

Statement of Miriam E. Sapiro
Nominee for Deputy United States Trade Representative
Before the Senate Finance Committee
June 5, 2009

Chairman Baucus, Ranking Member Grassley and Members of this distinguished Committee, it is a pleasure to appear before you today.

I am honored that President Obama has nominated me for this important position. We are facing unprecedented economic and political challenges, but with your continuing support we can develop a robust trade agenda that opens up additional markets and that translates into better jobs and better lives for America's working families.

I want to publicly thank my husband, Stephen, and our children, Max and Ellie, for their extraordinary support, without which I would not be here today. I am also grateful to my mother, Gloria, and my late father, Burton, for their guidance and inspiration.

Throughout my career in government and the private sector I have seen first-hand how economic growth, fueled by trade, can raise the standard of living for Americans and people around the world. My interest in trade issues stems from my earliest days at the State Department during the Reagan Administration, when I worked on export controls. My years in the Legal Adviser's Office and as a member of the Secretary of State's Policy Planning Staff have given me a deep understanding of the international arena and the dynamics of complex negotiations. These experiences have sharpened my ability to

resolve difficult issues between countries – a skill I relied upon when I helped to negotiate the Dayton Peace Accords that ended the war in Bosnia. These skills will now be useful as we strive to open new markets that can grow our economy and benefit our workers.

Under President Clinton, I moved from the State Department to the National Security Council, where I worked on security and economic policies. Later, as Special Assistant to the President for Southeast European Stabilization and Reconstruction, I supervised U.S. efforts to transform that area into a peaceful, democratic region. As chairman of the interagency committee that formulated and advanced U.S. goals, I worked with USTR and other agencies, other governments and international financial institutions to lay a sound foundation for economic development by increasing investment and trade.

My work on Internet policy and telecommunications issues in the private sector has given me direct experience with American companies fostering innovation and competition around the globe. I know the challenges they face, including non-tariff barriers in the technology sector and the continuing theft of billions of dollars of intellectual property each year.

As a small business owner, I have a special affinity for the many small and medium enterprises that form the backbone of our export industry. These businesses and their workers drive our economy and deserve a seat at the trade table.

Trade has been fundamental to U.S. economic success. Last year trade in goods and services was 30% of GDP and exports were 13% of the U.S. economy. Nearly half of the growth in our GDP over the last three years was from exports. We know trade can play a key role in America's economic recovery.

To achieve this we need to look for new opportunities to boost our exports while ensuring that the benefits of trade are enjoyed more broadly across America. We must also enforce our agreements with other countries more strictly. It cannot be that the United States is the only party that implements the agreements it signs. Our trading partners too must play by the rules and treat our products and our workers fairly.

We are fortunate that USTR has an outstanding leader in Ambassador Kirk and an exceptional career staff to help our manufacturers, farmers, ranchers, and service providers – large and small – succeed. By working with all stakeholders, we can establish a clearer domestic consensus on the importance of trade that can lead to progress on a range of issues. And, with strong bipartisan support for trade that can benefit all Americans, we can identify new mechanisms with the greatest promise to broaden market access and strengthen enforcement.

If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with the Members of this Committee to meet these challenges.

Thank you for your consideration.