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**Wyden Statement at Finance Committee Hearing on WTO Reform**  
*As Prepared for Delivery*

The Finance Committee meets today to discuss how to fix the WTO to get a better deal for American workers and businesses.

In my view, this whole debate comes down to a choice between two different approaches. On one hand, you've got the Donald Trump approach: Pull back from the WTO, forfeiting our economic power and stature to the Chinese government, and covering up that weakness with a whole lot of empty "America-First" rhetoric on the airwaves here at home. It's the same losing playbook the Trump administration ran on the Trans-Pacific Partnership, the Paris Climate Agreement and the World Health Organization. It obviously won't do much of anything to protect American workers against trade cheats if Trump hands the Chinese government the levers of power. In fact, it'd be a big win for the trade cheats.

Fortunately, there's bipartisan interest in a smarter approach to WTO reform based on addressing the areas where the Chinese government routinely games the system at our expense.

The rules that underpin the WTO were crafted more than two decades ago, when China was an economic middleweight. At that time, many hoped and predicted that joining the WTO would drive China further away from abusive, one-party control of government, economics and society. That obviously did not happen.

Today, China is an economic heavyweight. Much of its growth has come at our expense. That's because the Chinese government has broken rules and violated the commitments it made two decades ago. It's also because 20th century WTO rules have totally failed to keep up with 21st century technology.

As a result, there's a long list of trade ripoffs that have wiped out millions of American jobs. Subsidized state-owned enterprises. Intellectual property theft. Forced tech transfers. The Great Internet Firewall. Government-led shakedowns of foreign investors. China uses those schemes and entities to strong-arm American businesses, steal American innovations and rip off American workers.

Under President Xi, the government tightened its grip on power. The Chinese government identifies weaknesses in the WTO system, and other multilateral fora, and it seizes on them to further its own self-interests.

Fixing the WTO is also going to require addressing its Appellate Body, which hampers the application of U.S. trade enforcement laws to the detriment of American workers. There is a broad bipartisan view that WTO Dispute Settlement must be fixed to clamp down on judicial overreach.

I'll close with a few other important parts of this debate. First, a long-running battle against unfair fishing subsidies has the potential to bear fruit. Senator Crapo and I held a subcommittee hearing on the issue all the way back in 2010. Senator Portman was involved in getting these talks off the ground all the way back when he served as USTR.

The bottom line is that an agreement that curbs fishing subsidies will protect jobs, fisheries, and promote sustainable oceans. Accomplishing these priorities is vital. Our oceans are key to stabilizing the climate and feeding people all around the world. And our oceans provide trillions of dollars in economic activity, if nations around the world can protect them.

Second, WTO discussions around digital trade disciplines are at an earlier stage, but they're also vital to economic development and empowerment here and abroad. The U.S. needs to work with our allies to set the rules of the road and set the standard for the free flow of information and ideas.

On both of those issues, there's no chance at all that the U.S. can get a better outcome by handing our power to the Chinese government and pulling back from the WTO. That's why Democrats and Republicans need to continue working together on these issues. I believe this committee is in a position to lead on that debate. And I look forward to our discussion today.

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