

Senate Commerce Committee Nominee Questionnaire, 117th Congress

Instructions for the nominees: The Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation asks you to provide typed answers to each of the following questions. It is requested that the nominee type the question in full before each response. Do not leave any questions blank. Type "None" or "Not Applicable" if a question does not apply to the nominee. Return printed answers to Committee. Begin each section (i.e., "A", "B", etc.) on a new sheet of paper.

A. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION AND QUALIFICATIONS

1. Name (Include any former names or nicknames used):

Arun Venkataraman

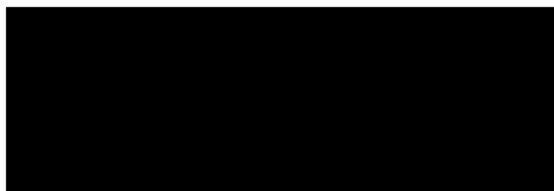
2. Position to which nominated:

Assistant Secretary for Global Markets and Director General of the U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service

3. Date of Nomination:

May 27, 2021

4. Address (List current place of residence and office addresses):



**Office:
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20230**

5. Date and Place of Birth:

August 24, 1973 Coimbatore, India

6. Provide the name, position, and place of employment for your spouse (if married) and the names and ages of your children (including stepchildren and children by a previous marriage).

Not applicable

7. List all college and graduate degrees. Provide year and school attended.

Bachelor of Arts, Tufts University (1991-1995)

Master of Arts in Law and Diplomacy, The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University (1996-1999)

Juris Doctor, Columbia Law School (1995-1999)

8. List all post-undergraduate employment, and highlight all management-level jobs held and any non-managerial jobs that relate to the position for which you are nominated.

- **Counselor to the Secretary (U.S. Department of Commerce, March 2021-Present) – managerial position**
- **Senior Director (Visa Inc., April 2019-March 2021) – managerial position**
- **Trade and Investment Advisor (Steptoe & Johnson, May 2018-March 2019) – managerial position**
- **Director of Policy (International Trade Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, April 2014-January 2017) – managerial position**
- **Director for India (Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, August 2010-April 2014) – relevant non-managerial position**
- **Associate General Counsel (Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, April 2006-August 2010) – relevant non-managerial position**
- **Legal Affairs Officer (World Trade Organization, September 2002-February 2006) – relevant non-managerial position**
- **Associate (Steptoe & Johnson, November 2001-August 2002) – relevant non-managerial position**
- **Law Clerk (Judge Jane Restani, U.S. Court of International Trade, October 2000-September 2001) – relevant non-managerial position**
- **Associate (Steptoe & Johnson, October 1999-September 2000) – relevant non-managerial position**
- **Law Clerk (Judge Jane Restani, U.S. Court of International Trade, August-September 1999) – relevant non-managerial position**

- **Summer Associate (Steptoe & Johnson, Washington, DC, May-August 1999) – relevant non-managerial position**
- **Summer Associate (Steptoe & Johnson, Washington, DC, May-August 1998) – relevant non-managerial position**
- **Intern (Judge Jane Restani, U.S. Court of International Trade, New York, NY, August-December 1997) – relevant non-managerial position**
- **Summer Associate (Shearman & Sterling, New York, NY and Washington, DC, May-August 1997) – relevant non-managerial position**
- **Research Assistant (Professor Jeswald Salacuse, Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Medford, MA, June-August 1996) – relevant non-managerial position**

9. Attach a copy of your resume.

Attached.

10. List any advisory, consultative, honorary, or other part-time service or positions with Federal, State, or local governments, other than those listed above, within the last ten years.

None.

11. List all positions held as an officer, director, trustee, partner, proprietor, agent, representative, or consultant of any corporation, company, firm, partnership, or other business, enterprise, educational, or other institution within the last ten years.

None.

12. Please list each membership you have had during the past ten years or currently hold with any civic, social, charitable, educational, political, professional, fraternal, benevolent or religiously affiliated organization, private club, or other membership organization. (For this question, you do not have to list your religious affiliation or membership in a religious house of worship or institution.). Include dates of membership and any positions you have held with any organization. Please note whether any such club or organization restricts membership on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, age, or disability.

Organization	Office Held (if any)	Dates of Membership
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- | | | |
|---|---------------------|---|
| 1. DC Bar | None | 2000-present (inactive 2013-2018) |
| 2. MD Bar | None | 1999-2003 |
| 3. Washington International Trade Association (WITA) | Board Member | 2019-Present
(Board Member 2020-Present) |

No restriction on membership on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, age, or disability.

13. Have you ever been a candidate for and/or held a public office (elected, non-elected, or appointed)? If so, indicate whether any campaign has any outstanding debt, the amount, and whether you are personally liable for that debt.

No.

14. List all memberships and offices held with and services rendered to, whether compensated or not, any political party or election committee within the past ten years. If you have held a paid position or served in a formal or official advisory position (whether compensated or not) in a political campaign within the past ten years, identify the particulars of the campaign, including the candidate, year of the campaign, and your title and responsibilities.

