

The Vision Council Advocates for the Vision Industry During White House Meeting

Industry leaders highlight rising tariffs' impact on access to eyewear and offer policy solutions to support public health and economic competitiveness

Alexandria, VA – April 22, 2025 – On April 21, representatives from [The Vision Council](https://www.thevisioncouncil.org), the national trade association representing manufacturers, suppliers, and retailers in the optical industry, met with Robin Colwell, Deputy Assistant to the President and Deputy Director of the National Economic Council, at the White House. The group shared how vision care supports public health, education, workforce participation, and aging – and emphasized the challenges posed by current trade policies.

“We appreciated the opportunity to meet with the White House and share how foundational vision is to Americans’ everyday lives,” said **Ashley Mills, CEO of The Vision Council**. “This conversation allowed us to highlight both the essential nature of vision care and the impact that rising tariffs are having on our industry and the consumers we serve.”

Mills was joined by a cross-section of industry leaders who shared firsthand experiences from across the optical sector:

- **Scott Shapiro**, Executive Director of Industry Relations and Former CEO of *Europa Eyewear*, described how his U.S.-based manufacturing facility faces challenges with imported components. He also provided background on how restrictive “Made in USA” labeling rules can limit a company’s ability to accurately represent domestically assembled products.
- **Brandon Butler**, President & CEO of *Artisan Lab Network & PAL*, noted the challenges optical labs face in reshoring production – particularly the lack of U.S.-made machinery and the financial strain of tariffs on raw materials.
- **Jamie Rosin**, Owner of *Rosin Optical Co. Inc.*, emphasized the downstream health impacts on patients, especially children and seniors, when rising costs delay access to care.
- **Ken Bradley**, President & CEO of *Eschenbach Optik of America, Inc.*, highlighted how increased costs affect publicly funded programs like Medicare, Medicaid, and Veterans Affairs – raising taxpayer burdens while reducing patients served.

Together, the group emphasized how tariffs are increasing the cost of eyewear and vision products, many of which are classified as Class I medical devices and are essential to children, seniors, veterans, and low-income individuals. These products are often supported through public programs such as Medicare, Medicaid, and Veterans Affairs – meaning increased costs also affect taxpayers.

For many small businesses and independent optical providers, these increases are straining operations and slowing efforts to onshore manufacturing.

In addition to outlining these challenges, The Vision Council presented constructive policy ideas aimed at supporting the administration's goals while easing the pressure on providers and patients, including:

- Revisiting "Made in USA" labeling standards for products assembled domestically with imported components
- Regulatory parity with other Class I medical devices, should an exemption process be opened
- Broader incentives to support domestic manufacturing and supply chain development

"Our members are committed to strengthening U.S. manufacturing while ensuring that vision care remains affordable and accessible," Mills added. "We look forward to continuing the conversation and identifying practical solutions together."

The Vision Council will continue to advocate on behalf of its 500+ member companies and promote policies that support access to vision care and a strong domestic optical industry. To learn more and get involved, visit thevisioncouncil.org.

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About The Vision Council

The Vision Council brings the power of sight to all through education, government relations, research, and technical standards. A leading advocate for the optical industry, the association positions its members to deliver the eyewear and eyecare people need to look and feel their best. Vital to health, independence and safety, better vision leads to better lives.