

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

*Full Committee
Nomination Hearing
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DEMOCRATIC QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD

Mr. Howard Lutnick

COVER PAGE

SENATOR MARIA CANTWELL (D-WA)

AI Export Controls. American national security and competitiveness depend on having AI export controls in place that protect our country and can be fully implemented by the private sector. The U.S. Department of Commerce must closely coordinate with the U.S. private sector and U.S. Allies.

Question 1: How will you ensure we get export controls on AI right and are focused on the most current threats?

Answer:

The America First Trade Policy Presidential Memorandum directs the Department to assess this and other matters and prepare a report to the President. As I have not been confirmed, I cannot speak to those efforts. These issues are a top priority for me.

Question 2: Are you reviewing the Biden administration's AI export control rule as part of the larger review of export control regimes and how will you take stakeholder inputs received during the current 120-day public comment period into account?

Answer:

The America First Trade Policy Presidential Memorandum directs the Department to assess this issue and other matters and prepare a report to the President. Upon confirmation, I will take appropriate action in due course.

Question 3: What do you anticipate will happen with this AI export control rule?

Answer:

As I have not been confirmed, I am not in a position to predict the outcome of this rule.

Question 4: Mr. Lutnick, former Secretary Raimondo said last year that the Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS), the agency responsible for implementing and enforcing export controls, has the same budget that it did a decade ago, despite having twice as many licensing requests. Do you believe that BIS needs more resources to improve fair and transparent export control enforcement?

Answer:

President Donald J. Trump consistently requested increased funding for BIS during his first four years in the Presidential Budget. Proper resourcing is critical to our export control and enforcement regime. I look forward to working with Congress to determine the appropriate level of funding to ensure BIS can execute its mission.

CHIPS Program Research & Development. In addition to the CHIPS Incentives Program, Congress created several programs funded by the \$11 billion CHIPS and Science appropriation provided to NIST to ensure U.S. leadership in semiconductor R&D, and to develop the

workforce required to domestically manufacture legacy, advanced, and next-generation semiconductors.

Question 5: Do you support continuing NIST programs focused on semiconductor R&D and workforce initiatives to maintain United States leadership in lab to market microelectronics innovation?

Answer:

Research and development are critical to any technological leadership. I look forward to working with and reviewing the semiconductor R&D teams and programs at NIST to ensure that they can most effectively support continued innovation and advancement in microelectronics.

Economic Development Administration (EDA)/Tech Hubs. The Economic Development Administration (EDA) is charged with investing in local communities to encourage and enable growth and innovation in the private sector, with particular focus on distressed or underserved areas. One of the investments currently managed by EDA is the Tech Hubs program, established by the CHIPS and Science Act, which represents a historic opportunity to strengthen American technological leadership and create thousands of high-paying jobs across the country. Project 2025 proposes to abolish the EDA and reallocate its funding to other overlapping federal grant programs.

Question 6: Do you agree with this recommendation? If so, how will you and the Administration meet the Congressional intent of the Chips and Science Act to administer a Tech Hubs program that is vital to economic and national security and has already awarded grants to 18 of 31 designated regional tech hubs?

Answer:

In meeting with Members of the Committee, I have learned the important role that Tech Hubs play in boosting American technology leadership. Upon confirmation, I will review the Tech Hubs program to ensure that it operates in the most efficient and effective manner possible.

Project 2025 Recommendation Regarding NIST Manufacturing Extension Partnership Program. CHIPS and Science increased funding for our successful Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) program, which works with small manufacturing companies to assist small- and medium-sized manufacturers by supporting workforce training and supply chain resiliency. Washington's own MEP Center, IMPACT Washington, has helped over 1,500 small businesses create and retain over 15,000 jobs, and has saved these businesses over \$286 million since its establishment in 1997. In Project 2025, the authors propose zeroing out this program and privatizing existing centers.

Question 7: Do you believe in privatizing the Manufacturing Extension Partnership program and eliminating federal funding?

Answer:

I appreciate the valuable work the MEP program has done to advance American manufacturing. As with any program, I will review the MEP closely to ensure that it is operating efficiently and effectively.

NIST/AI and Quantum. The Commerce Department plays a prominent role in advancing critical and emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, quantum, advanced manufacturing, and biotechnology through investing in fundamental research and development (“R&D”) at agencies like NIST, NTIA, and NOAA, as well as developing global technology standards through the U.S. AI Safety Institute at NIST. Last year, I introduced the Future of AI Innovation Act with Senator Young and some of my other colleagues that would ensure that the U.S. leads on AI reliability and transparency, as well as mitigating potential national security risks from AI, by authorizing this AI Safety Institute. I also introduced the National Quantum Initiative Reauthorization, where NIST plays a leading role in advancing the U.S. in the global race for quantum technology.

Question 8: Will you prioritize the development of quantum technology at the Department of Commerce? Will you support my National Quantum Initiative Reauthorization Act?

Answer:

U.S. leadership on quantum technology is vital to our national and economic security. Upon confirmation, I will review your National Quantum Initiative Reauthorization Act, and I commit to working with you and your staff on this important goal.

Question 9: Will you support continued focus by NIST on promotion of AI standards and developing testing for AI reliability and safety? Will you work with me, Senator Young, and Chair Cruz as we consider legislation to authorize the work that needs to continue to be done in this area?

Answer:

I believe that NIST should ensure American leadership on AI standards. I commit to working with you, Senator Young, and Chairman Cruz as you consider legislation.

Office of Space Commerce. The Office of Space Commerce is currently within NOAA’s National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service (NESDIS). Project 2025 suggests returning OSC to the Office of the Secretary, where it began decades ago, and directing the Office, working with the National Space Council, to establish a whole-of-government policy for licensing and oversight of commercial space operations. At the end of last year, the Senate passed legislation that would elevate the Office to an independent bureau within the department, and consistent with policy established in the first Trump Administration, granted the office legal

responsibility for providing basic space situational awareness (SSA) data and services to civil and private space operators.

Question 10: Do you support elevating the Office of Space Commerce within DOC?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I look forward to reviewing OSC's mission and position within the Department and receiving your input.

Question 11: Do you believe this would strengthen the global competitiveness of the U.S. space industry?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I will make the global competitiveness of the U.S. space industry a distinct priority.

Question 12: If elevated, how would you allocate resources and set priorities to enable the Office of Space Commerce to effectively oversee and promote commercial space activities and provide basic space situational awareness (SSA) capability?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I look forward to reviewing OSC's mission and position within the Department and receiving your input.

Workforce Development: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives have been integral to fostering inclusive workplaces within federal agencies. However, recent executive actions have mandated the termination of DEI programs within federal agencies, placing associated staff on paid leave and reversing efforts aimed at diversifying the federal workforce.

Question 13: Considering these developments, how do you plan to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion within the Department of Commerce and create a more inclusive workplace?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, one of my priorities will be to ensure that the Department's workforce is the envy of the world. In advancing that mission, I will follow President Donald J. Trump's executive orders to the fullest extent of the law.

Importance of MBDA. Mr. Lutnick, you sign the annual reports (10-Ks) for Newmark Group, where you serve as Executive Chairman and where according to the 2023 10-K, you spent 33% of your time. The 2023 10-K describes Newmark Group's commitment to diversity and inclusion, noting that Newmark is committed to policies that "seek to further our development of

a diverse and inclusive workplace”. The 10-K further notes that Newmark Group is an investor in a minority-owned business enterprise, E Smith Advisors.

Question 14: Mr. Lutnick, as Secretary of Commerce, will you commit to supporting and sustaining the Minority Business Development Agency to support minority-owned businesses, particularly those who have faced obstacles accessing credit?

Answer:

While I have testified about my priorities if confirmed, it is premature to discuss any specific recommendations before engaging with NOAA and the Office of Management and Budget. Additionally, at this time, it would be premature for me to comment on specific policy commitments before I have a chance to confer with the Department and the President. If I am confirmed, I look forward to working with you on these issues. Growing all American businesses—small, medium, and large—is among my top goals. Upon confirmation, I will review how the MBDA can meet its mission in the most efficient and effective manner possible.

Pebble Mine. The Pebble Mine has been a major concern of this office for many years because of its risk to the Bristol Bay fishery. The last three Administrations have denied it a permit or vetoed it. All major mining companies have abandoned it. From 2017 to 2020, Cantor was lead underwriter for the project until it withdrew and discontinued review coverage for the project.

Question 15: As Secretary of Commerce, would you recognize NOAA’s important role in upholding the current status under EPA’s 404(c) protection? Will you commit to recuse yourself if it once again comes up for review by NOAA?

Answer:

I will follow applicable government ethics laws and regulations based on guidance from the Ethics Office of the Department of Commerce.

Question 16: Will you recuse yourself from all matters relating to consultations and permitting of the Pebble Project, also known as the Pebble Mine? Additionally, will you recuse yourself from NOAA permitting of support projects related to the Pebble Projects, such as NOAA Fisheries consultations for roads, bridges, ports, and other infrastructure?

Answer:

I will follow applicable government ethics laws and regulations based on guidance from the Ethics Office of the Department of Commerce.

NTIA/Funding Commitments. The bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 appropriated over \$65 billion for broadband deployment and digital literacy programs overseen by NTIA and the Department of Commerce, including \$42 billion for the Broadband Equity Access and Deployment program, \$1.23 billion of which was allocated to Washington state to

connect households to broadband. Allocations of funding for the BEAD program, committed under the law, also include \$3.3 billion allocated to Texas, \$405 million allocated to Nebraska, \$1.2 billion allocated to West Virginia, and over \$1 billion allocated to Alaska. Other NTIA broadband programs have already finalized grants, connected thousands of households, and laid thousands of miles of fiber. Needless to say, the commitment that Congress made to reach the goal of connecting unserved and underserved households is well underway, with plans in all 56 states and territories approved by NTIA, in compliance with the law.

Question 17: Mr. Lutnick, will you commit to following the law and implementing all broadband funding as Congress intended?

Answer:

I will follow the law. Upon confirmation, I will review broadband programs closely to ensure that they are operating efficiently and effectively.

Question 18: Do you support efforts to bring broadband connectivity to households across the country?

Answer:

I support efforts to expand broadband connectivity efficiently and effectively.

Question 19: Will you commit to allowing the efforts to implement programs from the IIJA to continue as they are, and allowing states to proceed with implementation of these programs with the grant allocations as they currently stand?

Answer:

I will follow the law. Upon confirmation, I will review broadband programs closely to ensure that they are operating efficiently and effectively.

Question 20: Will you commit to consulting with and relying upon the expertise of the public servants at the Department of Commerce, as well as a diverse range of experts, stakeholders, and state and Tribal governments, rather than business interests that may, in reality or appearance, present conflicts of interest?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I will ensure the Department engages with domestic stakeholders who may be impacted by its programs.

Spectrum Management. The Department of Commerce, through NTIA, is tasked with representing the United States' spectrum interests internationally. We have seen China's growth in spectrum use not only threaten the U.S. economically, but China also raises national security concerns. U.S. representation at the International Telecommunications Union and World Radio

Conference are important fora to advance American interests in spectrum management and combat national security threats from China.

Question 21: Mr. Lutnick, do you support a modernized approach on federal spectrum policy that protects our communications networks against foreign adversaries?

Answer:

Yes.

Question 22: Will you commit to collaborating on a spectrum policy that engages stakeholders from the Department of Commerce, the Department of Defense, the Federal Communications Commission, and industry, to work towards resolution to restore U.S. leadership in innovation?

Answer:

I will ensure the Department engages with stakeholders, including government agencies and industry, who may be impacted by its programs.

Question 23: Will you commit to representing U.S. spectrum interests on the international stage to address concerns about China's spectrum use?

Answer:

Yes.

National Spectrum Strategy. In November 2023, the Biden Administration released the National Spectrum Strategy (NSS) that identifies over 2,700 megahertz of spectrum across five bands for study to determine the possibility of new, commercial uses. The NSS includes over 1,600 megahertz of midband spectrum, a range in high demand for next-generation wireless services. In the 118th Congress I led the effort to codify the NSS and a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the FCC and NTIA on spectrum coordination—the Spectrum and National Security Act. The final version of this legislation reflected a negotiated agreement between the Department of Commerce, Department of Defense, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff that preserved our national security, protected Federal incumbents, and advanced studies which would create a sustainable spectrum pipeline.

Question 24: Will you ensure that the feasibility studies currently underway are completed in a thorough and comprehensive manner?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I will seek to gain a better understanding of the status of the feasibility studies to determine what steps are necessary to complete them.

Question 25: Will you stand by the negotiated agreement between the Department of Commerce, Department of Defense, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I will review the negotiated agreement.

Question 26: What changes do you anticipate making to either the NSS or MOU between the FCC and NTIA?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I will ensure a strong focus on federal spectrum coordination. The Department will reach out to stakeholders—both within government and in the private-sector—to see how the NSS and MOU are working and what changes, if any, are needed.

