

## **OPENING STATEMENT OF DOUG MCKALIP BEFORE THE SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Chair Wyden, Ranking Member Crapo, and members of the committee. My name is Doug McKalip. I am honored to appear before you as the President's nominee for Chief Agricultural Negotiator for the Office of the United States Trade Representative. I am joined here today by my wife, Debbie, our two children ages 17 and 19, and my mom, Gloria, who shares the same rural roots in Northwestern Pennsylvania as I do.

In a federal career spanning nearly three decades, I have served in a wide range of capacities at the United States Department of Agriculture, which have built upon my rural roots, and positioned me to ensure that farmers and farm workers throughout the supply chain are successful and advance rural economies. Most recently, I have served as Senior Advisor for Trade and National Security to the Secretary of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack. In this role, I have stood toe-to-toe and worked hand-in-hand with trading partners to ensure international market access for our products.

If confirmed to this position, I will build on this progress as Ambassador Tai and USTR aim to bring more U.S. goods to customers and markets around the world.

I would like highlight two initiatives that I worked on that underscore our commitment to our producers, farmers, and ranchers.

Recently, at USDA, I helped spearhead negotiations that led to greater market access in Mexico for U.S.-grown potatoes. This meant aligning our trade and regulatory experts to reach a successful outcome on a trade issue that was more than ten years in the making. I am proud of the results and believe that we need to double down in our resolve to get similar tangible outcomes for our producers on a wide range of commodities.

This win was the result of close collaboration between USDA and USTR. It is vital for our agriculture industry and our producers that we maintain this partnership – and based on my history at USDA, I look forward to doing exactly that.

I have also been directly involved in negotiations with my Canadian counterparts on dairy policy. This experience has provided me a direct appreciation for the difficult steps and tenacity that we must exhibit to ensure that the promises of past trade agreements are realized. I know that many Americans have grown weary of trade and question whether the promises in various agreements will benefit their bottom line.

That is why Ambassador Tai has emphasized the importance of our trading partners following through on their commitments in bilateral and multilateral engagement. Earlier this month, we celebrated the second anniversary of the United States – Mexico – Canada Agreement's entry into force. If confirmed, I can assure members of this committee that utilizing full enforcement authority under USMCA and our other trade commitments and initiatives around the globe will be a top priority for me.

I also look forward to ensuring farmers and ranchers are front-and-center as USTR looks to strengthen our trade relationships, execute new initiatives, and address challenges like China. USTR initiatives such as the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity present an excellent opportunity to knock down regulatory barriers and help our producers expand exports. And, as we all know, China has failed to live up to its commitments under the “Phase One Agreement.” As Ambassador Tai works to realign the U.S. – China trade relationship and partners with allies to confront China’s unfair trade policies, I will use my position as Chief Agricultural Negotiator to ensure American farmers and ranchers get a fair deal.

Additionally, farmers and ranchers in the U.S. need an advocate to help ensure they have affordable access to input materials they need to operate. These are times of tremendous opportunity in international trade. But if the bills that farmers have to pay for their inputs negate those gains, we will have missed that opportunity.

Finally, these are important times around the globe and never before has food security and national security been as directly linked as they are today. It is vital that the Chief Agricultural Negotiator be on the job and be equipped to deal with all the facets of the challenges and opportunities ahead. I am uniquely qualified for the task ahead.

Congress is the executive branch’s constitutional partner on trade. If confirmed, I look forward to close collaboration with this committee and Congress, since our strength in international trade depends upon our unity and strength here at home. I value the opinions and expertise of this Committee and benefitting from our dialogue going forward.

I look forward to responding to questions that Members of the Committee might have. Thank you.