

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 27, 2026

The Honorable Jamieson Greer
United States Trade Representative
Office of the United States Trade Representative
600 17th Street NW
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Ambassador Greer,

I write to urge immediate action by the Office of the United States Trade Representative (“USTR”) to address the sustained and aggressive targeting of American companies by the Government of the Republic of Korea (“South Korea”). Seoul is currently conducting a campaign of open hostility toward foreign enterprises through onerous compliance requirements, excessive monetary fines, criminal prosecution of business executives, and biased regulatory enforcement.¹ Alarmingly, South Korea’s aggression is disproportionately directed at American companies, undermining our longstanding alliance and trade agreements.² In their own words, American companies in South Korea face “lack of due process and procedural unfairness.”³ This is unacceptable and cannot continue unanswered.

More than 70 years ago, the United States lost nearly 37,000 lives in the Korean War defending the people of South Korea from communist aggression.⁴ American forces, alongside our Korean partners, stopped the advance that would have extinguished freedom on the peninsula. In the decades that followed, the United States provided the security umbrella, economic assistance, open markets, technology cooperation, and investment climate that allowed South Korea to rise into one of the world’s leading economies. For over half a century, the United States has underwritten the presence of nearly 30,000 troops, extended nuclear deterrence against the North Korean threat, funded joint defense capabilities, and maintained preferential market access that has enabled South Korean industry to flourish.⁵ Today, the United States continues to financially bolster South Korea and the greater region’s security through forward-deployed forces,

¹ *U.S. Chamber of Commerce Comments On Unfair Trade Practices*, U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (March 12, 2025), <https://www.uschamber.com/international/u-s-chamber-comments-re-reviewing-and-identifying-unfair-trade-practices-and-initiating-all-necessary-actions-to-investigate-harm-from-non-reciprocal-trade-arrangements-federal-register-docket-number-ustr-2025-0001>.

² UNITED STATES HOUSE COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY, *Closed For Competition: South Korea’s Discriminatory Attacks On American-Owned Businesses* (July 1, 2026), <https://judiciary.house.gov/sites/evo-subsites/republicans-judiciary.house.gov/files/evo-media-document/south-korea-discriminatory-enforcement-report-draft-final.pdf>.

³ *Id.*

⁴ David Vergun, *America Marks Anniversary of End of Korean War*, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE NEWS (July 24, 2023), <https://www.war.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/3418679/america-marks-anniversary-of-end-of-korean-war/>.

⁵ *U.S.-South Korea Alliance: Background and Issues for Congress* (2026), <https://www.congress.gov/crs-product/R48877>.

intelligence sharing, and advanced weapons systems—costs singularly borne by tax-paying American families.

Thus, it is outrageous that South Korea has repaid this partnership with systematic discrimination against American companies. One particularly damning example is the regulatory crusade waged against Coupang Inc. and its South Korean subsidiary (“Coupang”). Coupang, headquartered in the United States and operating as the largest online retailer in South Korea, referred to as the ‘Amazon of Asia,’ is a shining example of joint American-South Korean innovation.⁶ However, Coupang has recently faced a regulatory “whole-of-government assault.” Following a data breach in 2025, Coupang has been forced to endure sweeping investigations from ten different government agencies, threats to suspend operations, and government portrayals of Coupang as a criminal organization.⁷ Disturbingly, South Korea also imposed on Coupang the largest monetary fine it has ever levied on a single company, and several of Coupang’s executives, including American citizens, are facing criminal charges in South Korea.⁸

This specific data breach deserves investigation and may warrant even-handed enforcement. However, the larger pattern emerging in South Korea is cause for intense concern. Seoul has weaponized a small incident into a pretext for widespread weaponization against American enterprise. This practice, well documented outside the Coupang case study, is deeply unfair to American businesses, workers, investors, and exporters. Such conduct also violates the spirit and letter of recently negotiated bilateral trade understandings, which prohibit discriminatory regulatory practices.⁹

Reciprocity is not optional. I respectfully request that USTR initiate a formal investigation under available authorities, including Section 301 if warranted, pursue consultations under our trade agreements, and prepare proportionate countermeasures to restore fair treatment for American companies. The United States has stood by South Korea through war and reconstruction; I will not stand by while Seoul ungratefully weaponizes its government against the very innovators who help power both our economies. Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter. I look forward to your prompt response and to working with you to defend American interests.

Sincerely,



Bernie Moreno
United States Senator

⁶ Annie Palmer, *Coupang, a SoftBank-backed start-up, is crushing Amazon to become South Korea’s biggest online retailer*, CNBC (July 20, 2021), <https://www.cnbc.com/2020/06/16/coupang-crushed-amazon-to-become-south-koreas-biggest-online-retailer.html>. See also Justin Papp, *South Korean government discriminated against Coupang, U.S. companies, House report finds*, CNBC (July 2, 2026), <https://www.cnbc.com/2026/07/01/coupang-south-korea-coupang-house-judiciary.html>.

⁷ UNITED STATES HOUSE COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY, *supra* note 1.

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ *Fact Sheet: The United States and Korea Agree to the Korea Strategic Trade and Investment Deal*, OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE (November 2025), <https://ustr.gov/about/policy-offices/press-office/fact-sheets/2025/november/fact-sheet-united-states-and-korea-agree-korea-strategic-trade-and-investment-deal>