Non-Partisan Spectrum Policy. Mr. Lutnick, you posted on X on October 27, 2024, stating that “The United States owns the spectrum, and it should only be auctioned for use by those who agree to be nonpartisan. Companies that do business with America shouldn’t be allowed to use that power for partisan politics.” This rhetoric appears to be consistent with the directives of Project 2025 and President Trump’s Executive Order (“Restoring Freedom of Speech and Ending Federal Censorship”) to identify and address federal policies aimed at “censorship.”

Question 27: Do you support the directives in Project 2025, and the directive in President Trump’s Executive Order (“Restoring Freedom of Speech and Ending Federal Censorship”) to identify and address federal policies aimed at “censorship”?

Answer:

I will follow President Donald J. Trump’s executive orders to the fullest extent of the law.

Question 28: What such policies at the Department of Commerce do you see as impacted by the directives that President Trump and Project 2025 have identified?

Answer:

I understand that several of President Donald J. Trump’s executive orders task agencies with determining which programs and policies are impacted by those orders. As I have not been confirmed as the Secretary of Commerce, I have not been involved with those efforts at the Department. As for Project 2025, I am not affiliated with that group. I cannot opine on any of the group’s plans or materials.

American Aerospace Manufacturing Competitiveness. The United States aerospace and defense sector has the largest positive trade balance among all U.S. manufacturing sectors, valued at over \$110 billion, and supports over 2.2 million good paying jobs. China’s aircraft manufacturer, COMAC, is a growing threat to United States’ market share of commercial aircraft in the global

aerospace sector. COMAC's narrowbody C919 aircraft competes with the 737 series aircraft, produced by Boeing, our leading domestic aircraft manufacturer. Boeing has experienced significant challenges in recent years including concerning aircraft production safety and quality issues that must be corrected before production of the 737 MAX can be allowed to increase beyond the cap of 38 per month instituted by former FAA Administrator Mike Whitaker. This will take time and so will Boeing's overall recovery efforts as a company to improve many of their product lines.

Boeing has estimated that Chinese airlines will need 8,830 new total commercial planes by 2043. However, if the current Administration were to issue broad retaliatory tariffs against China without considering the impact that they could have against Boeing's ability to sell aircraft in the Asian-Pacific market, Boeing and the greater domestic aerospace supply chain would be at risk of losing its competitive standing in the global aerospace sector. Such tariffs could have harmful impacts on U.S.-based aerospace supply chain companies and jobs.

Question 29: Do you commit to ensuring that the U.S. aerospace manufacturing sector and supply chain are not subject to new costs and burdens associated with tariffs, restrictions, or economic sanctions? If confirmed, what actions will you take at the Department of Commerce to assure domestic aerospace manufacturers they will not be put into such harmful situations?

Answer:

We need all businesses – small, medium, and large – to be successful in order to benefit American workers and American manufacturing. Upon confirmation, I will work to ensure that the U.S. aerospace manufacturing sector and its workers are treated fairly and can rely on a responsive government to help them succeed. A level playing field on the global stage will be a distinct priority.

Question 30: What actions will you take to protect our domestic aerospace supply chain and its highly-skilled American workers from new disruptions – such as issues that would jeopardize U.S.-based jobs and increase costs for U.S.-based companies?

Answer:

I understand that the Department is currently studying U.S. supply chains and industrial base pursuant to the America First Trade Policy Presidential Memorandum. This and other studies that are currently under way will inform our decisions on potential actions.

Tariffs and Trade.

Question 31: Do you said you do not view tariffs as inflationary. Please explain what impact that new tariffs would have on American families, farmers, and small businesses?

Answer:

The use of tariffs will help recalibrate our trading relationships and ensure American families, farmers, and small businesses are treated fairly and not taken advantage of by foreign interests.

Question 32: You indicated that you support an across-the-board approach to tariffs as opposed to targeted tariffs. What legal authorities will the U.S. Department of Commerce use to impose such tariffs?

Answer:

The Department is prepared to use any and all authorities at its disposal to implement the President's trade agenda.

Question 33: What role do you expect to play in the Trump administration's trade policy? How will your role be different from the role of the U.S. Trade Representative and the Secretaries of State and Treasury?

Answer:

The statutory responsibilities and authorities of the office of USTR remain unchanged. The same is true for the statutory responsibilities and authorities of the Secretary of State and Secretary of the Treasury. Under President Donald J. Trump's leadership, the Department will play a coordinating role with its interagency partners to deliver results for American workers, families, and businesses.

Question 34: How does the Trump administration plan on dealing with retaliatory tariffs and what role will the U.S. Department of Commerce play?

Answer:

I expect that the Department of Commerce, in close coordination with the Department of the Treasury and USTR, will advance President Trump's trade and tariffs policy agenda. I will work closely with Treasury and USTR to help ensure that American workers and American manufacturers receive the benefit of the President's trade and tariffs policies.

Question 35: Will the U.S. Department of Commerce lead an exclusion process if tariffs are imposed under Section 232? How will Commerce ensure that any exclusion process is fair, consistent, and transparent?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I will coordinate closely with the Department of the Treasury and USTR to develop and implement trade and tariff policy. I will prioritize fairness, consistency, and transparency.

Question 36: President Obama tried to double U.S. exports. What goal do you have to grow U.S. exports and how will you achieve it?

Answer:

Under President Donald J. Trump, the United States will be the best place in the world to do business. Strong trade and investment policy generate economic growth, rebalance trade, and increase exports of goods and services.

Question 37: Trump has directed the Secretary of Commerce to review the Antidumping and Countervailing Duty laws, also known as AD/CVD law. These trade enforcement laws are critical to fighting non-market policies and practices. In your view, how does AD/CVD law fit into the president's economic agenda? If confirmed as Secretary of Commerce, what do you see as the priorities for your review and report?

Answer:

Strong trade enforcement is core to the Trump Administration's trade policy. I understand the Department has been conducting a review pursuant to President Trump's America First Trade Policy Presidential Memorandum. As I have not been confirmed, I cannot speak to those efforts.

Protecting American Interests. As Commerce Secretary, one of your main missions would be to make sure that American interests come first. As you know, the laws in the United Kingdom require that the Bank of England have exclusive resolution authority over UK clearinghouses and requires that the Bank of England prioritize UK citizens first when exercising that authority.

Question 38: While it is true that the London Clearing House is registered with the CFTC and that U.S. Treasuries do not leave the United States, the law in the UK is also clear with respect to the role of the Bank of England and how the BOE must exercise its authority over UK clearinghouses. If the London Clearinghouse were permitted to clear futures on U.S. Treasury securities, the Bank of England would have authority to tear up those contracts and take other actions that could have a negative impact on the U.S. Treasury markets. Where do you stand on giving exclusive default and resolution authority over the U.S. Treasury futures market to a foreign regulator?

Answer:

No foreign regulator has exclusive default and resolution authority over the U.S. Treasury futures market, and I am not aware of any proposal for granting a foreign regulator such authority.

Cantor Fitzgerald's Relationship with Tether. During your staff interview on January 24, 2024, you said Cantor Fitzgerald "owns zero" Tether and did not have an ownership interest in Tether. During this staff interview, you also said that a November 23, 2024, *Wall Street Journal* [article](#) reporting on an agreement under which Cantor Fitzgerald stood to receive a 5% ownership interest in Tether, valued at \$600 million, was "false." But during your nomination hearing, you admitted that Cantor Fitzgerald "owns a convertible bond with Tether."

Question 39: When did Cantor Fitzgerald enter this agreement to purchase a convertible bond with Tether?

Answer:

Cantor Fitzgerald made a convertible debt investment in the holding company that owns the Tether stablecoin business in April 2024.

Question 40: What amount did Cantor Fitzgerald pay for this convertible bond, and what is the most recent valuation?

Answer:

The total amount paid in connection with the instrument is not a matter of public record. As of its most recent valuation in Q3 2024, Cantor Fitzgerald books and records reflect its value at cost.

Question 41: Were you involved in negotiating the agreement for Cantor Fitzgerald to purchase this convertible bond? If yes, please describe your role.

Answer:

Yes. I participated in the negotiations.

Question 42: For what purpose(s) did Cantor Fitzgerald purchase this convertible bond?

Answer:

To generate an attractive return for Cantor Fitzgerald.

Question 43: Do you believe Cantor Fitzgerald's convertible bond with Tether does not constitute an ownership interest in Tether held by Cantor Fitzgerald? If yes, please explain the basis for this position. If no, please explain how your answers during your staff interview are consistent with your testimony at your nomination hearing.

Answer:

Cantor Fitzgerald's debt investment in Tether does not constitute an equity interest.

Question 44: Please explain why you chose not to disclose Cantor Fitzgerald's convertible bond with Tether during your staff interview and how this omission reflects on your commitment to transparency with Congress, if confirmed?

Answer:

Minority staff asked if Cantor Fitzgerald owned 5% of Tether. The answer is no. I was, am, and will remain transparent with Congress.

Question 45: Besides Tether, how many clients has Cantor Fitzgerald purchased a convertible bond with or otherwise directly invested in during your tenure as Chairman?

Answer:

Cantor Fitzgerald is a diversified financial services organization providing a variety of services to its clients, which includes investing in clients' businesses.

Question 46: Describe all other investments Cantor Fitzgerald, Newmark, BGC, and any other company you own, or control has in Tether. For any such investment, provide the same amount of detail as requested in Questions 44 – 47 above.

Answer:

None.

Question 47: Describe all other investments your or any of your family members have in Tether. For any such investment, provide the same amount of detail as requested in Questions 44 – 47 above.

Answer:

None.

Audit. Tether claims to be “pegged at 1-to-1” with the U.S. dollar and “backed 100% by Tether’s reserves.” During a Bitcoin Conference in July 2024, you said “I can tell you with absolute certainty that Tether has every penny, and it can produce liquidity on a moment’s notice.”

Question 48: Can you confirm that Tether’s representations regarding its relationship to the U.S. dollar and reserves backing USDT are accurate?

Answer:

Cantor Fitzgerald is not conducting continuous diligence on Tether’s financial statements, but I believe my statements were accurate when made.

Question 49: During your nomination hearing, you said “U.S. dollar stable coins should be audited.” As the custodian of most of Tether’s assets, will you publicly call on Tether to submit to an independent audit in the next three months and publicly release the results? If not, please explain why not.

Answer:

Upon my confirmation as Secretary of Commerce, I will faithfully execute my duties consistent with applicable government ethics laws and regulations and based on the guidance of Department of Commerce Ethics Department officials.

Investigations into Tether. According to a November 23, 2024, article in the *Wall Street Journal*, Tether's owner, Giancarlo Devasini, told business associates that you assured him that you would use your political clout to try to defuse threats facing Tether.

Question 50: Is this reporting accurate?

Answer:

I do not know what Mr. Devasini told business associates.

Question 51: Have you ever told Devasini, or anyone else affiliated with Tether, that you would try to defuse threats facing Tether?

Answer:

I have never suggested to anyone that I would do anything improper with respect to Tether.

Question 52: The same *Wall Street Journal* report detailed a May 2024 meeting between you and Devasini, after which Devasini told business associates that you would seek to kill any bills that could hurt Tether. Is this reporting accurate?

Answer:

I do not know what Mr. Devasini told business associates.

Question 53: Have you ever told Devasini, or anyone else affiliated with Tether, that you would seek to undermine any bills, proposed legislation, or other legislative or regulatory efforts to regulate Tether?

Answer:

I have repeatedly conveyed my belief that the U.S. Congress should be careful not to undermine dollar hegemony on blockchain through legislation.

Question 54: Tether is reportedly under investigation by the U.S. Justice Department for possible violations of sanctions and anti-money-laundering laws. The Treasury Department has also reportedly considered sanctioning Tether given its cryptocurrency's widespread use by individuals and groups sanctioned by the United States. Will you commit not to interfere with or otherwise attempt to influence any federal investigation into Tether, if confirmed?

Answer:

I commit to fulfilling my duties as the Secretary of Commerce consistent with government ethics laws and regulations, to the extent applicable.

Question 55: Have you discussed any potential federal investigation into Tether with Devasini? If yes, please describe what you discussed and when these discussions occurred.

Answer:

No.

Law Enforcement Cooperation. Mr. Lutnick, you have said that Tether cooperates with law enforcement. But cooperation with law enforcement after a crime has been identified is the least we should expect, especially of someone who has been nominated for a Cabinet position.

Question 56: What proactive actions have you pressed Tether to take to make its platform less attractive to illicit financing?

Answer:

Tether does not operate a blockchain platform, but Cantor Fitzgerald has been supportive of Tether's ever-increasing engagement with U.S. law enforcement.

Question 57: Have you ever told Tether that Cantor Fitzgerald would cease managing their assets unless Tether took additional measures to combat illicit financing? If yes, please specify when you first approached Tether about this issue and detail what measures you advised they take.

Answer:

Cantor Fitzgerald has been supportive of Tether's ever-increasing engagement with U.S. law enforcement.

Question 58: Are you aware of any law enforcement request that Tether has not fully cooperated with? If yes, please detail each such request.

