

Kitchen countertop politics

By **SAM SUTTON** | 03/31/2026 08:00 AM EDT

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Longtime Trump donor and Cambria CEO **Marty Davis** has spent the better part of the last decade fighting to keep foreign quartz countertops out of U.S. markets, arguing that the domestic industry has been wounded by predatory trade practices.

President **Donald Trump** might soon get an opportunity to do something about it.

The U.S quartz industry is “a great example of [the] whole supply chain being constricted by this unfair trade,” the countertop magnate told MM. Davis said he made a similar case to **Scott Bessent** when the Treasury secretary visited Cambria's factory in Le Sueur, Minn., earlier this year.

“I shared with him what I just shared with you,” Davis said.

Those arguments are at the heart of a petition filed by the Quartz Manufacturing Alliance of America last year to the International Trade Commission, an independent commission that enforces federal trade laws. Davis and other quartz manufacturers contend that foreign companies avoided the anti-dumping penalties imposed during Trump's

first administration, which forced domestic facilities to close. The industry is seeking restrictive quotas and a 50 percent tariff on all imports of quartz surface products.

The ITC's decision is expected by Wednesday, and if it goes in the quartz industry's favor, it'll be up to the president to determine the scope and duration of the relief.

Davis — a longtime Trump ally who hosted a headline-grabbing \$100,000 per-person event for the president in 2020, and reportedly provided a loan to Trump's social media venture — sounded bullish on his industry's prospects.

Democratic lawmakers like Sen. **Amy Klobuchar** of Minnesota have also supported Cambria's efforts, Davis said. And while he expected to get tagged as a Trump ally, Davis told MM that he made no effort to curry favor with the administration and that "there's no influencing Trump" when it comes to trade policy.

Trump has his own "trade doctrine, he believes in it," he said. "He understands it very well. He doesn't get influenced. He's the influencer. And fortunately for American manufacturers, he's very smart about this."

And that's where the politics get interesting. The prospect of new levies has spooked a large coalition of home builders, fabricators and suppliers who are already contending with costly duties on other widely used construction materials. New caps and duties on imported quartz could drive up costs at a time when prices are already rising.

"We just can't pass along price increases," said **Ken Gear**, the CEO of the Leading Builders of America, which represents the largest homebuilders in the U.S. "Every mayor's office and state legislator in the country is talking about: 'How do we make housing more

affordable?’ This really goes in the opposite direction.”

Fabricators have warned that trade barriers would slow output, limit their ability to meet the demands of homebuyers and ultimately harm their ability to hire. Notably, both the QMAA and the industry coalition leading the opposition — Save Quartz Jobs — frame their arguments through a lens of protecting American workers.

If the ITC backs Davis’s camp — and kicks a relief recommendation up to the president — Gear said he’s hopeful that Trump will see that “we’re at a point with affordability that we just can’t bear any more costs.”

“The president’s a builder,” Gear said, when asked about Davis’s history as a Trump donor. “I think he’s got some good friends in the industry as well.”

