Ontario Premier Doug Ford meets with Utah Governor as bid to reverse tariffs continues

JEFF GRAY > QUEEN'S PARK REPORTER

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Ontario Premier Doug Ford speaks to media at Queen's Park in Toronto, on Thursday, April 3, 2025.
LAURA PROCTOR/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ontario Premier Doug Ford met with Utah Governor Spencer Cox in Toronto on Thursday, saying he is an important ally in the battle to get U.S. tariffs on Canada

reversed.

Mr. Cox, a Republican perceived as a moderate who has previously spoken out against U.S. President Donald Trump's trade levies, was on a trade mission scheduled long before Mr. Trump unleashed the trade policy chaos now spooking financial markets. Mr. Cox told reporters at Queen's Park that he has spoken to Mr. Trump and White House officials and that the aim in Utah – which counts Canada as its second-largest trading partner – is to get all of the tariffs removed.

"I have a great relationship with President Trump. And those are conversations that are ongoing," Mr. Cox said. "I know there's lots of concerns, I think on both sides, everybody's trying to figure out what this means and what the policy is going to be moving forward. And I will have these conversations with him."

Ontario's Premier, who left Mr. Cox to face reporters alone while he made an appearance on CNN, later said the Governor's support echoed the views of other Republican state leaders with whom Mr. Ford has met.

VIDEO 1:56

Utah Gov. Spencer Cox says he understands the betrayal felt by Canadians during a visit with Ontario Premier Doug Ford. He highlighted that Canada is the second largest trading partner for Utah and is having ongoing conversations with U.S. President Donald Trump regarding tariffs. (April 10 ,2025)

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Mr. Cox said he was sending a letter encouraging his fellow governors to make similar trade missions to Canada, and the Premier said he was already lining up more such meetings.

“It is critical,” Mr. Ford told reporters later. “The governors have massive power down there. And the President does listen to the governors.”

Mr. Cox said he welcomed Mr. Trump’s move on Wednesday to back off many of the large tariffs he had imposed on countries around the world. He also said he agreed with Mr. Ford that both countries face a common problem in the unfair trade practices of China.

Asked if he had told the President to drop his threats to use “economic force” to compel Canada to join the United States, Mr. Cox said he had raised this issue with the President.

“We have a great relationship with the White House. We worked through those issues,” Mr. Cox said. “I very much appreciated President Trump in the last call that he had with the Prime Minister, and at least the readout and his social messaging after that, showing what I felt was a great deal of respect between the two in those conversations and I am hopeful that that kind of dialogue can continue.”

The Governor said his state and Canada share deep trade and interpersonal ties and that he understands the reaction in Canada to the tariffs.

“I’m told that sense of betrayal that is being felt. And I understand that, I do. I see where that’s coming from,” Mr. Cox told reporters.

Doug Ford
@fordnation · **Follow**

I joined @wolfblitzer on @CNNSitRoom with a simple message: tariffs are hurting Americans, making their lives more expensive. It's time to end these tariffs and get back to the table.

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Both Mr. Ford and Mr. Cox said they hoped to cement ties between Utah and Ontario, noting the two jurisdictions have a focus on mining critical minerals and in artificial intelligence. In addition to two days in Ontario, Mr. Cox spent three days in Quebec, meeting with government officials in Montreal.

He was also scheduled to tour Ontario's Darlington nuclear site, where the province's power utility is building a small modular nuclear reactor designed by Wilmington, N.C.-based GE-Hitachi Nuclear Energy.

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