Answer:

No.

Question 59: During your nomination hearing, you said "AI tools used by the U.S. government running through the market will rid the world of criminals using blockchain." You predicted these AI tools would be available in a couple years. Is it your position that the United States must wait for future technology in order to combat illicit financing in the stablecoin market effectively?

Answer:

No.

Question 60: Do you believe there are no other tools we could deploy today to prevent the abuse of stablecoins in the secondary market?

Answer:

No.

Ethics Agreement. Although your ethics agreement states that, if confirmed, you will resign as trustee and terminate your grantor status of your family trusts, members of your family remain the beneficiaries. According to your public financial disclosure report (OGE-278), your family trusts invest in a variety of companies that appear to have a direct nexus to programs and policies under the purview of the Department of Commerce, including companies that develop AI technologies and autonomous drones.

Question 61: Will you take any additional steps, beyond those outlined in your ethics agreement, to give the American people assurances that you will act in the public's best interests and not those of your family?

Answer:

I will follow applicable government ethics laws and regulations based on guidance from the Ethics Office of the Department of Commerce.

Question 62: Your ethics agreement also states that you will resign from your positions with Cantor Fitzgerald, BGC, and Newmark, and divest your equity and stock interests in these companies. But it does not indicate to whom you will divest these interests. You previously stated only that you "do not expect any arrangement which involves selling shares on the open market." Please detail your current intentions for divesting these interests.

Answer:

I will divest my interests in Cantor Fitzgerald, BGC, and Newmark consistent with applicable government ethics laws and regulations as set forth in my ethics agreement.

Question 63: To promote transparency and public confidence, if confirmed will you commit to publicly releasing the terms of your divestments, including the identities of the acquiring parties? If no, please explain why not.

Answer:

I will divest my interests in Cantor Fitzgerald, BGC, and Newmark consistent with applicable government ethics laws and regulations as set forth in my ethics agreement.

Satellopic. Following the announcement of your nomination in November 2024, you resigned from the Board of Satellopic, a commercial remote sensing satellite company. However, Cantor Fitzgerald significantly increased the number of shares it owns in Satellopic in November 2024. And according to a Satellopic SEC filing, Tether—with which Cantor Fitzgerald holds a convertible bond—entered an agreement with Satellopic in April 2024 to buy \$30 million worth of secured convertible notes. Satellopic received a commercial remote sensing license from the Commerce Department’s National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in November 2023 and will now be subject to NOAA’s Office of Space Commerce (OSC) oversight.

Question 64: If confirmed, will you commit to recusing yourself from all discussions regarding Satellopic, including NOAA’s oversight of Satellopic?

Answer:

I will follow applicable government ethics laws and regulations based on guidance from the Ethics Office of the Department of Commerce.

Question 65: Please explain the steps you will take, beyond your ethics agreement, to assure the public that you will not seek to benefit Satellopic if confirmed as Commerce Secretary.

Answer:

I will follow applicable government ethics laws and regulations based on guidance from the Ethics Office of the Department of Commerce.

Question 66: In December 2024, Cantor Fitzgerald was fined \$6.75 million by the SEC to settle charges that it violated securities laws. According to the SEC, Cantor Fitzgerald caused two special purpose acquisition companies (SPACs) it controlled to falsely deny in regulatory filings having had contact or substantive discussions with potential merger targets before those SPACs’ initial public offering. In fact, Cantor Fitzgerald had already initiated discussions with Satellopic and at least two other potential targets regarding a potential business combination when it submitted the false filing, according to the SEC.

As the Chairman and CEO of Cantor Fitzgerald, were you aware of or involved in these discussions with Satellopic or the other potential targets identified by the SEC?

Answer:

Cantor Fitzgerald agreed with the SEC that Cantor Fitzgerald would neither admit nor deny the SEC order’s findings.

Question 67: Do you condone violations of federal securities laws like this?

Answer:

Cantor Fitzgerald agreed with the SEC that Cantor Fitzgerald would neither admit nor deny the SEC order's findings. I do not condone violations of laws.

China. Through BGC and Cantor Fitzgerald, you have developed business ties to Chinese state-owned entities. Concerns have been raised over whether your business interests in China may pose conflicts of interest or the appearance of conflicts if you are confirmed as Commerce Secretary. According to Kathleen Clark, a professor of government ethics at Washington University in St. Louis, your financial dealings make you essentially “business partners” with the Chinese government, which “raises the specter of the Chinese government having leverage over the commerce secretary.”

Question 68: Beyond your ethics agreement, how will you assure the American people that your decisions as Commerce Secretary, if confirmed, will not be influenced by your financial ties to Chinese-state-owned entities?

Answer:

I will follow applicable government ethics laws and regulations based on guidance from the Ethics Office of the Department of Commerce.

Question 69: If confirmed, will you screen yourself from any communication with your business associates involved in Chinese-state-owned enterprises, such as China Credit BGC Money Broking Company Limited, regarding the Administration's policies related to China?

Answer:

I will follow applicable government ethics laws and regulations based on guidance from the Ethics Office of the Department of Commerce.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. On January 20, 2025, President Trump signed an Executive Order aiming to end all diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs in the federal government. The following week, President Trump signed another DEI executive order, this time targeting specifically the United States armed forces. Mr. Lutnick, you seem to value DEI in the workplace – as do I, and many Americans across the country and our workforce. Under your leadership at BGC, the company says it is developing and retaining top talent while emphasizing “increasing representation of traditionally underrepresented groups at all levels of the organization.” In 2023, another one of your companies, Newmark, signed the Girl Scouts' Gender Parity Initiative: Fair Play, Equal Pay®. By signing up for this initiative, Newmark pledged to advance gender parity within your organization and embraced the goal to achieve like pay for like work as well as 30% female leaders in corporate leadership roles by 2030. Notably, Newmark was even named to Globe St.'s 2021 Women of Influence ‘Diversity Champion’ list.”

Question 70: Mr. Lutnick, you have built and led multiple highly successful companies—at which DEI policies appear to be implemented today. Do you think these policies have benefitted your companies?

Answer:

I do not know.

Question 71: Do you disagree with President Trump's executive orders on DEI noted above?

Answer:

No.

Cryptocurrency Policy. President Trump created a President's Working Group on Digital Asset Markets charged with formulating policies on digital assets—including stablecoins like Tether. As Commerce Secretary, you would sit on this Working Group.

Question 72: Do you plan on recusing yourself from this Working Group? If no, please explain how this decision does not present a conflict or the appearance of a conflict, given your extensive ties to Tether.

Answer:

I will follow applicable government ethics laws and regulations based on guidance from the Ethics Office of the Department of Commerce.

Question 73: If confirmed, will you commit not to discuss the Administration's cryptocurrency policies, regulations, or other deliberations with any individual associated with Tether?

Answer:

I will follow applicable government ethics laws and regulations based on guidance from the Ethics Office of the Department of Commerce.

Question 74: According to an October 23, 2024, report in *Politico*, Republican officials close to President Trump accused you of improperly mixing your business interests with your duties as then-co-chair of the transition team. Specifically, you were accused of taking meetings on Capitol Hill in your role as transition co-chair, but then using the opportunity to raise matters impacting Cantor Fitzgerald, including regulatory matters involving cryptocurrency, with the Members you met.

During the time you served as co-chair of the transition team, did you ever meet with Members on Capitol Hill regarding Cantor Fitzgerald or cryptocurrency? If yes, please identify which Member(s) and the purpose for the meeting(s).

Answer:

I never met with members regarding regulatory matters involving Cantor Fitzgerald or cryptocurrency in my capacity as co-chair of the transition team.

Project 2025 and NOAA, NOAA Organic Act. NOAA is the largest bureau within the Department of Commerce (“DOC”) and accounts for nearly 64 percent of its appropriated funds and a little less than one-third of its employees, nearly 12,000 people worldwide. Project 2025 states that “NOAA should be dismantled and many of its functions eliminated.”

Question 75: Should NOAA be dismantled?

Answer:

While I have testified about my priorities if confirmed, it is premature to discuss any specific recommendations before engaging with NOAA and the Office of Management and Budget. Additionally, at this time, it would be premature for me to comment on specific policy commitments before I have a chance to confer with the Department and the President. If I am confirmed, I look forward to working with you on these issues.

Question 76: Do you support any function, mission, or congressionally authorized or appropriated work within NOAA, or executed by NOAA, being moved out of the NOAA or the Department of Commerce? If so, please describe.

Answer:

While I have testified about my priorities if confirmed, it is premature to discuss any specific recommendations before engaging with NOAA and the Office of Management and Budget. Additionally, at this time, it would be premature for me to comment on specific policy commitments before I have a chance to confer with the Department and the President. If I am confirmed, I look forward to working with you on these issues.

Question 77: If confirmed, will the Department of Commerce retain all NOAA missions, functions, authorities, and congressionally authorized and appropriated programs, grants, and activities within NOAA?

Answer:

While I have testified about my priorities if confirmed, it is premature to discuss any specific recommendations before engaging with NOAA and the Office of Management and Budget. Additionally, at this time, it would be premature for me to comment on specific policy commitments before I have a chance to confer with the Department and the President. If I am confirmed, I look forward to working with you on these issues.

Question 78: Project 2025 stated that the National Weather Service forecasting operations should be fully commercialized, and its focus should be shifted to only data gathering. This would benefit private companies that use NOAA’s taxpayer funded data and forecasting for free and then charge taxpayers for those services. Collaboration with the private sector is already happening at NOAA, but Project 2025 wants to halt the agency from providing its free,

lifesaving forecasts that some companies see as competition to their product. Do you support the National Weather Service continuing to provide these critical forecasts without privatization?

Answer:

I will support the NWS to continue providing its forecasts for the protection of life and property.

Question 79: What is your vision for the National Weather Service?

Answer:

I think the National Weather Service can operate more efficiently, but the outcome of delivering its services should not be changed.

Question 80: Project 2025 proposed to “streamline” the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). What does that mean?

Answer:

I am not affiliated with Project 2025. I cannot opine on any of the group’s plans or materials.

Question 81: If NMFS were to move to the Department of the Interior, it would create substantial additional layers of red tape because the Secretary of Commerce is required to execute many functions, including regulatory functions, under law. Are you considering moving the National Marine Fisheries Service out of NOAA?

Answer:

No.

Question 82: The Secretary of Commerce has specific authorities under the Endangered Species Act with respect to a number of species under NOAA’s jurisdiction, including salmon, Southern resident orcas, and North Atlantic right whales. Will you ensure that as Secretary, you continue to uphold the Endangered Species Act, the Marine Mammal Protection Act, and all other laws governing NOAA and Department of Commerce activities related to NOAA’s functions and missions that were in place on January 1, 2025?

Answer:

I will follow the law.

Question 83: If the Department of Commerce were to allow the Department of the Interior to conduct the Department of Commerce Endangered Species Act activities, including listings, consultations, and any other activities, the Secretary of Commerce would still be required under law to execute the Endangered Species Act. Allowing Department of Interior to participate in these activities would add red tape, result in permitting delays, it would separate scientists and

experts from regulatory matters concerning endangered and protected species and ultimately result in increased cost to communities that rely on reliable permitting and consultations to execute infrastructure projects such as ports, highways and rail. Would you allow any NOAA Endangered Species or Protected Species authorities, functions, or activities (including consultations) to be moved to the Department of the Interior?

Answer:

I will continue to support collaboration between NOAA and Interior when necessary on ESA activities as they currently do.

NOAA Corps.

The NOAA Corps is the smallest uniformed service of the United States and is comprised of 320 uniformed members operating a fleet of 15 large research vessels, 10 aircraft, and many small boats. NOAA research vessels conduct hydrographic, oceanographic, atmospheric, and fisheries research including stock assessments which support fisheries management, energy development, marine transportation, port operations, emergency response, and national security. Project 2025 proposes to break up the Office of Marine and Aviation Operations and reassign NOAA's vessel and aircraft fleet to other agencies, eliminating NOAA's ability to meet its missions.

Question 84: Are you in support of breaking up this office and reassigning its assets?

Answer:

While I have testified about my priorities if confirmed, it is premature to discuss any specific recommendations before engaging with NOAA and the Office of Management and Budget. Additionally, at this time, it would be premature for me to comment on specific policy commitments before I have a chance to confer with the Department and the President. If I am confirmed, I look forward to working with you on these issues.

Question 85: The NOAA Corps has been underfunded in recent years, which is why we have worked in a bipartisan basis to authorize funding increases for the Corps missions, people, and assets. Do you support increasing resources for the NOAA Corps so that it is able to execute its full mission set?

Answer:

While I have testified about my priorities if confirmed, it is premature to discuss any specific recommendations before engaging with NOAA and the Office of Management and Budget. Additionally, at this time, it would be premature for me to comment on specific policy commitments before I have a chance to confer with the Department and the President. If I am confirmed, I look forward to working with you on these issues.

