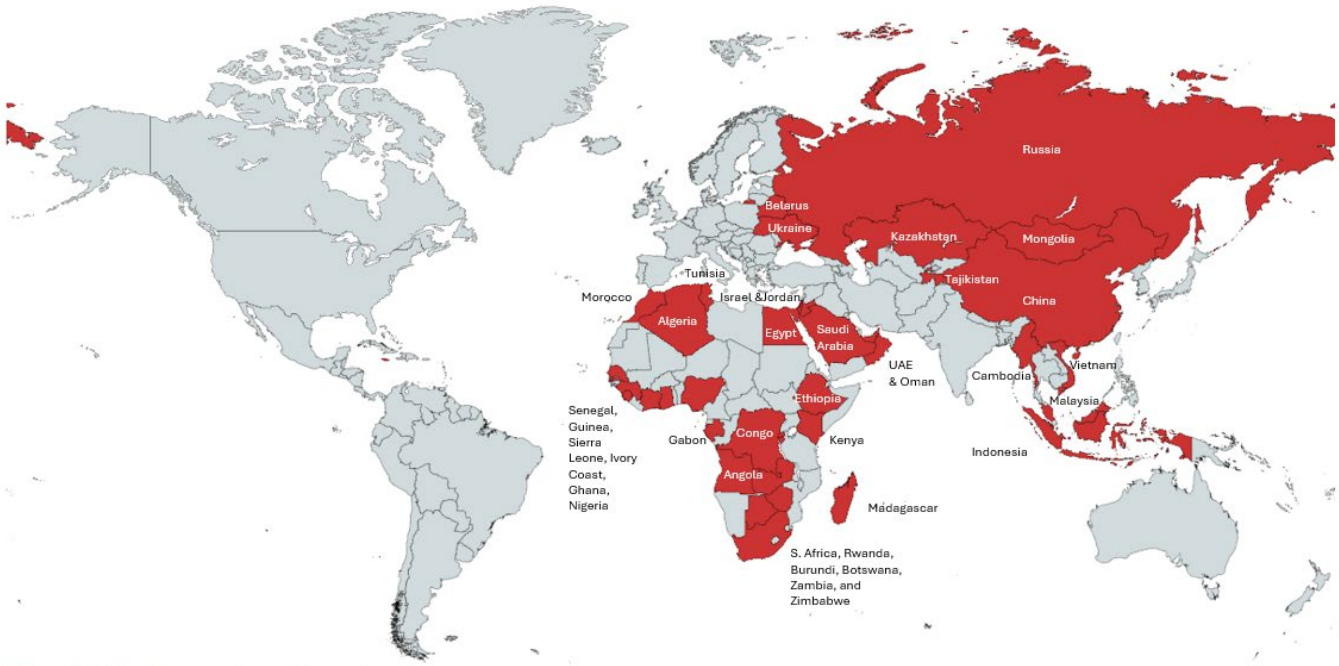
Aluminum is more than a simple commodity – it is a strategic material needed for defense and essential infrastructure. Sending scrap abroad without limits weakens the U.S. industrial base that supports these sectors. It also makes us more dependent on foreign sources for materials we may need most in a crisis.

In 2024 alone, the United States exported more than 2 million metric tons of aluminum scrap, much of it to countries that later send finished products back to us. This flow means lost economic value and less control over a critical supply chain. It also raises big questions about how strong and flexible the U.S. aluminum industry will be when global shocks hit. Meeting these risks head-on calls for smart policy that keeps vital scrap here in the United States.

4. International Precedents and Reciprocity

As the United States weighs the risks of exporting aluminum scrap, it helps to see how other countries handle the same challenge. Many governments around the globe recognize the value of keeping aluminum scrap close to home. (Notably, the United States runs an effective trade deficit of 1.3 million metric tons of aluminum scrap with the rest of the world.) Other countries use export bans and similar restrictions to support strategic industries and keep supply chains strong. These examples show clear precedent for the United States to consider a similar approach.

The following map shows the approximate 25% of global aluminum UBC scrap that is under either a hard (high tax/ban) or soft (license/low tax) export restriction:



Source: OECD Export Restriction Database, various gov't documents

Export Restrictions in Major Economies

Several of the world's top economies have rules that limit or ban the export of aluminum scrap, with a special focus on high-grade scrap like UBCs and mill-ready materials.

More than a dozen countries including China, Russia, India and Saudi Arabia all restrict exports of aluminum UBCs. Several countries have implemented or strengthened these restrictions in recent years. The European Commission is currently considering a new set of scrap export restrictions in the region, including for aluminum scrap. China has recently relaxed its import restriction regime to accept more types of aluminum scrap.

