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Subject: U.S. trade commission launches investigation into Suniva solar trade complaint

By Esther Whieldon

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The U.S. International Trade Commission has initiated an investigation into the request by U.S.-based solar cell manufacturer Suniva that the Trump administration create temporary trade tariffs to protect the manufacturing sector.

The move, announced today, clears the first first hurdle in the process.

In April, Suniva filed a petition with the USITC asking the agency to recommend Trump grant for temporary relief under Section 201 of the Trade Act of 1974 and to impose trade restrictions for four years on imported solar cells and modules. Suniva is going through a bankruptcy proceeding and agreed to file the Section 201 petition in exchange for an additional line of credit.

The company contends that an influx of cheaper solar panel modules and cells largely from China are putting it out of business.

WHAT'S NEXT: The commission said it will accept pre-hearing briefs on the case through Aug. 8. It hopes to determine the extent to which the cheaper solar panels are causing injury by Sept. 22 and to send recommendations to Trump by Nov. 13.

Doug Palmer contributed this report.

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