Question 86: The NOAA Corps provides a critical service to our nation yet is often overlooked in laws and policies governing the Uniformed Services of the United States. As Secretary, would you work with the Committee, and with your own authority, to provide services, benefits, cutting

edge training, and access to family resources such as childcare, health care, and other unique needs of NOAA Corps members?

Answer:

While I have testified about my priorities if confirmed, it is premature to discuss any specific recommendations before engaging with NOAA and the Office of Management and Budget. Additionally, at this time, it would be premature for me to comment on specific policy commitments before I have a chance to confer with the Department and the President. If I am confirmed, I look forward to working with you on these issues.

Question 87: Sexual assault and sexual harassment at sea is also a serious issue facing all uniformed services, including the NOAA Corps. As Secretary, how will you work to eliminate instances of sexual assault, sexual harassment, and sexual misconduct from the NOAA Corps?

Answer:

I will fully support the significant advancements NOAA has made in eliminating sexual assault, harassment and misconduct in the NOAA Fleet and across the NOAA portfolio. The priority on training, expectations for conduct, and accountability measures that are part of NOAA and the NOAA Corps will remain in effect under my leadership.

Question 88: The NOAA Corps has made great strides in improving investigations, response, and victim care, but there is more to be done. How will you work to address prevention, response, and victim care activities in the NOAA Corps?

Answer:

I will work to ensure the resources required by the NOAA Corps for prevention, response and victim care are provided. The NOAA Corps works with the other services to access resources and leverage shared government resources to support our service members.

Question 89: Sexual assault and sexual harassment are also a problem in the NOAA fisheries observer programs. What will you do to address these issues facing fisheries observers?

Answer:

Observer safety at sea is an on-going and serious issue. I will continue the work NOAA does with the U.S. Coast Guard, Congress, and industry to institute best practices through training and accountability to provide a safe working environment for fishery observers. I will also work with Congress and the USCG to evaluate opportunities for monetary and permitting deterrents.

Oscar Dyson's Repair Funding. We understand that repairs for the R/V Oscar Dyson's repair funding have been held up by the EO pausing executive orders. The R/V Oscar Dyson is critical for the Alaskan Pollock industry's stock assessments, which they rely on under law to establish catch limits.

Question 90: Should this funding be paused? Did you review the updated OMB guidance?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I will review the OMB guidance and work closely with you and your office on this issue.

Question 91: Will you commit to ensuring that the contract will be issued for the R/V Oscar Dyson's midlife repair as appropriated and included in the spend plan approved by the appropriations committees?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I plan to work closely with Congress on the R/V Oscar Dyson's condition and address it in a timely and efficient manner.

Question 92: Do you support transferring survey funding to the Coast Guard? Or the USGS? The USGS does not operate vessels of this size and is not capable.

Answer:

It is not my intention to move services outside of NOAA and into other agencies.

Scientific Integrity. Science-based decision-making is at the core of weather forecasting and is a cornerstone of robust policy decisions.

Question 93: Will you ensure that NOAA's scientific work remains accurate and free from political interference?

Answer:

I support that NOAA's scientific work continues to follow the science, the scientific method and remains scientifically accurate.

Question 94: What steps will you take to ensure NOAA continues to lead the world in ocean and atmospheric science, modelling, and engineering?

Answer:

Atmospheric science, modelling, and engineering are at the core of NOAA's mission to protect life and property through its services to the American people. I support NOAA continuing to lead the world in these efforts.

Tribal Consultation and Salmon Management. Tribes are a key partner in fisheries management, conservation, and resilience, across the nation, and especially in Pacific Northwest

and Alaska. NOAA has struggled to meet its treaty obligations to tribes and has not fully complied with government-to-government consultation and engagement requirements under law and policy.

Question 95: If confirmed, will you ensure that Tribes are able to access meaningful government-to-government consultation on NOAA programs, including grants?

Answer:

Yes.

Question 96: Will you commit to the Department's obligation to provide technical assistance to Tribes? Will you continue to support capacity building programs, including programs that support Tribes accessing and executing grants and providing access to technical assistance?

Answer:

Yes.

Question 97: I established a new Tribal hatchery infrastructure program in an effort to restore salmon populations that benefit Tribes, sportsmen and Washington's \$22 billion outdoor recreation economy which supports more than 200,000 jobs. Do you support investing in hatchery infrastructure? Will you work with me to double down on salmon hatchery investments to ensure that tribes, sportsmen, and commercial fishermen are able to fish?

Answer:

NOAA considers the Tribes key partners in fisheries management and should continue to work with them on fisheries issues.

Question 98: What is the definition of DEI? Do you consider programs supporting Tribes as DEI? Do you consider tribal consultation as DEI? Are tribal liaisons and offices designated as DEI?

Answer:

NOAA respects the sovereignty of Tribal Nations and considers the Tribes key partners in fisheries management and will continue to work with them on fisheries issues.

Montlake Lab. NOAA's Montlake Fisheries Science Center ("Montlake Lab") in Seattle will be divested due to the building's age, and proximity to the 520 Bridge. The Montlake Lab conducts critical research important to our multi-billion-dollar fisheries in the Pacific Northwest and Alaska, including research into future opportunities in domestic aquaculture of black cod and shellfish. In lieu of constructing a new building, NOAA is working on establishing a long-term lease of a new facility at the University of Washington. More than \$80 million has already been appropriated for this purpose.

Question 99: Will you commit to ensuring the appropriated \$80 million will reserved for its intended use: to replace NOAA's Montlake Lab?

Answer: Upon confirmation, I will work to better understand Montlake Lab and will appreciate your input on this issue.

Fisheries. Illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing poses significant threats not only to global fish stocks but also to national security and economic security in the United States, as illegal fishing often goes hand in hand with other illicit activities such as forced labor and drug trafficking. Failure to effectively combat IUU fishing also places U.S. fishing communities – which invest millions of dollars to play by the rules – at a competitive disadvantage in US and global markets.

Question 100: How would you, as Secretary of Commerce, strengthen NOAA's efforts to combat illegal fishing, particularly in key regions of interest, such as the Arctic? Do you agree it is critical to close U.S. markets to illegal seafood imports, including Russian seafood?

Answer:

Yes. I think it is critical to combat illegal seafood imports and will work closely with NOAA to combat illegal fishing upon confirmation.

Question 101: How else will you help the US lead in combating illegal fishing and safeguard American interests?

Answer:

I plan to work closely with Congress to identify illegal fishing across the United States and address it in a timely and efficient manner.

Question 102: NOAA Fisheries and partner agencies are working to combat IUU fishing and associated labor abuses in the seafood sector. Unfortunately, U.S. consumers unwittingly buy imported IUU-fished seafood each year, making our market a major driver of global illegal fishing and its grave human costs. We import more seafood than any other single nation in the world, including, in 2019, an estimated \$2.4 billion dollars' worth of seafood imports derived from IUU fishing practices. The influx of illegal imports, in turn, is harming our domestic fishing communities as they seek a fair price for their legal catch. Would you agree that the United States has tremendous market power to curb illegal fishing and improve ocean health by rejecting IUU fished seafood from its markets? Do you commit to supporting NOAA Fisheries in continuing its efforts to do so within the Department of Commerce?

Answer:

Yes. I support NOAA's efforts to curb illegal fishing and improve ocean health through rejecting IUU fished seafood to U.S. markets.

Question 103: The US has some of the most effectively managed fisheries in the world. Our fisheries are critical to the economy. The Magnuson-Stevens Act has successfully built numerous fisheries around the country, but there is still progress to be made in our management system. How do you plan to enhance NOAA's role in ensuring that US fisheries are sustainably managed for future generations?

Answer:

I support responsibly managed fisheries and, upon confirmation, will work closely with your office on this matter.

Question 104: Given the significant economic challenges facing the US fishing industry, including high production costs, collapsing markets, and foreign competition that is sabotaging prices and markets for American fishermen, how would you as Commerce Secretary ensure the long-term viability of coastal communities and economies that are reliant on healthy fisheries and ecosystems?

Answer:

Ensuring the long-term viability of coastal communities and economies that are reliant on healthy fisheries and ecosystems is very important. Upon confirmation, I will work closely with you and your office on this topic.

Question 105: According to the latest statistics from 2022, US commercial and recreational fisheries generated \$321 billion in sales, 2.3 million jobs, and \$149.8 billion in value-added to the US economy. Commercial fisheries landings alone were valued at \$5.9 billion, and recreational fishermen took 201 million fishing trips that year. Communities across the country rely on these fisheries and the benefits they provide. They also rely on NOAA Fisheries providing world class science and management to support this fishing activity. Will you commit to investing effort and resources into improving fishery data systems, navigating climate change, and other pressures on fisheries?

Answer:

Ensuring robust and organized data, and management of that data is key to having world class science at NMFS. Upon confirmation, I will support improving the science and management of fisheries.

Question 106: Do you support increased funding for stock assessment surveys?

Answer:

Robust and reliable data is critical to the NMFS mission. Upon confirmation, I will be happy to work with your office closely on improving stock assessments.

Question 107: Pursuant to regulation, the National Marine Fisheries Service will issue determinations late in 2025 on whether foreign fisheries are meeting US standards for protecting marine mammals and the US government will ban imports that do not meet US standards on January 1, 2026. Until that regulation is implemented, US fishermen compete in the US market against foreign fisheries that are not playing by the rules and US consumers are unwittingly eating seafood that needlessly kills whales and dolphins. Will you commit to ensuring that the National Marine Fisheries Service rigorously implements the requirement that foreign fisheries meet US standards and not allow the agency to give foreign fisheries a “pass” for mere effort and instead demand concrete, affirmative proof that foreign fisheries meet US standards?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I look forward to better understanding this issue receiving your input.

NOAA and DOGE. President Trump has created a new “Department of Government Efficiency” (DOGE) to be run by people without expertise in ocean and climate science or marine natural resource management. Despite this lack of experience and expertise, DOGE will make recommendations on how to manage Federal agencies like NOAA, including on which programs and positions to cut. NOAA employs workers across the United States, with laboratories and regional offices supporting jobs in Alaska, Washington, New York, Oklahoma, Texas, Hawaii, Missouri, and Utah. Shutting down these offices or broadly firing career employees would not only harm US ocean science leadership, it would also harm the communities across the country that benefit from NOAA facilities, data, and services.

Question 108: If confirmed, would you carry out recommendations that would jeopardize NOAA’s scientific integrity, or reduce public access to NOAA data and services?

Answer:

NOAA is one of the best examples of a government agency that provides data and services back to the taxpayers, through its data and services for the protection of life and property. I will follow the law, and I support NOAA taking a data-driven approach to address important issues.

Question 109: NOAA’s current mission is “To understand and predict changes in climate, weather, ocean, and coasts, to share that knowledge and information with others, and to conserve and manage coastal and marine ecosystems and resources”. Do you agree with this mission? If so, how will you use your position as Secretary of Commerce to advance this mission?

Answer:

Yes. Upon confirmation, I will work to support NOAA achieving its mission in the most efficient and effective manner possible.

SENATOR AMY KLOBUCHAR (D-MN)

Question Topic: Artificial Intelligence

We discussed American leadership in artificial intelligence (AI) and the need to put standards in place for high-impact AI models. My bill with Majority Leader Thune, the *Artificial Intelligence Research, Innovation, and Accountability Act*, would direct the Commerce Department to issue standards for testing and evaluating high-risk, non-defense AI applications.

1. If confirmed, will you review this bill and commit to working with us on it?

Answer:

Yes.

Question Topic: Unfair Trade Practices

It is critical Minnesota's workers and producers have the opportunity to grow and thrive without being undermined by unfair trade practices. For decades, our nation's bipartisan antidumping and countervailing duty laws have played a vital role in addressing those practices. I have heard from industries and workers in my state about the need to enforce and strengthen these laws.

2. If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that the Commerce Department aggressively enforces our anti-dumping and countervailing duty laws?

Answer:

Strong trade enforcement will be a priority during my tenure. Upon confirmation, I look forward to working with Congress to ensure that the Department is properly resourced and has the tools it needs to execute its mission

3. Will you commit to working with Congress to update our trade laws to address repeat violators and account for cross-border subsidies?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I look forward to working with Congress on efforts to strengthen the Department's authority to address bad actors that unfairly disadvantage American workers and businesses.

Question Topic: Semiconductor Follow-up

Given that bolstering domestic semiconductor manufacturing is a big priority of mine, I was glad to hear yesterday that you consider CHIPS Act funding to be a much-needed "down payment" for the American economy but want to clarify what you meant.

4. If confirmed, do you commit to strengthening investments in the production of legacy-node semiconductors (also known as specialty chips) in Minnesota and across the country?

Answer:

Reshoring and nearshoring semiconductor production is critical to our economic and national security. Ensuring that the United States has robust domestic manufacturing capacity and supply chains to support the production of semiconductors is a top priority for me. Upon confirmation, I plan to ensure that the Department is delivering these objectives in the most effective way possible.

Question Topic: Greenland/Conflicts of Interest

We discussed Cantor Fitzgerald's financial interest in Critical Metals Corp., which acquired a controlling stake in a mine in southern Greenland in June 2024. According to the *New York Times*, Critical Metals Corp.'s CEO regards you as a possible conduit for U.S. government investment in this project.

According to your government ethics agreement, you have agreed to not participate in any matters that have a direct and predictable effect on the financial interests of Cantor Fitzgerald or its subsidiaries until you are fully divested from the firm. Reports indicate, however, that your family members intend to continue working for the firm. As a result, regardless of your own personal divestment plans, I am concerned about the potential conflicts of interest, as well as the appearance of such conflicts.

5. If confirmed, will you recuse yourself from policy issues related to Greenland?

Answer:

I will follow applicable government ethics laws and regulations based on guidance from the Ethics Office of the Department of Commerce.

SENATOR EDWARD MARKEY (D-MA)

Trade with Canada

Canada buys \$3.2 billion worth of goods from Massachusetts every year and 35,000 people in my state are employed by Canadian companies. Canada has already taken significant steps to reduce illegal activity at the border.

1. Will you push back if President Trump attempts to use trade laws for anything other than to support Americans and American jobs?

Answer:

President Donald J. Trump's mission, and my mission, is to support the American people, create good paying American jobs, and keep our country safe. I think we all can and should support those goals.

Pardons:

2. Do you support President Trump's pardons of violent January 6th insurrectionists?

Answer:

Presidential pardons are the prerogative of the President and outside the scope of the Department of Commerce.

Inspectors General:

Last week, President Trump fired the Department of Commerce Inspector General, among 17 other inspectors general, without giving a 30-day notice to Congress, as required by law.

3. Do you support President Trump's decision to fire the Inspectors General?

Answer:

I look forward to working with the new Inspector General upon confirmation.

4. If President Trump directed you to unlawfully remove employees under the Commerce Department, would you comply with that order?

Answer:

I will follow the law.

Artificial Intelligence:

In your confirmation hearing in front of the Senate Commerce Committee you mentioned your goal to create artificial intelligence standards.

5. Can you describe your plan for the creation of artificial intelligence standards?

Answer:

As I stated in the hearing, the Department has the gold standard in cybersecurity. We should seek a similar approach for AI. The United States should be a leader in AI development, not a leader in heavy-handed regulation that hampers innovation.

6. If confirmed, will you commit to directing the National Institute of Standards and Technology to convene a consortium of stakeholders to identify measurement needs and standards for artificial intelligence's environmental impacts?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I support including all relevant and necessary stakeholders.

7. If confirmed, will you commit to supporting the National Institute of Standards and Technology to create a system for entities developing or operating artificial intelligence to voluntarily report the full range of artificial intelligence's environment impacts?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I commit to studying this issue further and working with your office on this matter.

8. NTIA also recently released a report noting the benefits of open-source AI and has also concluded that the federal government should invest in monitoring and testing AI for harms. Will you follow the recommendations of Commerce's own experts within NTIA?

Answer:

As stated in President Donald J. Trump's Executive order, titled "Removing Barriers to American Leadership in Artificial Intelligence," AI should promote human flourishing, economic competitiveness, and national security. Upon confirmation, I look forward to working with NTIA on advancing these objectives while mitigating risks that would hinder AI's potential.

Algorithmic Discrimination:

9. Do you believe that bias and discriminatory artificial intelligence is a problem?

Answer:

I believe AI should be held to the highest standards.

Answer:

10. If confirmed, what is your plan to address biased and discriminatory artificial intelligence, especially in critical areas such as health care, education, employment, and criminal justice?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I will work to ensure AI is held to the highest standards.

Workforce Development Programs:

The Department of Commerce established two principles that guided the Department's workforce development programs. First, the Department of Commerce laid out a three-part approach to help meet employers' need for talent and to connect Americans to good jobs. These principles included: Invest in employer-driven education and training systems; foster transformative employer practices; and produce timely data to help Americans develop and advance. Second, through the Department of Labor's Good Jobs Principles, the Department of Commerce worked to ensure its programs created good jobs as a building block for equitable economic growth.

11. If confirmed, will you keep these two principles in place?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I look forward to examining the Department's principles.

Million Women in Construction Initiative:

In May, Department of Commerce announced the Million Women in Construction Initiative which aims to expand the American construction workforce by doubling the number of women in construction over the next decade.

12. If confirmed, will you commit to maintaining the Women in Construction Initiative?

Answer:

I support the Department's work to boost American manufacturing.

13. If directed by President Trump, would you stop any support for increasing the number of women in the construction industry?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I look forward to coordinating with the President on labor market policy.

Facial Recognition:

NIST's Face Recognition Vendor Test has been an important tool in informing our understanding of the impact, bias, and performance of facial recognition technology.

14. Do you commit to maintaining the program, including its independence in its scientific and voluntary assessments?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I look forward to carefully reviewing this program.

Closing the Digital Divide:

15. Do you support closing the digital divide for low-income people?

Answer:

I support efforts to improve connectivity for all Americans.

16. Do you support closing the digital divide for elderly individuals?

Answer:

I support efforts to improve connectivity for all Americans.

17. Do you support closing the digital divide for incarcerated individuals?

Answer:

I support efforts to improve connectivity for all Americans.

18. Do you support closing the digital divide for veterans?

Answer:

I support efforts to improve connectivity for all Americans.

19. Do you support closing the digital divide for individuals with disabilities?

Answer:

I support efforts to improve connectivity for all Americans.

20. Do you support closing the digital divide for individuals with a language barrier?

Answer:

I support efforts to improve connectivity for all Americans.

21. Do you support closing the digital divide for individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group?

Answer:

I support efforts to improve connectivity for all Americans.

22. Do you support closing the digital divide for people who primarily reside in a rural area?

Answer:

I support efforts to improve connectivity for all Americans.

23. If confirmed, what is your plan to close the digital divide in our country?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I will use all appropriate tools to improve connectivity for all Americans in the most efficient and effective way.

24. If confirmed, what is your plan to close the digital divide for Indigenous people?

Answer:

I support efforts to improve connectivity for all Americans.

25. If confirmed, what is your plan to close the digital divide for students?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I will support efforts to improve connectivity for all Americans.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration:

26. Project 2025 included a proposal to dissolve the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). NOAA houses irreplaceable climate, fisheries, and endangered species expertise. Can you confirm you would not dissolve or privatize NOAA, if confirmed

Answer:

I was not affiliated with Project 2025. I cannot opine on any of the group's plans or materials. I have no plans to dissolve NOAA.

27. We have critical NOAA facilities in Massachusetts, including the Northeast Fisheries Science Center. Can you commit to working with me to maintain that facility and support NOAA's presence in Massachusetts?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I will commit to working with you on this topic.

28. President Trump has already issued executive orders targeting offshore wind. These projects are creating hundreds of union jobs in Massachusetts, and NOAA has a role in permitting these projects and understanding their effect on our ocean and wildlife. If confirmed, will you work with me to protect Massachusetts jobs and help return economic stability to this industry?

Answer:

I support all American workers, and I look forward to working with your office on this topic.

29. Project 2025 also called for the privatization of key functions of the National Weather Service. Do you support the privatization of our National Weather Service?

Answer:

I was not affiliated with Project 2025. I cannot opine on any of the group's plans or materials. NOAA and the National Weather Service provide important services to the American people.

Minority Business Development Agency:

30. Do you believe the President's executive orders can overturn statutory authority at the Minority Business Development Agency?

Answer:

I will comply with President Donald J. Trump's executive orders to the fullest extent of the law.

SENATOR GARY PETERS (D-MI)

1. Mr. Lutnick, it is clear that if a universal tariff approach is taken by this Administration, trade enforcement will look substantially different than in years past. In fact, it is likely that the Department of Commerce and the International Trade Administration will be tasked with investigating greater instances of duty circumvention. How do you envision the International Trade Administration factoring into the enforcement of this Administration's trade agenda? Do you believe the agency possesses the appropriate resources to handle what will likely be an increased volume of investigations?

Answer:

The Department has seen a significant increase in trade enforcement cases, and additional resources should be considered. Upon confirmation, I hope to work with your office and appropriators to make sure that component of the Department is properly resourced.

2. Mr. Lutnick, as you are aware, under Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962, the President is permitted to impose certain import controls, including tariffs, so long as the Commerce Department investigates and determines that imports in question threaten national security. So far, the Trump Administration has threatened to impose tariffs on countries, outside of the Section 232 process, as well as outside of the Section 201 and 301 processes. If the President does indeed consider imposing tariffs outside of the Section 232 process, can you explain what role the Department will have in making recommendations on the ultimate need of duty imposition? Should the President seek to utilize the Section 232 process, can you commit that you will engage in a fair and transparent investigation process?

Answer:

As part of the Administration's trade team, the Department has immense analytical capabilities that will be brought to bear in a deliberative process of this magnitude. Regarding Section 232, the Department has a long record of fair and transparent investigations, whether in the Section 232 context or regarding other matters.

3. Mr. Lutnick, it is imperative that we address both the economic and national security threat posed by Chinese government-backed automotive companies. That's why I pushed for the Biden Administration's rule – finalized early this year – that would prevent the import or sale of any Chinese-controlled connected vehicle or vehicles component in the U.S. This rule – written by the Bureau of Industry and Security under the Department of Commerce – would prevent Chinese companies from building manufacturing plants in Mexico in order to send vehicles that could spy on Americans across the border. However, President Trump signed an executive order last week that freezes and calls for a review of this important rule. If confirmed, will you work to immediately unfreeze this rule and implement this ban on dangerous Chinese-connected vehicles and vehicles technologies in America?

Answer:

As I understand, there has not been a notice published in the Federal Register delaying this rule. Upon confirmation, I will review this regulation and take appropriate action.

4. Mr. Lutnick, the Chips and Science Act has been a huge win for Michigan manufacturers. I was encouraged in our meeting by your support for this law and projects like Hemlock Semiconductor's expansion in Saginaw, Michigan. As you may know, I authored a provision in the Chips and Science Act to ensure funding also went to ensuring the domestic production of the types of chips used in automobiles – or “legacy chips.” In 2020, a shortage of these chips left thousands of vehicles sitting in lots waiting for parts and caused the price of a car to increase significantly for consumers. If confirmed, will you continue to prioritize Chips Act funding for domestic mature node production? What additional steps will you take to ensure that the United States has a secure, domestic source of these mature chips?

Answer:

The CHIPS Act advanced efforts to ensure that the United States has robust domestic manufacturing capacity and supply chains to support the production of semiconductors whether they are leading edge or legacy-node semiconductors, including those critical to automotive and other applications. Upon confirmation, I plan to ensure that the Department is delivering on those requirements in the most effective way possible.

5. Mr. Lutnick, Michigan received over \$1.5 billion in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law's BEAD program to build rural broadband across Michigan and make sure every Michigander has access to high-speed internet. The process for deploying these funds has been long due to Congress's requirement to improve FCC mapping prior to the deployment of funds to ensure that funding would flow to those communities who are the most in need. Those projects are starting now, and our state needs certainty that the rug won't be ripped out from under them as we build out broadband networks over the next decade. If confirmed, do you commit to preventing rural broadband funding from being frozen, withdrawn, or otherwise unnecessarily delayed?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I plan to review BEAD funding closely, ensure thoughtful consideration is provided to all states, including Michigan, and implement the law to ensure efficient and effective outcomes for all Americans.

6. Mr. Lutnick, the BEAD program statute, supported by both Democrats and Republicans, allows states that have left over BEAD funds after fully deploying broadband internet to all the unserved locations in the state to use those leftover funds for digital skills training to ensure that our workforce has the internet skills they need in our modern economy. The law does not allow NTIA to punish states who used funds efficiently by clawing back leftover funds – instead states must be allowed to use these funds for their intended purpose. If confirmed will you commit to follow the law and allow states that have leftover BEAD funds to use them on eligible digital skills and literacy programs?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I commit to reviewing BEAD nondeployment funds to ensure that they are efficiently and effectively used consistent with the law.

7. Mr. Lutnick, the Michigan Manufacturing Tech Center (MMTC) does amazing work with small and medium manufacturers across my state – doing personalized consultations, workforce training, and helping small businesses integrate new technologies into their manufacturing process. The MMTC is part of the Department of Commerce’s Hollingsworth Manufacturing Extension Partnership Program. Unfortunately, Project 2025 called for privatizing this program, which would reduce the capacity of Centers like MMTC to support Michigan small businesses. These centers have an exceptionally high return on investment – MMTC creates \$18 dollars in economic growth for every \$1 it spends. If confirmed, do you commit to opposing efforts any efforts to privatize or defund Manufacturing Extension Partnerships?

Answer:

President Donald J. Trump will make a decision in due course regarding the budget and spending priorities that he will submit to Congress in the coming months.

8. Mr. Lutnick, the Department of Commerce houses the Census Bureau, a critical agency. The Bureau conducts the census, the only comprehensive source of data about our nation. It also leads essential surveys – like the Economic Census and the American Community Survey – which provide the data for our nation’s economic indicators, and help businesses determine how to invest and create jobs. Census data affect our roads, hospitals, schools, fire departments, veterans’ services, small businesses, and more. To carry out this mission, especially in rural communities and others that are hard to count, the Bureau needs sufficient funding. If confirmed, will you work with me to ensure that Census Bureau funding is a priority for the Commerce Department?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I commit to working with you and your staff on issues pertaining to the Census Bureau.

9. Mr. Lutnick, Next fiscal year, the Census Bureau is planning to conduct the 2026 Census Test, the first major on-the-ground tests to prepare for the 2030 Census. These tests, conducted in six sites nationwide, will evaluate innovative technologies and methodologies to help ensure the next decennial count is accurate and cost efficient, including for rural areas, tribal areas, high-growth areas, and others. To ensure the success of this critical planning phase, the Bureau needs the ability to hire staff, as well as reliable funding. What are your plans for ensuring continuity of operations for the 2026 Census Test?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I plan to work closely with Census Bureau leadership and staff to ensure the effectiveness of its operations.

10. I proudly serve as Co-Chair of the Great Lakes Task Force and have long advocated for the NOAA Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory (GLERL). GLERL studies the dynamic environments and ecosystems of the Great Lakes. The work produced and shared by GLERL informs local decisions for safe and sustainable resource management throughout the Great Lakes Basin. GLERL research also plays a crucial role in the work carried out by the Coast Guard's Center of Expertise for Oil Spill Preparedness and Response in Sault Ste Marie. If confirmed, will you support stable funding and continued attention to GLERL and its mission in the Great Lakes?

Answer:

I will work closely with you and your office with regard to funding and proper attention to the GLERL.

11. Mr. Lutnick, the Chips and Science Act included \$11 billion for research and development. Given the speed of innovation in the semiconductor industry and the unusually high reliance the sector has on R&D, disseminating these funds in a fair and transparent manner is essential to ensure that the progress we are making in onshoring semiconductor supply chains is not lost. If confirmed, will you commit to fairly allocating the remaining R&D funding to keep our semiconductor sector competitive?

Answer:

Ensuring that the U.S. has robust domestic manufacturing capacity and supply chains to support the production of semiconductors whether they are leading edge or legacy-node semiconductors like those critical to automotive and other applications is called for by the CHIPS Act. Upon confirmation, I plan to ensure that the Department is delivering on those requirements in the most effective way possible.

12. The Department of Commerce strongly encouraged applicants for CHIPS funding to use a project labor agreement (PLA) to reduce the risk of delays in project delivery and ensure the creation of good-paying jobs. If a PLA is not used, the Department of Commerce requested applicants demonstrate workforce continuity with other measures, such as commitments to target labor hours expected to be performed by registered apprentices. If confirmed, will you keep this policy in place?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I plan to ensure that the CHIPS funding agreements are structured to deliver the most benefit to Americans and that we maintain a robust domestic semiconductor manufacturing base.

13. It has been reported that while at Cantor-Fitzgerald, you were responsible for managing the assets of the cryptocurrency, Tether. It appears that this Administration wants to take an active look into regulations surrounding digital assets, including cryptocurrencies. In

fact, in his first week in office, the President issued an Executive Order establishing a working group designed to examine the future of digital assets in this country, and the position for which you've been nominated was listed as a member of this working group. The future of cryptocurrencies and digital assets is one that will require bipartisan cooperation, and it is critical that agendas are not being pursued as we craft common-sense rules and regulations. As such, do you believe that your previous work with Tether is a conflict of interest that should prohibit you from engaging in conversations about future federal treatment and regulation of digital assets?

Answer:

I will follow applicable government ethics laws and regulations based on guidance from the Ethics Office of the Department of Commerce.

SENATOR TAMMY BALDWIN (D-WI)

American Innovation

The Department of Commerce does significant work to ensure U.S. companies are able to compete with China and drive American innovation.

1. How will you utilize programs within the Commerce Department, including those authorized by the bipartisan CHIPS and Science Act, to promote American innovation?

Answer:

The Department plays a critical role in driving American innovation, especially in areas of critical technology that are critical for our competition with China. From efforts at NIST to drive innovation AI, quantum science, semiconductors, and cybersecurity, to programs at BIS that help protect U.S. leadership in critical those same critical technology areas, I will ensure that the Department is well positioned to continue to drive U.S. innovation. I look forward to working with the Administration and Congress to that end.

Wisconsin BioHealth Tech Hub

Wisconsin's BioHealth Tech Hub positions the state as a global leader in personalized medicine, which tailors healthcare treatment to a patient's unique history and genetic code.

2. Last week, I spoke with community leaders involved with Wisconsin's Tech Hub. Their number one question was, can we count on future funding?

Answer:

Please see below for the answer to questions 2 and 3.

The first tranche of funding has been disbursed, but there are millions more owed to the Tech Hub over the next 5 years.

3. Should the Wisconsin Biohealth Tech Hub be concerned they may not receive future tranches of funding?

Answer:

I recognize the importance of the Tech Hubs program and look forward to closely reviewing the program and staying in contact with your office to ensure that the American people are getting the benefit of the bargain.

Sec 232 Steel Derivatives

Section 232 tariffs have been successful in defending the U.S. steel and aluminum industry from dumping by foreign producers, primarily China. However, in response to these tariffs, foreign producers have shifted their production downstream. Prestressed concrete (PC) steel strand, a derivative steel product made from steel wire rod, and fabricated structural steel (FSS), a derivative steel product made from steel beams, sections, and plate are not currently protected under the Sec. 232 tariff program. These downstream products are critical to our nation's

physical infrastructure. Expanding the 232 tariffs to cover these products would lead to increased domestic production capacity and protect American jobs.

4. If confirmed, will you expand the scope of the Section 232 steel tariffs to cover prestressed concrete steel strand and fabricated structural steel?

Answer:

I understand President Donald J. Trump's America First Trade Policy Memorandum directs the Department to study the existing steel tariffs and suggest potential changes. Upon confirmation, I will be sure the Department specifically looks at prestressed concrete steel strand and fabricated structural steel.

AD/CVD

Over the past decade, the number of U.S. trade remedy orders has grown substantially. During this time, instances of transshipment and other forms of customs fraud have also increased. Foreign producers, particularly in China, have created elaborate schemes using shell companies to obscure the origin of their products and evade AD and CVD duties.

5. With that context, do you believe the United States' "trade toolbox" needs to be updated?

Answer:

I look forward to working with Congress to ensure the Department has the resources and tools it needs to strongly enforce our trade laws.

6. If so, will you work with me to strengthen Customs' enforcement tools to uphold lawfully imposed trade orders and preserve the effectiveness of U.S. trade laws?

Answer:

Yes.

Trade Enforcement

The Commerce Department has a critical role to play in the enforcement of our trade laws and in ensuring a level playing field for domestic manufacturers. Unfortunately, we have seen time and again foreign producers flood the U.S. market with dumped and subsidized imports, as well as design all sorts of tactics to evade our trade laws and current orders. While China is notorious for this type of unfair trade activity, producers from historically allied nations take advantage of our trade laws as well. For example, in steel, the United States has orders against unfair trade from a long list of foreign producers including many in the EU and Japan. Japan alone has at least a dozen AD/CVD orders on steel products on the books and just last November, the International Trade Administration preliminarily determined that Japanese company Nippon Steel dumped hot-rolled steel products on the US market by a margin of 29.03 percent during the period between October 1, 2022 and September 30, 2023. This is a substantial increase in the dumping

margin from the previous level of 1.39 percent is a worrisome trend that suggests the company continues to embrace anti-competitive trade practices that harm American steelworkers.

7. If confirmed, what actions will you direct Commerce Department officials to take action to enhance trade enforcement and thwart unfair trade antics, in order to ultimately strengthen and grow domestic manufacturing by American workers?

Answer:

I look forward to working with Congress to ensure the Department has the resources and tools it needs to strongly enforce our trade laws.

Chinese Connected Vehicles

The Commerce Department recently finalized rulemaking to restrict the import or sale of “connected vehicle” technology – as well as completed vehicles that contain the restricted hardware or software – from foreign adversaries. Today’s modern vehicles are embedded with sensors, microphones, cameras, automated driving systems, and other potential access points for data collection and operational control that must not fall into the hands of China, Russia, or other adversaries. This rule is an important step towards protecting our national security from dual use military technologies of adversaries, but also our economic welfare as Chinese companies increasingly look for opportunities to penetrate our critical infrastructure markets and disrupt supply chains.

I am concerned, however, that the rule was limited only to the passenger vehicle market – excluding commercial vehicles such as buses from the final scope even though Commerce itself noted that the national security risks are “grave.” While the rule is largely proactive in keeping Chinese passenger autos out of the U.S. market, the same cannot be said of commercial vehicles such as buses. These commercial vehicles produced by Chinese companies – such as BYD – are already operating throughout the United States as transit systems in major U.S. cities, moving passengers at major U.S. airports, moving cargo at our ports, and perhaps soon bringing our children to school or moving goods across our highways on trucks.

8. BIS states in its final rule that it intends to propose a new rule specifically tailored to the commercial vehicle sector. Mr. Lutnick, will you commit to prioritizing such rulemaking for commercial vehicles and continue to evaluate the necessity for similar restrictions on drones, vessels and maritime applications, and other applications where U.S. economic and national security are at risk?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I will be sure to get briefed on this potential rule and take appropriate action.

MBDA

The Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) provides high quality, technical assistance to Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs) – including counseling and mentoring,

assisting with access to capital, contracts and grants, and supporting job creation and retention. The funding provided supports small businesses and local communities across the country.

9. What are your priorities for MBDA?

Answer:

My priority for MBDA is for it to operate efficiently, effectively, and in compliance with the law.

10. Can minority owned small businesses count on your advocacy and support?

Answer:

Yes.

NOAA

11. What can we expect from the Department regarding budget requests for NOAA?

Answer:

NOAA provides important and valuable services to the American people. The Department will seek to ensure that it continues to provide these services in an efficient and effective manner to live up to its mission.

SENATOR TAMMY DUCKWORTH (D-IL)

Question Topic: Trade Policy

Increasing the resiliency of our nation's supply chain is crucial for both our economy and our national security. To do this, we need strong relationships with friendly partner countries. One of Commerce's primary regional agreements is the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity – also known as IPEF. IPEF established the Agreement Relating to Supply Chain Resilience to work with member nations on critical economic sectors as well as identify risks in current supply chains.

1. If confirmed, what will you do to help foster strong relationships with friendly countries who can help make our supply chains more resilient?

Answer:

The Indo-Pacific is a critical region for our economic and national security. Upon confirmation, I will leverage the tools available to the Department to deepen ties with countries in the region that want to partner with us to promote mutual security and a level playing field.

Question Topic: Economic National Security

In 2023, CNN reported that parts made by more than a dozen U.S. and Western companies were found inside a single Iranian drone downed by Ukraine. If confirmed, you will oversee the Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS), whose export control mission is critical for our national security.

2. If confirmed, how will you ensure BIS is pursuing robust export controls to keep sensitive materials out of the hands of bad actors?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I plan to review the authorities and tools under BIS closely to ensure sensitive materials are kept out of the hands of bad actors.

3. Do you think BIS needs more resources from Congress?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I look forward to working with Congress to make sure BIS is properly resourced.

Question Topic: Including People with Disabilities

According to the International Finance Corporation, people with disabilities represent a global market bigger than China. This population consists of 1.85 ***billion*** people – with \$1.9 ***trillion*** in annual disposable income. In the United States, more than 70 million people have a disability. That number is expected to increase as our aging population continues to grow. Ensuring these Americans can fully access – and help grow—our nation’s economy will be critical to keep America competitive.

4. If confirmed, how will you ensure that Americans with disabilities will be able to fully access and contribute to our economy?

Answer:

Growing the U.S. economy is a distinct priority of mine. Upon confirmation, I will use all appropriate tools to grow the economy and to ensure that Americans with disabilities have access and contribute to its growth.

SENATOR JACKY ROSEN (D-NV)

Topic. Tariffs on Homebuilding Materials

There is an affordable housing crisis in Nevada and across the nation, and tariffs on homebuilding materials will only serve to increase housing costs. Since 2020, more than 80 percent of construction materials have gone up in price. Softwood lumber prices have been especially volatile, increasing approximately 35 percent in the last five years. While the U.S. does produce its own lumber, we cannot meet our own demand from domestic production alone. As the top exporter of lumber to the U.S., Canada serves as a critical partner in our efforts to increase housing supply by ensuring that we have a reliable source of lumber at a competitive price. President Trump's proposed tariffs are estimated to raise the already-high cost of construction materials by \$3 billion to \$4 billion, which would make homebuilding drastically more expensive and ultimately increase housing costs for homebuyers and renters.

1. If confirmed, do I have your commitment that any tariffs imposed by the Administration will be narrowly targeted so as to not negatively impact housing affordability?

Answer:

I understand President Donald J. Trump's America First Trade Policy Memorandum directs the Department and other agencies to study tariffs in a variety of contexts. I cannot speak to those efforts and, moreover, I should refrain from prejudging the results of that study or predict how President Trump may react to their findings.

SENATOR BEN RAY LUJAN (D-NM)

1. Yes or no, do you commit to continuing to invest in domestic chip manufacturing through the CHIPS Act as authorized by Congress?

Answer:

Yes, I am committed to investing in domestic chip manufacturing and look forward to reviewing all the agreements and ensuring that they are structured to deliver the best results for the American people.

2. Yes or no, do you commit to supporting and working with our National Laboratories?

Answer:

Yes, where there is a programmatic need to for the Department to work with the DOE National Laboratories, it should do so.

3. If the Supreme Court rules that an order taken by the President is unlawful, will you refrain from carrying out that order? Please answer yes or no.

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I will take an oath to defend the Constitution. I will abide by that oath.

4. Yes or no, if you are confirmed, will you commit to protecting the independence of the Department of Commerce Inspector General?
 - a. Yes or no, will you commit to letting the Inspector General choose their investigations and audits?

Answer:

I commit to following the law and advancing the Inspector General's mission to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Department's programs and operations and to detect and deter waste, fraud, and abuse.

- b. Yes or no, would you ever direct the Inspector General to investigate something or someone at the request of the White House?

Answer:

I commit to following the law and advancing the Inspector General's mission to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Department's programs and operations and to detect and deter waste, fraud, and abuse.

5. The President may fire inspectors general. However, he must notify Congress 30 days in advance of such action. Last week, Trump fired the Department of Commerce Inspector General without providing the 30 days notice. Yes or no, did President Trump comply with the law when he terminated the Commerce Inspector General?

Answer:

I look forward to working with the new Inspector General upon confirmation.

6. Do you commit to allowing states to move forward with their current BEAD plans as approved by the NTIA without forcing them to adopt changes that would significantly slow down their process of getting shovels in the ground?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I look forward to analyzing the BEAD program, including states' plans, to ensure that all Americans are getting the benefit of the bargain, as Congress intended.

7. As you embark on the process of examining ways in which government spectrum can be shared to support commercial uses, will you commit to preserving and extending the principles that underpinned CBRS in expanding access to wireless spectrum in ways that incentivize greater innovation and competition?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I will take a thoughtful, rigorous, and data-driven approach to spectrum management, taking into account national security, commercial applications, and the effects on the American taxpayer. I look forward to analyzing CBRS to determine the best ways to foster innovation and competition.

SENATOR JOHN HICKENLOOPER (D-CO)

Small Business: Key agencies in the Department of Commerce like the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) and the Economic Development Administration have been directed by Congress to foster startup creation, support entrepreneurs and small businesses, and develop innovation hubs to increase regional growth. The Department also oversees trade compliance and exports of U.S. goods to markets overseas.

1. Mr. Lutnick, if confirmed, how will you ensure any new tariffs or revised trade actions do not harm America's "Main Street" economy and how will you measure the success of economic development programs carried out by the Department of Commerce?

Answer:

I understand President Donald J. Trump's America First Trade Policy Memorandum directs the Department and other agencies to study tariffs in a variety of contexts. Although I cannot speak to those efforts, I will say that our goal will be to advance the cause of American workers and families and to put them in a better economic position than the one they have been subjected to for the last four years.

Economic Development: The Economic Development Administration's (EDA) Good Jobs Challenge supports regional workforce training systems to establish sectoral partnerships that train and place workers in good jobs. The awardees funded by the Good Jobs Challenge expand opportunities across diverse populations, regions, and communities including paid on-the-job training opportunities.

2. Mr. Lutnick, if confirmed, how will you direct EDA to build upon these programs to support workforce training opportunities?

Answer:

I appreciate the valuable work that EDA has done to advance American job creation. As with all programs, I will review EDA programs closely to ensure that it is operating efficiently and effectively and providing American taxpayers with the benefit of the bargain.

Artificial Intelligence and Data Centers: Artificial intelligence models require a large amount of data to be trained to generate summaries, create lifelike images, or analyze complex supply chains. AI is now driving a surge in demand for new data centers to support AI model training and cloud computing activities. As AI demand increases, so will the energy required to power data centers. We should continue attracting investment, establishing standards, and developing state of the art cooling technologies here in the U.S. to improve data center efficiency.

3. Mr. Lutnick, if confirmed, how will you work with federal agencies, states, and industry partners to support responsible domestic data center growth?

Answer:

U.S. leadership on artificial intelligence is vitally important to our national and economic security. Data centers and the energy to power them are crucial to supporting this objective. Upon confirmation, I look forward to looking with you and your staff to identify the best ways to promote data center growth that benefits American workers and manufacturers.

Artificial Intelligence & Standards: During your testimony, you emphasized your belief in standards as a foundation for promoting American innovation and augmenting the development lifecycle for AI applications. Standards development organizations are considering issuing a standard for the independent evaluation of AI models. These evaluations could either be performed internally from an independent unit of an AI developer organization or by a trustworthy third party. Independent evaluations of AI models can ensure AI applications made available to consumers and businesses protect sensitive data from being leaked and ensure the application performs as intended.

4. Mr. Lutnick, do you believe that voluntary and evidence-based standards that establish consistent methods for independent evaluations (either within an organization or by a third party) of AI models could be a valuable tool to help U.S. innovators maintain a competitive lead in AI?

Answer:

U.S. leadership on AI standards is vitally important to our national and economic security. Upon confirmation, I look forward to looking with you and your staff to identify the best ways to achieve this goal.

Communications Supply Chain and Cybersecurity: Last Congress, we worked on a bipartisan basis to close the funding shortfall to a Federal Communications Commission program to remove dangerous Chinese equipment from communications networks. The Salt Typhoon attack showed how we need to do a better job securing our data and communications infrastructure.

The CHIPS & Science Act prioritizes supply chain resiliency and the development of new Open Radio Access Network (Open-RAN) technology manufactured by trusted U.S. vendors.

5. Mr. Lutnick, in the wake of threats we have seen from Chinese attacks and insecure equipment made by Huawei, if confirmed, what is your plan to build and upgrade our communications networks with trusted and secure vendors?

Answer:

I am aware of the threat posed by Huawei and other companies associated with the Chinese Communist Party and People's Liberation Army. I look forward to working with the Administration and Congress to ensure that the programs and resources of the Department and our partners ensure that the United States is able to maintain a robust and trusted telecommunications infrastructure.

Cybersecurity: During your nomination hearing, you used the cybersecurity standards and guidance developed by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) as a model for how the Department of Commerce should approach Artificial Intelligence. In recent years, NIST has produced cybersecurity guidance for organizations of all sizes including the recently updated

Cybersecurity Framework and associated resources. Even beyond the Department of Commerce, several U.S. Departments and Agencies coordinate, assert jurisdiction over, or enforce sector-specific rules, with respect to cybersecurity. As a result, small businesses struggle to allocate resources to understand and implement cyber defenses and many large companies with sufficient resources still find themselves vulnerable to preventable cyberattacks. These attacks can result in financial losses, service disruptions, legal consequences, and economic harm that directly impacts Americans.

6. Mr. Lutnick, if confirmed, what actions would you take, or recommend Congress to take, to amplify the impact of cybersecurity standards and guidance produced by the Department of Commerce to improve cyber resilience across the private sector?

Answer:

NIST's prior work on cybersecurity standards is the gold standard for the world. Upon confirmation, I will build on this work through the creation of AI standards, and I look forward to working with you and your staff to improve cyber resilience.

7. Will you commit to helping harmonize the application of cybersecurity rules, regulations, or guidelines across the federal government where appropriate?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I look forward to working with you and your staff on this issue.

Export Controls & Emerging Technologies: Global competition in key technologies has continued to increase in recent years. To protect sensitive U.S. technologies from adversaries, Presidents Trump and Biden have issued export controls to limit the sale of U.S.-made semiconductor, quantum, AI, and aerospace technologies to countries of concern. This month, the Department of Commerce updated export controls to promote access to U.S. innovations in AI among trusted allies while limiting the sale of advanced semiconductors to adversaries.

8. Mr. Lutnick, if confirmed, how would you carry out an export control strategy that balances safeguarding U.S. technologies with promoting American competitiveness globally?

Answer:

This is a central question moving forward, and I will commit to collect inputs from Congress, industry, and the public as we work to properly protect U.S. technology from exploitation by malign actors.

9. Which reforms do you believe Congress should provide the Department following the enactment of the Export Control Reform Act of 2018?

Answer:

President Trump's America First Trade Policy Memorandum directs the Department to study this issue. I should refrain from prejudging the results of that study, but I look forward to working with Congress to implement any proposals that result from it.

10. How will you work to increase interagency collaboration in the development of export controls and provide sufficient transparency for impacted U.S. companies?

Answer:

There is a robust interagency process around U.S. export controls, and I will work to ensure this process runs smoothly and with as much transparency as possible while still protecting privacy and national security.

11. In your view, what amount of additional personnel and appropriations would the Bureau of Industry and Security, including the Office of Information and Communications Technology Services (ICTS), need to succeed?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I look forward to closely reviewing the needs of the Department of Commerce, including BIS.

Semiconductors & NSTC: Considering the ongoing importance of ensuring the US is leading in both the design and manufacturing of semiconductor chips, it is essential the progress we have made via the CHIPS R&D Office and the National Semiconductor Technology Center (NSTC) continues.

12. Can you commit to ensuring continued funding at the levels that Congress appropriated and the Commerce Dept has awarded to date?

Answer:

I will efficiently and effectively execute on congressional funding that Congress appropriates to the Department.

13. Specifically, for the NSTC facilities in Arizona, California, and New York? What is your timeline?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I look forward to getting detailed briefings on those announced projects and the expected timelines.

14. How will you ensure different NSTC facilities established across the United States remain coordinated with each other within their program activities and those of the Department of Defense's Microelectronics Commons?

Answer:

The Department plays a critical role in driving American innovation, especially in areas of critical technology that are critical for our competition with China. From efforts at NIST to drive innovation AI, quantum science, semiconductors, and cybersecurity, to programs at BIS that help protect U.S. leadership in critical those same critical technology areas, I will ensure that the Department is well positioned to continue to drive U.S. innovation. I look forward to working with the Administration and Congress to that end.

Outdoor Recreation: The Department of Commerce recently created an Office of Travel and Tourism. The Office has a dedicated mission to attract domestic and international visitors to landmarks across the country. Colorado has a rich and diverse outdoor recreation economy that spurs travel and tourism to communities across the state and contributes \$14B to our GDP.

15. Mr. Lutnick, if confirmed, how would you ensure the enforcement of tariffs does not unduly harm the needs of the outdoor recreation sector and the Department of Commerce's tourism mission?

Answer:

President Donald J. Trump, through his America First Trade policy, will fight for American workers and businesses, including the U.S. travel and tourism industry. The President has made clear that tariffs are a crucial tool in making sure that America is no longer taken advantage of by our trading partners.

16. What is your general view on exemptions, which have precedent following prior tariffs, to avoid undue harm to small businesses including the outdoor recreation sector?

Answer:

I understand President Donald J. Trump's America First Trade Policy Memorandum directs the Department and other agencies to study tariffs in a variety of contexts. I cannot speak to those efforts and, moreover, I will refrain from prejudging the results of that study.

Tariff Exceptions

Under the last Trump Administration, many companies filed for exemptions from the application of tariffs issued under Section 301 of the Trade Act. The Trump Administration has stated its intent to apply tariffs in the near future on neighboring allies ahead of the USMCA review in 2026. There are U.S.-based companies with operations in the U.S. and Canada who are fearful they will have to pay tariffs on their own intra-company, essentially internal shipments of supplies, necessary to make their products.

17. How should new tariff policies account for intra-company shipments?

Answer:

I understand President Donald J. Trump's America First Trade Policy Memorandum directs the Department and other agencies to study tariffs in a variety of contexts. I will refrain from prejudging the results of that study.

U.S. Mexico Canada Agreement Review: The Trump Administration entered into the U.S. Mexico Canada Agreement (USMCA) to reform the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). USMCA requires a comprehensive review before the end of 2026 to evaluate trade compliance under the USMCA. Colorado's top three exports to Canada and Mexico include

agricultural, machinery, and electronics products. Colorado also has a leading aerospace sector that contributes to our national security and space exploration missions.

18. Mr. Lutnick, if confirmed, how will the Department of Commerce help ensure all U.S. businesses have a level playing field as part of the upcoming USMCA review?

Answer:

One of the Department's core missions is to ensure fair treatment for U.S. businesses and an even playing field on the global stage. That will remain a priority.

19. Which sectors of the economy do you believe will benefit the most by the USMCA review?

Answer:

I will not prejudge the results of the coming review.

Tariffs and Chips: The first Trump Administration imposed tariffs on Chinese goods such as motor vehicle parts. According to the U.S. International Trade Commission, the full burden of the tariffs were passed on to our own importers, rather than any of this cost being incurred by the Chinese exporters. The Trump Administration also imposed tariffs on steel and aluminum which increased prices and production costs in industries like car manufacturing and oil and gas. While the bipartisan CHIPS Act is growing manufacturing here in the U.S., the President stated he will be imposing tariffs on semiconductors from Taiwan.