These countries share a common goal: keep valuable scrap at home to support jobs, industry and national defense. Their policies show that they recognize aluminum scrap as a key resource, not just a basic good.

The Principle of Reciprocity

Reciprocity is simple -- it means treating others the way that they treat you. In trade, it's about matching the rules and limits set by your partners. When other countries restrict aluminum scrap exports, the United States risks losing out if it does not do the same.

Without reciprocity, U.S. manufacturers face a twin challenge. They lose scrap that leaves the country, while overseas competitors get more supply at a lower cost. This gap can mean fewer jobs, weaker supply chains and lower growth in U.S. recycling and manufacturing.

Bringing U.S. export rules in line with global standards would level the playing field. It would send a clear signal that the United States values its aluminum scrap and stands ready to support its industry. Reciprocity also gives the U.S. more leverage in trade talks to help address unfair practices abroad.

Protecting Aluminum Scrap Imports into the United States

The United States currently imports UBCs and mill ready scrap from other countries -- in particular Canada and Mexico. Nearly 90% of the ~700,000 metric tons of this scrap comes from Canada and Mexico. These scrap imports from North American trading partners provide a critical source of material for U.S. industry. Preserving the free flow of scrap in North America is essential and imports of scrap should be free of duties or restrictive measures as a critical material for the domestic industry. As the administration addresses concerns in the USMCA trade agreement, the free flow of scrap from Mexico and Canada should be preserved.

5. Economic and Industrial Benefits of a Ban

Across the world, countries are tightening rules on scrap exports to support their own industries. For the United States, keeping more aluminum scrap at home brings clear benefits. A focused ban on exporting key scrap streams—like UBCs and mill-ready scrap—would support U.S. manufacturing, strengthen supply chains, reduce reliance on other countries and bolster national security.

Strengthening Domestic Manufacturing

When the United States keeps aluminum scrap inside its borders, mills and manufacturers have more of what they need to make products. This scrap becomes the backbone for everything from beverage cans to car parts and airplane components. With a steady flow of high-quality scrap, U.S. manufacturers can invest, grow and hire with more certainty. Take the two new, multi-billion-dollar rolling mills currently under construction -- they depend on domestic scrap to keep up with rising demand. Keeping scrap here will help new and existing plants operate competitively while sparking additional growth throughout the sector.

Enhancing Supply Chain Resilience

Recent years have shown how easily global supply chains can break down. When the United States sends large amounts of scrap overseas, it risks running short if other countries change their trade rules or face disruptions. By holding onto more scrap, the industry gains control over a key resource and faces less risk from global shocks. This control matters even more for sectors tied to national defense, where a steady aluminum supply is crucial. Banning the export of high-quality aluminum scrap would help build a supply chain that can handle tough times and keep American production moving.

Reducing Import Dependency and Costs

Right now, the U.S. meets much of its aluminum demand by importing primary aluminum. This process uses a lot of energy and costs more than recycling. Recycling aluminum scrap takes only about 5% of the energy needed for primary production, making it a smart and efficient choice. By keeping more scrap at home, the U.S. can cut back on costly imports, save money, and reduce energy use. It also means less dependence on foreign suppliers, who may face political or trade challenges.

Promoting Sustainable Recycling and a Circular Economy

A ban on specific scrap exports would drive investment in U.S. recycling systems and new technology. When scrap stays home, there is more reason to build advanced sorting and remelting plants that squeeze the most value out of every scrap of discarded aluminum. Keeping our scrap would incentivize private and public investment in new sorting technologies utilizing AI and other techniques to separate and ultimately reuse aluminum in various products. These gains help both the economy and the environment.

Supporting U.S. Recyclers

Critically, the Aluminum Association is only calling for a ban on scrap exports of high quality, mill and furnace ready aluminum scrap like UBCs. Domestic sorting technology is not currently sufficient to process lower grade scrap like Zorba at scale and some specialized aluminum scrap cannot be processed domestically. The association's targeted ask will reduce the disruption for scrap recyclers and ensure that we only keep the aluminum scrap here that we can readily recycle and use. Scrap export restrictions now will ensure that domestic metal traders always have a U.S. market for their highest value material, while simultaneously supporting the U.S. economy and our national security.

6. Policy Recommendations and Implementation Pathways

Keeping aluminum scrap in the United States matters for both our economic and national security. This section lays out a clear plan to put an export ban in place – securing key scrap streams like UBCs and mill-ready scrap for use by American producers.

