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Statement before the
U.S. Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs
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Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Senator Brown, Senators of the Committee,

It is a distinct privilege and truly humbling experience to come before this Committee to be considered for Under Secretary of Commerce for Export Administration. I am deeply honored to have been nominated by President Donald Trump and greatly appreciate the confidence that has been placed in me by the President and Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross.

When I served as legislative assistant to Republican Leader Bob Dole, I did not imagine that the future might hold this opportunity – that one day I would not be preparing questions, but answering them. Perhaps my late father might have thought it possible, not only because of bias towards his daughter, but because he was always optimistic about what was possible in this great Nation – a view that carried him from communist-controlled Croatia via Germany to the United States, with little more than optimism in his pockets.

I wish to thank Senator Bob Dole for teaching me so much about leadership, integrity and fairness. I learned hands-on that building bipartisan coalitions is essential to progress and reaching agreements. This lesson informed how I approached issues as a member of his staff, and later how I approached working within the U.S. government interagency while I served in the Department of Defense. The ability to understand and balance the equities of U.S. agencies and drive toward solutions that strengthen U.S. national security is vital.

The role of the Under Secretary of Commerce for Export Administration is consequential and one in which I will be able to leverage my experience and skills if confirmed. The Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) advances U.S. national security and economic objectives by ably managing and ensuring effective export control systems, supporting treaty compliance, and enforcing sanctions. The Bureau's responsibilities are executed in close cooperation with a wide range of departments and agencies, including the Departments of Treasury, Justice, State, Defense and Homeland Security.

The recent announcement by Secretary Ross of record criminal and civil penalties against ZTE Corporation is the culmination of six years of investigation and highlights the crucial function of the Bureau's Office of Export Enforcement. Last year, the Bureau's Export Administration office processed more than 33,000 license applications related to dual use items and items that had been on the U.S. Munitions List. The United States retains jurisdiction over re-exports of U.S. origin goods abroad; this is an indispensable tool to address the potential diversion of items to our adversaries who might use these them against U.S. military forces abroad or in the development of weapons of mass destruction.

Important also is that the licenses processed by the Bureau of Industry and Security enable exports of U.S. goods and these exports mean jobs for American workers. As a former employee of an aerospace company, I can appreciate the impact of exports on jobs. At the same time, the health of the U.S. defense industrial base is imperative and in that regard under Secretary Ross' initiative, the Bureau of Industry and Security has launched two investigations on steel and aluminum imports under Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act. In addition, the Bureau regularly conducts studies on other areas of the U.S. industrial base.

Secretary Ross recently said, “Under President Trump’s leadership, we will be aggressively enforcing strong trade policies with the dual purpose of protecting national security and protecting American workers.” If confirmed, I will act vigorously to enforce U.S. export controls, embargoes and sanctions, as well as continuously promote and advance policies that support U.S. industries and technologies and the American workers who are the foundation of our industrial base.

Mr. Chairman, Senator Brown and Senators of the Committee, thank you for your consideration of my nomination. I would be pleased to answer any questions the Committee may have.