

Statement of Michael C. Camuñez

*Nominee for Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Market Access and
Compliance*

U.S. Department of Commerce

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Thank you, Chairman Baucus, Ranking Member Grassley and members of the Committee. It is a distinct privilege to be here with you today as President Obama's nominee to be the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Market Access and Compliance. I am deeply grateful for the privilege I have had to serve the President these last 20 months at the White House, and I am honored and humbled by the confidence he has again placed in me. I would also like to thank both Secretary Gary Locke and Under Secretary Francisco Sanchez for their leadership and support of my nomination.

I have never felt more excited about the opportunity to serve my country than I do today. My passion for public service was instilled in me by my late mother, Mary Agnes, who as a single parent raised me to believe in myself, have a heart for others, and a desire to serve my community and my country. I want to thank her publicly for her love and her extraordinary example. I also want to thank other members of my family, including above all my partner of eleven years, Steven Means, who is here, for his tireless support and encouragement, acknowledging the tremendous blessing he has been in my life. I have many others to recognize for their love and support, including my family back home in California, and my many friends and colleagues who are here with me today, who are too many to name, but to whom I am immensely grateful for their support.

If I am confirmed, I will have the great privilege of leading the talented men and women who comprise the Market Access and Compliance division of the Department of Commerce. "MAC," as it is known, plays a mission critical role in supporting the Department's work in at least two respects: first, it is the chief advocate for U.S. companies that encounter barriers to trade that keep them from competing fully and fairly in international markets. Second, MAC also plays a critical role in ensuring that our trading partners meet their obligations and commitments under an array of bilateral and multilateral trade agreements and protocols that govern the flow of commerce internationally. As the President has said, realizing the benefits of free trade "means enforcing those agreements so our trading partners play by the rules."

If confirmed, I will be guided by three basic priorities in my leadership of MAC:

First, I will ensure that MAC's work is prioritized and focused to strategically support the goals of the President's National Export Initiative. In his State of the Union Address this past January, President Obama described the significant challenges the country faces with an economy rocked by severe recession and unemployment approaching historic highs. The President made clear that strengthening the economy and putting Americans back to work is a top priority for the Administration. Among the many job creation strategies the President identified was the announcement of the National Export Initiative and the goal of doubling exports over the next five years. An aggressive export promotion strategy will not only drive job creation, but it can help ensure that U.S. industry remains globally competitive.

If confirmed, I will work to ensure that MAC's efforts are strategically focused, in coordination with other U.S. government agencies, to identify, address and resolve those non-tariff barriers in existing and emerging markets that will yield the most tangible

results in terms of a net increase in U.S. exports and, by extension, U.S. jobs. With the NEI, MAC will also heighten its trade compliance and enforcement efforts through an expansion of compliance and enforcement officers in critical markets.

Second, if confirmed I will ensure that MAC will help lead the effort to expand U.S. market share in targeted, priority jurisdictions like China, Brazil and India and, equally important, in other key emerging markets. Specifically, MAC will co-chair the "Next Tier Countries Working Group" that will lead and develop new commercial engagement strategies for six priority emerging markets that have the greatest promise for increased U.S. exports, especially in high growth sectors.

Third, if confirmed I will work to deepen and expand MAC's efforts to facilitate dialogue and collaboration with the private sector to ensure that MAC is a critical ally in advancing U.S. commercial interests abroad. The expansion of these dialogues, such as the Americas Competitiveness Forum in the Western Hemisphere, gives U.S. and foreign industry a critical voice in identifying common challenges that hinder competition and trade to the detriment of all nations. If confirmed, I will also ensure that MAC works hard to address the unique needs of small- and medium-sized enterprises, since small business is a major driver of economic growth and is, to date, severely underrepresented among U.S. exporters.

Because the economic and strategic challenges the country faces are great, MAC's agenda must be multidimensional and interdisciplinary, working closely in an integrated fashion within Commerce and across numerous federal agencies with shared responsibilities. I feel especially motivated to tackle this important challenge, in part because I have spent a good part of my professional career working with and representing U.S. companies on similar issues. As a partner in a leading international law firm with offices and clients in countries around the world, I have counseled companies on an array of issues, including especially the challenges and risks of doing business abroad in foreign markets. In addition, as a Special Assistant to the President and, later, as Special Counsel to the President, I have had the great privilege of working with many of the leaders who, if I am confirmed, will be my partners in addressing these myriad issues on behalf of the United States' commercial interests. I believe these relationships will greatly facilitate the kind of interagency collaboration that the President and Secretary Locke have called for in the National Export Initiative.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank you and this Committee for the opportunity to be here today, and for the great privilege of being considered by this body for this important position of trust and responsibility. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with you and your staff to restore the American economy and rebuild American jobs by aggressively promoting a balanced and reinvigorated trade agenda.

Thank you.

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