

Dave Townsend

Partner

townsend.dave@dorsey.com

Minneapolis – 612.492.6192

Washington, D.C.



Dave Townsend defends U.S. and foreign companies in export controls, economic sanctions, and trade litigation matters so they can manage cross-border risk and keep goods moving across borders.

When trade policy shifts overnight, Dave's clients need someone who knows the agencies, the statutes, and the strategy. Dave is a partner in Dorsey & Whitney's Government Solutions and Investigations practice, advising U.S. and foreign companies on the full range of international trade law, from trade remedy proceedings to U.S. economic sanctions and export controls compliance.

Dave represents clients before the Department of Commerce, the International Trade Commission (ITC), and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) in tariff proceedings. He also counsels clients on investigations under Sections 232 and 301 of U.S. trade law, and advises on compliance with free trade agreement and preferential tariff program obligations. His import compliance work covers classification, country-of-origin determinations, valuation, and prior disclosures to CBP.

On the national security side, Dave advises clients on U.S. economic sanctions and export controls administered by the Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS), the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), and the Directorate of Defense Trade Controls (DDTC). He guides clients through voluntary self-disclosures, enforcement actions, and the development of corporate compliance programs. He also advises on Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS) matters — helping both buyers and sellers assess mandatory and voluntary filing obligations, including transactions involving critical technologies, critical infrastructure, sensitive personal data, and sensitive real estate.

Dave's clients span a wide range of industries, including agricultural products, chemicals, energy, distilled spirits, financial services, solar products, and steel. He has particular

Education

- The George Washington University Law School (J.D., 2010)
 - with honors; Senior Articles Editor, *Journal of Energy and Environmental Law*
- London School of Economics and Political Science (M.S., International Political Economy, 2007)
 - with honors
- University of Minnesota (B.A., Political Science and Sociology, 2004)
 - *summa cum laude*; Phi Beta Kappa

Bar Admissions

- District of Columbia
- Maryland
- Minnesota

depth advising clients doing business between China and the United States.

Dave serves as adjunct faculty at the University of Minnesota Law School, where he teaches U.S. trade law. He previously taught at the Georgetown University Law Center on World Trade Organization (WTO) agreements, negotiations, and disputes. Dave is a Council Member of the Minnesota State Bar Association International Business Law Section and previously served as its Chair.

Select Experience

- Obtained the lowest preliminary antidumping and countervailing duty rates for the Argentine mandatory respondent in White Grape Juice Concentrate from Argentina proceedings, and negotiated a suspension agreement to avoid final antidumping and countervailing duties.
- Advised clients on voluntary self-disclosures to and enforcement actions by BIS, OFAC, and DDTC.
- Advised buyers and sellers on the necessity of mandatory and voluntary disclosures to CFIUS, including identifying U.S. operations involving critical technologies, critical infrastructure, sensitive personal data, and sensitive real estate.
- Counseled clients on import entry, classification, valuation, marking, and rules of origin before CBP and disputes with CBP relating to the same.

Professional Affiliations

- Adjunct Faculty, University of Minnesota Law School
- Board Member, Global Minnesota

Accolades

- *Thomson Reuters*, "Stand-Out Lawyer", 2025
- *IFLR*, Americas Rising Star (International Trade), 2021
- *Thomson Reuters*, "America's Leading Business Lawyers" (International Trade: Trade Remedies & Trade Policy), 2019

Dorsey Law & Policy Notebook

June 4, 2026

Tariffs Roundup

March 12, 2026

Massive New Section 301 Investigations Present Opportunity for Comment

February 23, 2026

Are New Tariffs on Solid Legal Footing Under Section 122?

February 21, 2026

Where things Stand After a Monumental Day on Tariffs

January 17, 2026

USDA Updating its Foreign Investment in Ag Disclosure Process

Insights

September 10, 2026

White House Ups the Ante with Section 338 Import Bans Against Canadian Products

August 27, 2026

United States and Canada Reciprocal Tariff Actions

July 24, 2026

Trump Administration Implements Replacement Tariffs Covering Most U.S. Imports

July 23, 2026

Dave Townsend Breaks Down a Historic Week in U.S. Tariff Policy

July 22, 2026

U.S. Government Announces Section 338 Retaliatory Tariffs Against Canadian Goods

June 4, 2026

Proposed New Section 301 Tariffs and Other Trade-Related Developments

May 8, 2026

U.S. Court of International Trade Holds Section 122 Tariffs Unlawful – Enjoins Tariff Collection and Orders Refunds for Plaintiff-Importers

May 7, 2026

Dave Townsend Examines U.S. Trade Court’s Decision on Trump’s New Global Tariffs

March 13, 2026

Opportunity to Comment on Foreign Trade Practices with New Tariffs Looming Under Section 301

March 12, 2026

DOJ Releases “First-Ever” Corporate Enforcement Policy Promoting Self-Disclosure and Cooperation

March 1, 2026

Dave Townsend on the Supreme Court's Ruling on President Trump's Tariffs

February 20, 2026

U.S. Supreme Court Strikes Down Trump Emergency Tariff Actions

November 6, 2025

Trump Decreases Tariffs on Chinese Goods, Increases Tariffs on Canadian Goods, and Announces a Flurry of Trade Arrangements

October 30, 2025

Trump Escalates Sanctions Against Russia

October 7, 2025

Public Consultation Begins on Renewal of U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement