



STRINGS ATTACHED

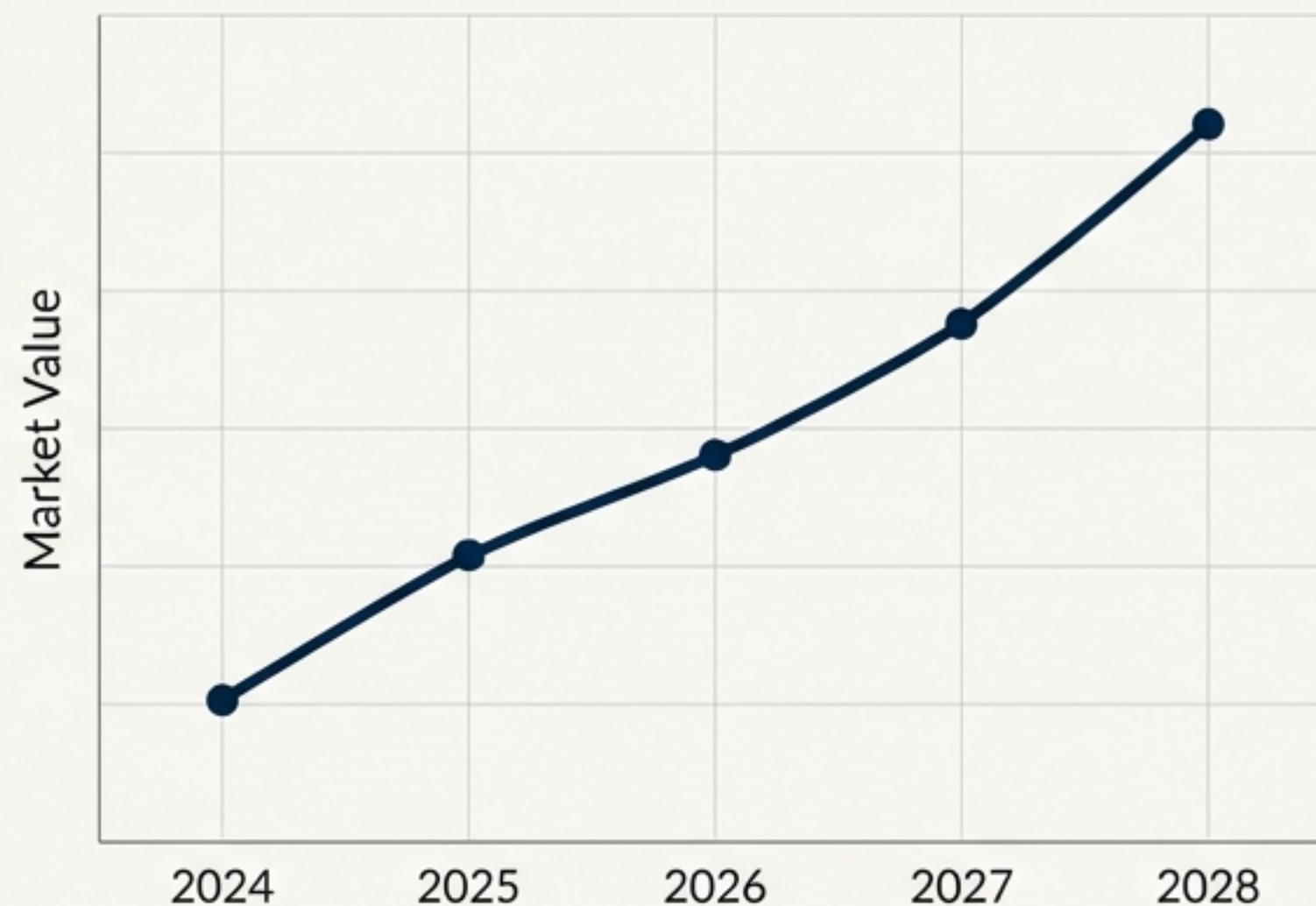
The Hidden Cost of Tariffs on the Next Generation of Music

The Guitar Market is a Global Growth Story

USD \$1.84 Billion

Projected market growth from 2024-2028, driven by the rising popularity of music culture and increasing numbers of beginner musicians worldwide.

Global Guitar Market Value (USD Billions)



Source: PR Newswire, Ken Research

A Policy Shift Disrupts the Harmony

Proposed new tariffs of up to 25% target musical instruments and critical components imported from China. This policy directly impacts a significant portion of the global supply chain for guitars, amplifiers, and repair parts.



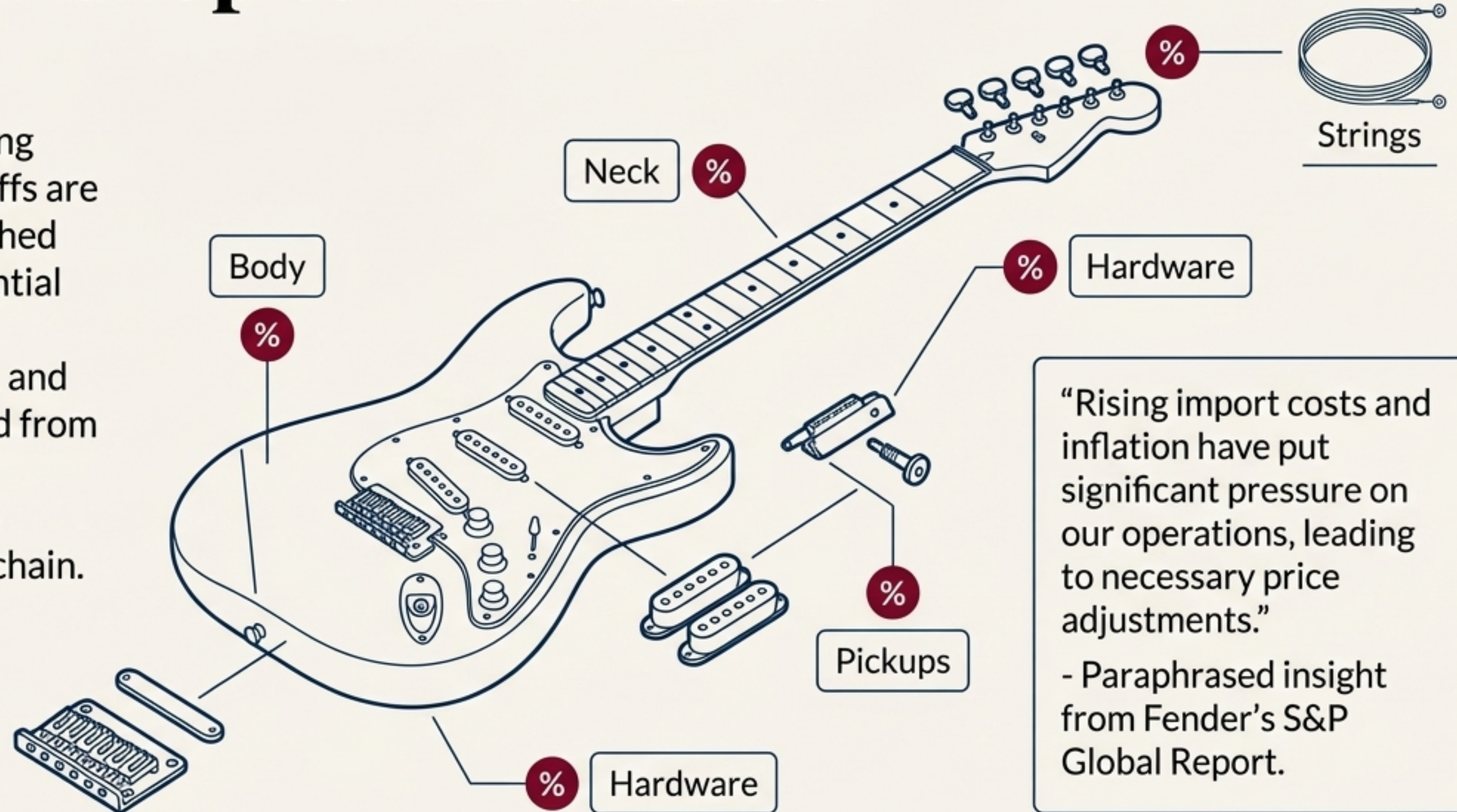
China



U.S.

The Supply Chain Squeeze: Costs Rise from Workshop to Warehouse

The entire manufacturing process is affected. Tariffs are applied not only to finished guitars but also to essential components like guitar strings, wooden bodies, and electronic parts sourced from China. This creates a cascading cost increase throughout the supply chain.



