

Testimony of Halie L. Craig
Nominee to be a Member of the U.S. International Trade Commission
Nomination Hearing before the Senate Committee on Finance
December 18, 2024

Chairman Wyden, Ranking Member Crapo, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am grateful to Leader McConnell for supporting my nomination and to the President for nominating me to be a member of the U.S. International Trade Commission (ITC).

With me in the hearing room is my younger sister Erin, my soon-to-be brother-in-law Chris, and colleagues of all political stripes with whom I have had the honor of working with throughout my nearly seven years of public service in the Senate. Watching remotely from Pennsylvania are my parents, my maternal grandparents, and my former boss, Senator Toomey.

My upbringing deeply shaped my interest in public service. I have witnessed firsthand how the American economy can serve as a rising tide for all families regardless of socioeconomic status. I have also witnessed what it is like for those who are left behind.

My family's story, like so many, is a testament to the greatness of the American experiment and the tremendous hope and opportunity that this country affords.

Having been persecuted by the Nazis because she was Polish, my great-grandmother, Sophie, was transferred between prisoner of war camps, including a forced labor camp, during World War II. She sailed to Ellis Island following the war with her baby son in tow. Her extraordinary resilience and strength in the face of adversity will always inspire me.

Her son, my grandfather, Henry, who is watching today, went on to enlist in Vietnam at age eighteen as a non-commissioned officer. His service to country has also inspired me, including my decision to pursue public service.

I was born and raised in Pipersville, Pennsylvania, where my parents still live today.

My father worked as a traveling furniture salesman in his late teens before beginning a career as a painting contractor—a job he still does with pride today at age seventy-two. My mother has dedicated most of her adult life to supporting our family from home.

Like many Americans, my parents were working class; they didn't have the privilege of having a four-year degree, but they worked hard and made significant sacrifices to give me and my sister access to opportunities that they never had for themselves.

When the Great Recession hit in 2008, my father was out of work for over two years. Despite the severe financial hardship, my parents continued to prioritize education, and I did what I could to earn money, including bussing tables at the local diner. I was fortunate to earn a nearly full scholarship to a high school where I participated in an internship program on Capitol Hill. That

formative experience as an intern in the office of the late Senator Tim Johnson set me on a path to public service in the Senate.

I believe my roles as a senior policy advisor for Senator Cruz and Senator Toomey working on trade, technology, and other issues, has prepared me well to support the ITC in its important work analyzing facts, deliberating, and advancing trade matters in a nonpartisan fashion. As part of my roles, I have worked with countless constituents across Pennsylvania, Texas, and our nation who are affected by trade policy decisions made in Washington. I have also developed expertise across many aspects of trade law and policy. Throughout my Senate service, it has been my privilege to work with staff on both sides of the aisle, including Chairman Wyden's and Ranking Member Crapo's trade staff, in a bipartisan manner.

Crucial to the mission of the ITC is the nonpartisan, objective application of U.S. trade remedy, unfair import, and safeguard laws. The Commission also plays an important role in advising Congress, including this Committee, and the Executive Branch on trade matters. I have deep respect and admiration for the Commission's longstanding reputation as an independent, neutral, and fact-based body. If I am given the opportunity to sit on the Commission, I will uphold these values and obligations.

Through my work on the Hill, I've never lost touch with how trade policy affects workers and businesses across the United States. I know firsthand what being out of work does to a family and its future. If I'm fortunate enough to be confirmed, I will bring with me to the job every day my personal experience that first ignited my desire to serve my county.

I am extremely grateful to be here before the Committee today. I look forward to the Committee's questions.