Policy Asks

1. **Immediately ban the export of Used Beverage Container (UBC) scrap outside North America**
   UBCs are defined with a unique tariff code; are highly sought after by U.S. re-melters; and are needed today. An immediate ban on UBCs will support U.S. aluminum industry investment in the near term and further efforts to onshore manufacturing. Importantly, the UBC export ban should not apply within North America where the free flow of aluminum scrap is vital for industry throughout the region. Imported aluminum UBCs are a vital feedstock for the domestic can sheet market especially and should be traded within North America with zero tariffs or other restrictions. As USMCA negotiations proceed, the United States, Canada and Mexico should work to harmonize trade and tariff policies to

restrict the trade of scrap and other aluminum with China and other non-market economies.

2. **Update U.S. Harmonized Tariff Schedule (USHTS) and Schedule B codes**
   Trade codes today lump many types of scrap together, making it difficult to enforce rules. The U.S. Census Bureau, Customs & Border Protection and the U.S. International Trade Commission should work with the aluminum industry to fine-tune Schedule B and USHTS codes so that high-value material like mill-ready scrap can be identified. Better codes help CBP track and control exports more closely, ensuring the United States does not export material it can easily use and does export metal it cannot.

3. **Invest in infrastructure and new technology to improve scrap sorting and collection**
   Large amounts of scrap aluminum, particularly lower-grade Zorba, is currently difficult to process and recycle economically and at scale in the United States. The domestic industry is currently investing in new technologies to address this problem. Government investment and public-private partnerships could speed up this process and enable the industry to keep more scrap at home for domestic use. Current bipartisan legislation in Congress including the CIRCLE Act would act as a downpayment on improving American recycling infrastructure.

4. **Consider expanding export controls to other mill-ready scrap over time**
   As tariff and tracking codes are refined and infrastructure improves, policymakers should also consider potential export restrictions on other forms of mill-ready aluminum scrap. (The industry is not calling for a full scrap export ban at this time as domestic technology matures to better process Zorba, Twitch and other lower grade scrap.) There are multiple mechanisms the administration can deploy to enact scrap export restrictions, from full bans to a business license approach. In addition to potential legislative fixes, the president also has authority under Section 301, the Defense Production Act and the Export Control Reform Act to address this issue.

Monitoring and Enforcement Strategies

1. **Better data and reporting**
   Good data on scrap flows is vital. The government should require detailed reports on what scrap is shipped and where it goes. Better data will help identify transshipment trends and track changes in the market. This begins with greater specificity in the USHTS codes and requires additional regulatory action to clarify requirements on exporters seeking to profit from shipping valuable metal to strategic rivals.

2. **Customs checks and penalties**
   Government agencies need sufficient resources to check shipments and enforce the rules to ensure that companies and individuals who attempt to evade duties on imports of aluminum and aluminum products are identified and held accountable. Penalties for breaking the law should be tough enough to stop illegal exports. The Department of Justice and Department of Homeland Security recently announced the creation of a cross-agency Trade Fraud Task Force this week to "augment [government coordination] and aggressively pursue enforcement actions against any parties who seek to evade tariffs and other duties" -- a positive step forward.

3. **Ongoing industry-government engagement**
   Regular meetings between the association, government agencies and industry leaders can catch new issues early and fine-tune the rules. This teamwork can help to keep export restrictions strong and up to date.

7. Conclusion and Call to Action

Protecting America's aluminum scrap supply is more urgent now than ever. Aluminum scrap is not trash – it is a key resource that powers our economy, keeps us secure and keeps the manufacturing base humming. When we ship large amounts of this scrap overseas, we weaken our own factories, depend more on imports and give an edge to foreign competitors – some of whom don't play by the rules.

Keeping more aluminum scrap here at home – especially UBCs, but also other high value mill-ready scrap – helps us to build stronger supply chains, reduce energy use and costs and create good jobs. This is not just smart business. It makes our country more secure and ready for the future. Other nations have already moved to protect their own scrap supplies. The United States needs to do the same to stay competitive.

Setting clear limits on aluminum scrap exports is a practical step we can take right now to support America's aluminum industry while critical work to increase recycling rates and build new U.S. smelters continues. Doing so will help American producers get the materials they need, grow their plants and compete fairly. Along with export controls, updating trade codes and investing in better recycling systems will boost the value of scrap and support a more efficient manufacturing sector.

Now is the time to act to protect our aluminum scrap and secure the future of U.S. manufacturing. These efforts will support American jobs, reduce our reliance on foreign imports and keep vital industries strong. Protecting our aluminum scrap supply is not just an industry concern, it is a national priority. The time to act is now.