“Rising import costs and inflation have put significant pressure on our operations, leading to necessary price adjustments.”
- Paraphrased insight from Fender’s S&P Global Report.

The Beginner's Guitar Just Became a Luxury

Tariffs disproportionately affect entry-level and mid-range instruments, the very products most relied upon by new players. This price shock creates a significant new barrier for aspiring musicians.



The Most Vulnerable Player: Who Bears the Brunt?

While established musicians and collectors are less affected, the price increases fall hardest on beginners, students, and families—the foundation of the future music market.



Profile 1: The Collector

Buys premium, often US-made instruments.
Less sensitive to price fluctuations on imported goods.



Profile 2: The Student / Beginner

Relies on affordable, entry-level instruments, a category dominated by Chinese manufacturing. Highly price-sensitive. This is where market growth is choked off.

The Impossible Equation for K-12 Music Programs

Public school music programs operate on notoriously tight budgets. A 25% increase in instrument costs means they can serve fewer students, are forced to delay essential purchases, or must cut programs entirely.

What a \$5,000 Music Budget Buys



Voices from the Classroom and the Community



“These tariffs will force schools to choose between repairing old instruments and buying new ones. Either way, students lose.”

— National Association for Music Education (NAfME)



“This isn’t just about guitars. It’s about access to arts education. When costs go up, the number of students we can serve goes down. It’s that simple.”

— Wisconsin School Music Association (WSMA)

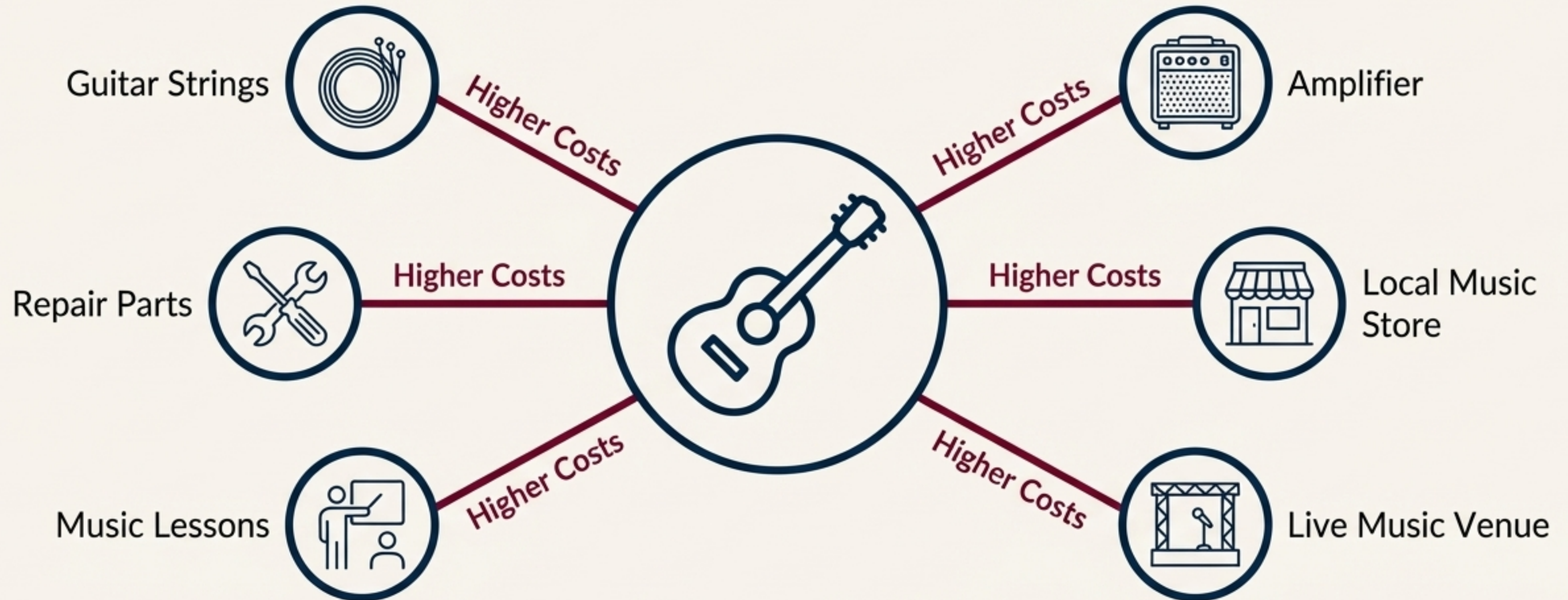


“The tariffs create a new financial barrier that could silence the next generation of American musicians before they even have a chance to play.”

