

# Christopher Weld Discusses Commerce's Probe of Steel Imports with Section 232 Investigation, and 'Buy America' Review

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Christopher B. Weld, a partner in Wiley Rein's International Trade Practice, was quoted extensively in a recent special edition of *American Metal Market* regarding the potential impact of the U.S. Department of Commerce's Section 232 investigation into the effects of steel imports on national security. The results of the investigation, authorized under the Trade Expansion Act of 1962, could significantly impact the U.S. steel industry.

Mr. Weld—who represents domestic steel industry clients on trade remedy issues—noted that Commerce is likely to define “national security” in broad terms, meaning the investigation could focus on more than just conventional military and defense projects, and include critical infrastructure such as roads, bridges, and power grids. As far as potential punitive actions that could result from the investigation such as quotas and tariffs, Mr. Weld noted that “it’s all on the table.”

Another boon to domestic steel producers could result from Commerce's upcoming review of the “Buy America” policies that require businesses to use U.S.-made steel for federal projects. The review could have an impact on government procurement practices in the short term, Mr. Weld noted. “We will probably have fewer (Buy America) waivers because contracting officers will pick up on the tone of the executive order” that was signed by President Trump.

## Related Professionals

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Christopher B. Weld  
Partner  
202.719.4651  
cweld@wiley.law

## Practice Areas

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International Trade

Mr. Weld also dismissed fears that imposing controls on imports might limit steel supplies or drive up costs for steel consumers. "The U.S. industry is running at 75 percent capacity, so I don't see that as a problem."

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