# U.S. Imposes Clean-Energy Tariffs On China

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Obama administration moved Wednesday to impose stiff new tariffs on wind-energy towers made in China, the latest strike in an escalating trade war over clean energy.

The Commerce Department said in a preliminary decision that Chinese companies have received government subsidies on steel wind towers ranging from about 14 percent to 26 percent. The decision could result in tariffs of those amounts being imposed on about a dozen Chinese companies that export large steel towers used in U.S. wind farms.

The decision follows a Commerce Department decision earlier this month to impose tariffs averaging about 31 percent on solar cells and panels imported from China.

China has called the U.S. action on solar equipment unfair and warned that U.S. tariffs could hurt efforts to promote clean energy. Four U.S. wind tower manufacturers complained in December that Chinese-subsidized rivals were harming their business. Members of the Wind Tower Trade Coalition — Illinois-based Broadwind Towers Inc., North Dakota-based DMI Industries, Nebraska-based Katana Summit LLC and Texas-based Trinity Structural Towers Inc. — called for tariffs of more than 60 percent to offset Chinese subsidies.

Alan H. Price, a lawyer for the U.S. manufacturers, called the Commerce ruling an important step to remedy harm caused by what he termed unfair Chinese subsidies.

The towers covered by the ruling are least 150 feet high and support turbines that generate at least 100 kilowatts of electricity each. The United States imported steel towers worth an estimated $222 million from China last year.

Commerce still needs to decide whether Chinese and Vietnamese manufacturers are "dumping" their wind towers to gain an edge in the fast-growing international market for wind turbines. A ruling on anti-dumping tariffs is expected in July. Commerce plans to make a final decision on tariffs in August and will collect cash deposits from Chinese companies immediately.

President Barack Obama has said that China has "questionable competitive practices" on clean energy and that his administration has fought dumping activities and will continue to do so. The administration will act to enforce trade laws where appropriate, Obama said.

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