— Peterson Institute for International Economics (PIIE)

An Entire Music Ecosystem at Risk

The impact extends far beyond the initial guitar purchase. Tariffs also apply to strings, amplifiers, repair parts, and accessories, raising costs for local music stores, repair shops, and music teachers who rely on this ecosystem to operate.



Fading Music, Fading Potential

The decline of **music education** is not just a cultural loss; it's a developmental one. Decades of **research** show a direct link between **music education** and **enhanced cognitive abilities, discipline, and collaborative skills** in students.



Cognitive Development & Math Skills



Creativity & Problem Solving



Collaboration & Teamwork

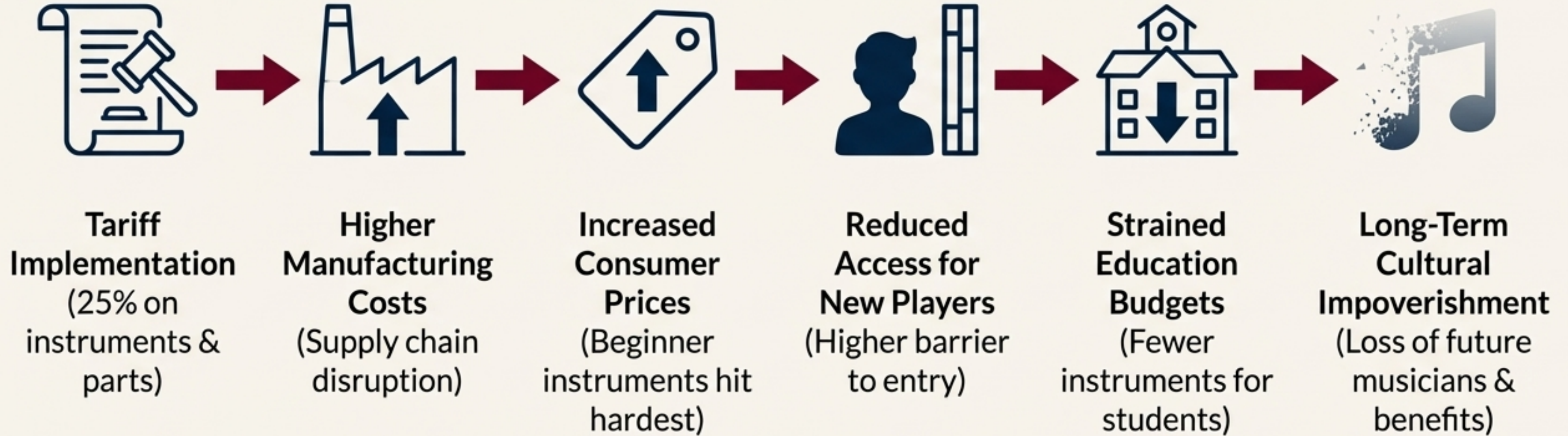


Discipline & Perseverance

A black and white photograph of a stage. A spotlight illuminates a music stand in the center of the stage. The stage floor is made of wood, and the background is a dark curtain. The text "What is the price of a song that is never written?" is overlaid in white serif font across the middle of the image.

What is the price of a song that is never written?

The Domino Effect: From Policy to Silence



Key Takeaways

- A healthy, growing global guitar market is being disrupted by proposed tariffs of up to 25% on Chinese-made instruments and parts.
- The primary burden of these price increases falls not on collectors, but on beginners, families, and K-12 school music programs—the foundation of future musical participation.
- The impact is systemic, threatening the entire music ecosystem—from manufacturing and retail to education and repair services.
- The true, long-term cost is not economic but cultural: a potential silencing of the next generation of musicians and a loss of the proven cognitive benefits of arts education.



The Future of Music is on the Balance Sheet.

Analysis based on reporting from PIIIE, Forbes, Guitar World, NAFME, and others.

Sources & Further Reading

Peterson Institute for
International Economics (PIIE)

National Association for Music
Education (NAfME)

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Guitar World / Guitar Player

PR Newswire

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