

Crapo Statement at USTR Nomination Hearing

February 6, 2025

Washington, D.C.--U.S. Senate Finance Committee Chairman Mike Crapo (R-Idaho) delivered the following remarks at a hearing to consider the nomination of Jamieson Greer to be United States Trade Representative (USTR), with the rank of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary.

As prepared for delivery:

“Mr. Greer, welcome and congratulations on your nomination.

“By traditional timelines, this is one of the earliest dates the Finance Committee has held a nomination hearing for the United States Trade Representative, or USTR.

“Your cooperation and timely responses to questions from both sides of the aisle expedited this Committee’s very demanding process.

“Mr. Greer has been nominated by the President for an incredibly important job: America’s chief trade negotiator. By statute—and frankly, in accordance with our Constitution—our negotiator must report to Congress, which means he reports to the Finance Committee.

“This week, attention fell on President Trump’s executive orders to help secure our borders from illegal immigration and fentanyl smuggling. I strongly support securing our borders and fighting fentanyl trafficking.

“The executive orders rely on the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, or IEEPA, and concern drug policy and border security. The President, not USTR, invokes IEEPA, and the Department of Homeland Security, not USTR, is responsible for securing our borders. Nonetheless, I am securing briefings on these orders and, in fact, Customs and Border Protection will brief Committee staff on this matter today.

“What the President has done that is different, though, is bringing tariffs into the discussions about border security. USTR is, as I said, America’s chief trade negotiator.

“Any time the U.S. government is considering tariffs or something that implicates trade policy, he should be part of those conversations, and report to us about those conversations and solicit our input.

“Right now, Mr. Greer is not in government and not privy to various discussions.

“Confirming him will allow him to be part of the conversation and work with this Committee, ensuring Congress fulfills its constitutional responsibilities over international trade.

“When we look at whether Jamison Greer will be a good negotiator for America’s trade interests and a partner to this committee, his experience and skillset indicate the answer is yes.

“He understands USTR’s policymaking since he served as its Chief of Staff. At USTR, he distinguished himself as an effective negotiator in his work on the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, or USMCA, which overwhelmingly passed Congress. As many of my Democrat colleagues know firsthand, he worked closely with them on their priorities for USMCA.

“As an accomplished international trade attorney, he is an expert on our trade agreements and trade laws, including the requirements to report to Congress promptly and thoroughly.

“We need an effective USTR now more than ever. The last USTR did not negotiate any agreements and we lost ground to foreign competitors. The Biden Administration walked away even from its own limited initiatives, such as the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework. Rather than forge new rules to combat China’s trade practices, the prior administration turned its back on existing rules and positions, such as our intellectual property rights under the WTO TRIPS Agreement, and support for open data flows and non-discrimination against our technology companies.

“The Biden Administration also dawdled on enforcement of our existing trade agreements, including by failing to act against protectionist measures on our U.S. agriculture and energy producers.

“Finally, there was one other major USTR failure during the last Administration: failing to report and to consult with this Committee. Both sides of the aisle expressed serious concern about the last USTR’s repeated failures to consult with the Committee—and her position that she did not need to improve consultation with the Committee or the agency’s transparency with the public.

“We should not hold Mr. Greer responsible for those failings. Mr. Greer has been crystal clear that he will consult with this Committee and respect Congress’s constitutional prerogatives over trade. I expect that some members may disagree from time to time with the Administration, but, if so, Mr. Greer has committed to make its case before us, rather than ignore us. If confirmed, I will hold him to that commitment.

“Mr. Greer, thank you for your willingness to serve, and I look forward to hearing more from you about your perspectives on international trade policy and how you plan to work with this Committee to achieve our shared priorities.

“With that, I recognize Ranking Member Wyden for his opening remarks.”