Press Release

Tariff Refunds: Will Consumers Benefit?

ALLIE WATSON | MAY 19, 2026

On April 20, United States Customs and Border Protection (CBP) launched the Consolidated Administration and Processing of Entries (CAPE) portal to automate the process of refunding U.S. importers for International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) tariffs. In a new insight, Trade Policy Analyst Jacob Jensen breaks down the IEEPA tariff refund process and explains how consumers will benefit – even while not directly receiving the refunds.

Key points:

- *As U.S. importers – primarily consisting of businesses – begin to receive refunds, many taxpayers and lawmakers are expressing concerns that big businesses will be "bailed out" while U.S. consumers are left footing the tariff bill.*
- *This view, however, neglects complexities in the refund process and nuances with how tariffs were passed along the supply chain.*
- *This insight sheds light on why importers are receiving refunds directly, why consumers will be reimbursed indirectly through "secondary refunds," and why the current process is simply the inverse of how tariffs were paid in the first place.*

Read the analysis.