20. Mr. Lutnick, if confirmed, will you ensure that the U.S. government honors its financial commitments under the CHIPS Act to companies who are ramping up their domestic manufacturing facilities?

Answer:

I will ensure that the American people get the benefit of the bargain, and that CHIPS Act money achieves its intended goal. I will take a rigorous approach to ensure that the agreements that the Department makes as part of the CHIPS act deliver for the American people.

21. What is your plan to offset rising costs for the raw materials we need for domestic manufacturing of semiconductors?

Answer:

Semiconductors represent a critical supply chain for the economic and national security of the United States. Upon my confirmation, the Department will be taking a whole of government approach as we seek to secure those supply chains.

Broadband Workforce: Every American deserves access to high-speed broadband. Too many Coloradans and households across rural America lack access to any broadband service. While Congress has invested over \$42 billion to expand access to high-speed broadband, we need to make sure we have enough workers to build these important projects. Reports indicate we need roughly 30,000 more workers in the next five years to build federal broadband projects we invested in.

22. Mr. Lutnick, what is your plan to ensure the U.S. has enough workers ready to put shovels in the ground to build the broadband networks of the future?

Answer:

The United States has the greatest workforce in the world. Upon confirmation, I will ensure that we have the workers to build out these broadband networks of the future. I will engage with all stakeholders to achieve a highly-trained broadband workforce that will help lead our country into the future.

Natural Disaster Monitoring & NOAA: We have seen devastating wildfires rampage across the city of Los Angeles. In Colorado, we are all too familiar with natural disasters such as wildfires and drought. Today, every part of the United States is vulnerable to some form of a natural disaster. We need to continue pushing the limits of space-based Earth observation technologies, weather forecasting capabilities, and mitigation planning, thus fortifying our economy, national security, and individuals' safety.

23. Mr. Lutnick, if confirmed, how do you plan to expand NOAA's research efforts that enable better forecasts, give earlier warnings, and improve preparedness for natural disasters?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I will seek to ensure that NOAA leads the world in providing the best forecasts, earliest warnings, and maintains optimal preparedness for national disasters to the benefit of the American people.

24. How do you plan to support NOAA and its University-based Cooperative Institutes to serve the Nation's needs in weather, oceans, and coasts?

Answer:

The Cooperative Institutes are key partners with NOAA in its mission to serve the American people.

25. Will you support necessary funding for NOAA's GeoXO program as well as next-generation Low Earth Orbit (LEO) weather and space weather satellite programs?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I will ensure that there is funding for NOAA to continue to collect robust data from satellites to satisfy its mission to the American people.

Spectrum: The National Telecommunications & Information Administration (NTIA) manages federal agencies' use of spectrum used by federal agencies to complete their missions. The Institute of Telecommunications Sciences is located in Boulder, CO and is the leading spectrum lab for the Department of Commerce. It is no secret that Congress and the Executive Branch have struggled to balance the commercial demands for spectrum with essential federal agency missions. For example:

- In the auction for commercial licenses in the 24 GHz band, agencies such as NOAA and NASA, as well as scientists, raised concerns about potential electromagnetic interference impacting weather forecasting.
- In the auction for commercial licenses in the “C-Band”, agencies such as the FAA and the airline industry raised concerns about potential interference impacting aviation safety technologies.
- In various Congressional, Interagency, and private sector conversations around a provision in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law regarding the “Lower 3 GHz” band, concerns have been raised about any auction for commercial licenses causing potential interference impacting national security missions carried out by the Department of Defense.

These proceedings saw disagreements arise over (1) the design, execution, and leadership of studies to evaluate the feasibility of sharing or reallocating spectrum and (2) the likelihood of spectrum interference to adjacent spectrum users.

26. If confirmed, how would you ensure the Department of Commerce executes a balanced spectrum management approach that fairly considers the equities of the federal agencies it is responsible by statute for representing? Will you commit to allowing evidence-based and impartial studies to help guide spectrum policy decisions?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I will take a thoughtful, rigorous, and data-driven approach to spectrum management, taking into account national security, commercial applications, and the effects on the American taxpayer.

Spectrum Relocation Fund: Under the Spectrum Relocation Fund, an agency may only be reimbursed for a “comparable capability” in terms of costs to modify their systems following a spectrum reallocation or spectrum sharing action.

27. Do you believe this mechanism has been interpreted in a way that limits the ability of federal agencies to modify and modernize their systems following a spectrum reallocation or sharing action? If yes, what impact would this have on the ability of federal agencies from fulfilling their missions which require access to spectrum?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I will review the Spectrum Relocation Fund to determine its impact on federal agencies.

SENATOR JOHN FETTERMAN (D-PA)

1. The Department of Commerce plays a key role in administering and enforcing our anti-dumping/counter vailing duty (AD/CVD) laws. These are tools that domestic industry uses to counter unfair trade practices that put American workers at a disadvantage on the international playing field. Despite these tools, China has built up a massive amount of overcapacity in sectors like steel and is flooding the market globally with dumped and subsidized steel. Chinese companies are also making massive investments in steelmaking capacity outside China through cross border subsidization, to evade payment of duties on from prior AD/CVD investigations. **Do you agree that we need more tools to address schemes like these to protect critical domestic industries like iron and steel making? If so, what suggestions do you have for steps Commerce can take under existing statute to address unfair trade practices and what recommendations would you propose to Congress to ensure a level playing field for American workers and industry?**

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I look forward to studying the issue and working with Congress to make sure that the Department has the resources and tools it needs to strongly enforce our trade laws and address unfair trade practices by foreign actors.

2. I am closely monitoring the current outbreak of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) and the serious threat it poses to our nation's public health, food production, and the way of life of farmers across the country. President Trump has threatened to levy tariffs as early as February 1, 2025 on Mexico and Canada, with other nations implicated in the near future. The President, yourself, and I share the same goals to reshore American manufacturing and reduce our dependence on China. However, I am concerned that disruptions in our supply chain from retaliatory tariffs or increased prices could negatively impact the ability of biomedical manufacturers currently operating in the United States to meet increased demand should this outbreak become something much worse. **Are you committed to closely reviewing the impact that tariffs on medical equipment, vaccines, medications, and any components that are necessary to manufacture these aforementioned items, would have on the ability of U.S. manufacturers to meet demand if the current HPAI outbreak becomes more severe?**

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I will do whatever is necessary to ensure the safety and prosperity of the American people.

3. It's essential that the new generation of American high-tech manufacturing being enabled by CHIPS Act funding creates quality jobs that can sustain Pennsylvania families and their communities. Strong labor protections, including the use of Project Labor Agreements (PLAs), are indispensable to getting that done. I was glad that the

Department of Commerce recognized the importance of PLAs and other pro-worker tools and policies, like requiring the use of registered apprentices, to delivering these high-tech investments on time and within their budgets. **If confirmed, will you commit to maintaining the Department's policies supporting the use of PLAs and strong labor protections for the Pennsylvania workers who are breaking their backs to build our future?**

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I look forward to reviewing all such agreements and ensuring that they are structured to deliver the best results for the American people.

SENATOR LISA BLUNT ROCHESTER (D-DE)

Question Title: Broadband Access and Digital Skills

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) administers the Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) program and the Digital Equity Act. These laws increase access to broadband and help improve digital skills to underserved communities like seniors and veterans. Older Americans are particularly at risk of being scammed and defrauded. Digital skills can help prepare seniors to recognize and avoid online traps.

1. Do you think NTIA should continue to support digital skills training for older Americans?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I look forward to analyzing the BEAD program to ensure that all Americans, including older Americans, are getting the benefit of the bargain.

2. Do you think NTIA should support digital skills training for veterans, Americans in rural areas, and those who face substantial barriers to skills training?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I look forward to analyzing the BEAD program to ensure that all Americans, including veterans and rural Americans, are getting the benefit of the bargain.

3. What steps will you take as Secretary to promote digital literacy for seniors and other underserved communities?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I look forward to analyzing the BEAD program to ensure that all Americans, including seniors and other underserved communities, are getting the benefit of the bargain.

4. Do you think artificial intelligence literacy is a component of digital literacy?

Answer:

Understanding how artificial intelligence works and how it impacts the lives of all Americans is important to protecting U.S. national and economic security.

5. More than 50,000 Delaware households needed support to afford internet access and benefited from the Affordable Connectivity Program, which lapsed in April 2024. Do you think affordable internet access is essential to full participation in the modern economy?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I will work to ensure that programs designed to make broadband more affordable address the problem effectively.

6. Do you think the Commerce Department, NTIA, and the Administration should prioritize making broadband more affordable for Americans?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I will work to ensure that programs designed to make broadband more affordable address the problem effectively.

7. Delaware was the second state in the nation to submit its BEAD plan, which has been approved. Delaware is on track to be the first fully connected state. Do you commit to honoring Delaware's approved BEAD plan and implement the law as written by Congress?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I plan to review BEAD funding closely, ensure thoughtful consideration is provided to all states, including Delaware, and implement the law to ensure efficient and effective outcomes for all Americans.

Question Title: Advanced Manufacturing Competitiveness

8. Manufacturing is critical to our economic growth, national security, and general prosperity. Historically, the U.S. has led the world as an innovation and manufacturing powerhouse. However, that leadership is not guaranteed. Over the last several decades, our country has fallen behind in many ways compared to competitors around the world. The Manufacturing USA program administered by the Department of Commerce helps address this problem. As I mentioned in the hearing, one of those centers of excellence is located in my state – the National Institute for Innovation in Manufacturing Biopharmaceuticals (NIIMBL). Institutes like NIIMBL accelerate the development and adoption of innovative manufacturing technologies, develop new standards and best practices, create and train a manufacturing workforce, and help secure our economic security. What strategies would you employ as Secretary to support advanced manufacturing leadership?

Answer:

Bringing back all manufacturing to the United States, including advanced manufacturing, is a distinct priority of mine. Upon confirmation, I will use all appropriate tools available to me to accomplish this goal.

9. Do you believe that continued investment in bipartisan efforts like the Manufacturing USA program is important to ensure the U.S. competitiveness?

Answer:

Promoting U.S. manufacturing and competitiveness is a distinct priority of mine. Upon confirmation, I will use all appropriate tools available to me to accomplish this goal.

10. The Delaware Manufacturing Extension Partnership spurs innovation, investment, and opportunity for workers in my state. Project 2025 suggests privatizing the Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnership. Do you agree with this proposal?

Answer:

I was not affiliated with Project 2025. I am not in a position to opine on any of its plans or materials.

11. Do you think the MEP program is valuable?

Answer:

I appreciate the valuable work that the MEP program has done to advance American manufacturing. As with all programs, I will review the MEP closely to ensure that it is operating efficiently and effectively to ensure that American taxpayers are getting the benefit of the bargain.

Question Title: Women in Construction

12. The Million Women in Construction Initiative at the Department of Commerce aims to expand the American construction workforce by doubling the number of women in construction over the next decade. President Trump issued an Executive Order eliminating DEI programs. Do you consider the Women in Construction Initiative a DEI program?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I will carefully examine all Department programs and the effect of President Donald J. Trump's Executive Order, titled "Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Programs and Preferencing" on those programs.

13. Would you end Commerce's support for increasing the number of women in the construction industry?

Answer:

Upon confirmation, I will carefully examine all Department programs and the effect of President Donald J. Trump's Executive Order, titled "Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Programs and Preferencing" on those programs.

Question Title: US Patent and Trademark Office

14. You have shared that as a patent holder you have personal experience with the US Patent and Trademark Office. Are you aware of how President Trump's plan to end remote work for federal workers could impact the USPTO?

Answer:

I am aware and I am excited by the benefits of the President's plan. I share his belief that in-person, on-site work improves collaboration, communication, and accountability. For those positions with critical skill sets and hard-to-fill vacancies, I will work with USPTO to evaluate remote work as a potential tool to be employed on a case-by-case basis to address unusual needs.

15. USPTO has used remote work as a business strategy since the 90's and 96% of the USPTO workforce is remote or has telework agreements. How would you suggest USPTO prevent massive disruptions if they must comply with President Trump's plan?

Answer:

I would not expect any disruptions. I share the President's belief that in-person, on-site work improves collaboration, communication, and accountability, and will be a net positive for every agency. For those positions with critical skill sets and hard-to-fill vacancies, I will work with USPTO to evaluate remote work as a potential tool to be employed on a case-by-case basis to address unusual needs.

Question Title: NOAA's Independence

16. NOAA is a critical bureau at the Department of Commerce that is responsible for climate monitoring, coastal restoration, environmental satellite information, and other services that low-lying states and coastal communities like Delaware rely on. Do you commit to honoring the scientific integrity of NOAA's work?

Answer:

Having reliable, more accurate data will enable better policy and thus improve Americans' lives. Upon confirmation, I will support NOAA's scientific work and make sure the agency continues to follow the scientific method faithfully.