

*Embargoed for Delivery*

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Nominee, Chief Agricultural Negotiator  
Oral Statement  
Office of the United States Trade Representative  
Senate Committee on Finance  
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Chairman Wyden, Ranking Member Hatch, Members of the Senate Finance Committee, thank you for welcoming me here today. I am honored to be considered by this Committee as President Obama's nominee to be Chief Agricultural Negotiator at the Office of the United States Trade Representative.

I would like to start by recognizing my husband, Jason Hafemeister, who is with me this morning. I am grateful for his sacrifice, support, and flexibility which have made it possible for us to juggle two careers and our two beautiful children.

As an alumna of the Senate Finance Committee, I have had the great privilege of working with many of the Committee Members and staff. During my time at the Office of the United States Trade Representative working on agriculture and environmental issues, and at USDA as Deputy Under Secretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services, it has always been clear that the Executive Branch and Congress must maintain a close working relationship on trade issues. This is a relationship I intend to strengthen in my new capacity, should I be confirmed.

I grew up on a family farm in Nebraska, where my family also operates a grain processing business that exposed me to the benefits of trade at a very early age. In the 1980s, at a time when many farmers were moving off the farm, my family found foreign markets to sustain our family business. Some of our first foreign customers were tofu makers in Japan, who were willing to pay a premium for our high quality soybeans. Today our family business has nearly 30 employees, thanks, in part, to open and reliable overseas markets.

Through my personal and professional experiences, I have witnessed the benefits of trade for American agricultural producers firsthand. I am committed to leveling the playing field for our farmers and ranchers, and holding our trading partners accountable by enforcing trade rules to ensure our products are treated fairly. Using all the tools at our discretion, including the dispute settlement body at the World Trade Organization, I intend to press our trading partners to make decisions based on science and eliminate unwarranted sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures that restrict safe, wholesome U.S. agricultural products from entering their markets.

The United States is the world's largest agricultural export economy. U.S. food and agricultural exports reached an all-time high in 2013, accounting for \$148 billion in exports. I believe there is much more we can accomplish.

If confirmed, I am excited to join a dedicated team that is working on one of the most ambitious trade agendas in decades. The trade agenda holds great potential for ‘Made-in-America’ agricultural products.

I am committed to advancing our ongoing negotiations – TPP and T-TIP – where we are pursuing high-standard trade agreements that will create significant new market access opportunities for U.S. agriculture. Eliminating tariffs and unwarranted SPS and TBT barriers on agricultural products will ensure our agricultural producers can continue to export high-quality, safe American food and agricultural products.

Finally, I also look forward to working with you Chairman Wyden, Ranking Member Hatch, and the Committee to secure Trade Promotion Authority that has as broad bipartisan support as possible.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with Ambassador Michael Froman and Congress to further opportunities around the world for U.S. agriculture. Again, I thank the President for this opportunity and the Committee for considering my nomination. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.