None.

15. Itemize all political contributions to any individual, campaign organization, political party, political action committee, or similar entity of \$200 or more for the past ten years.

Biden for President - \$500 (07/13/20)
Biden Action Fund - \$500 (07/13/20)
Biden Victory Fund - \$500 (09/03/20)
Biden for President - \$500 (09/03/20)
Biden Victory Fund - \$500 (10/11/20)
Biden Victory Fund - \$500 (10/11/20)
Biden for President - \$500 (10/11/20)
Biden for President - \$500 (10/11/20)
Biden for President - \$800 (10/29/20)
Sri for Congress - \$20 (10/31/20)
Sri for Congress - \$20 (10/24/20)
Sri for Congress - \$20 (10/17/20)
Sri for Congress - \$20 (10/10/20)

Sri for Congress - \$20 (10/03/20)
Sri for Congress - \$100 (9/9/20)
Haley Stevens for Congress - \$250 (3/31/2019)

16. List all scholarships, fellowships, honorary degrees, honorary society memberships, military medals, and any other special recognition for outstanding service or achievements.

- **USTR Kelly Award for outstanding performance and extraordinary leadership (2011)**
- **USTR Team Awards for leading settlement of litigation on Chinese subsidies and for contributions to passage and implementation of U.S.-Peru Free Trade Agreement (2008)**

17. Please list each book, article, column, Internet blog posting, or other publication you have authored, individually or with others. Include a link to each publication when possible. Also list any speeches that you have given on topics relevant to the position for which you have been nominated. Do not attach copies of these publications unless otherwise instructed.

- **USMCA Unlocked: Working Under the New NAFTA, co-authored with Susan G. Esserman, Luke Tillman, Lauren Shapiro, March 2019 (<https://www.steptoec.com/en/news-publications/usmca-unlocked-working-under-the-new-nafta.html>).**
- **“India: A Turing Point on Trade?”, co-authored with Susan G. Esserman, Harvard Asia Quarterly, Spring 2002 (https://projects.iq.harvard.edu/files/har/files/vol_6.2_spring_2002.pdf).**
- **“Binational Panels and Multilateral Negotiation: A Two-Track Approach to Limiting Contingent Protection?”, Columbia Journal of Transnational Law, vol. 37 (1999) (no link available).**

18. List all digital platforms (including social media and other digital content sites) on which you currently or have formerly operated an account, regardless of whether or not the account was held in your name or an alias. Include the name of an “alias” or “handle” you have used on each of the named platforms. Indicate whether the account is active, deleted, or dormant. Include a link to each account if possible.

- **LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/venkataramanarun**

- **Instagram: www.instagram.com/clubarunv/**
- **Twitter: @arunincali**
- **Facebook: account deleted, but believe it was listed under my full name**

19. Please identify each instance in which you have testified orally or in writing before Congress in a governmental or non-governmental capacity and specify the date and subject matter of each testimony.

None.

20. Given the current mission, major programs, and major operational objectives of the department/agency to which you have been nominated, what in your background or employment experience do you believe affirmatively qualifies you for appointment to the position for which you have been nominated, and why do you wish to serve in that position?

I have spent over two decades working on international trade issues in the public and private sector. In particular, I have devoted most of my career to public service, working to advance the interests of U.S. business and workers by expanding commercial opportunities in foreign markets.

I wish to serve in this position in the Biden-Harris Administration because I believe the Global Markets business unit of the International Trade Administration (ITA), working closely with Congress, can help put the U.S. on a long-term trajectory of economic success at this pivotal moment in our history. As our country emerges from the pandemic, Global Markets' role in expanding opportunities to sell U.S. goods and services to foreign markets and attracting job-creating foreign investment to the U.S. will help sustain the post-pandemic economic recovery. By engaging foreign governments to improve their commercial policy environments and improving our strategy for competing in those markets, Global Markets will help strengthen the competitiveness of U.S. industry and support growing jobs in the U.S. If confirmed, I would also be eager for Global Markets to work with other offices in the Commerce Department and with USTR to make trade agreements work better for American industry and workers. This would include offering more export-oriented services to a wider group of small and medium-sized enterprises, ensuring full access to those services for all Americans, and making sure our trading partners follow through on their obligations under those agreements.

Through my experience, I have worked to acquire skills that will allow me, if confirmed, to successfully perform the role of Assistant Secretary for Global Markets and Director General of the U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service. I have led negotiations with key trading partners to hold them accountable to their trade commitments and open markets for U.S. goods and services. I have defended U.S. trade laws against foreign governments' efforts to limit their effectiveness and stood up for U.S. industry and workers when faced with unfair foreign trade practices. I have implemented and participated in government dialogues and developed new tools of engagement with foreign governments that are designed to strengthen U.S. negotiating positions and facilitate cooperation in challenging policy areas. I have also worked with Congress in the implementation of trade agreements, development of trade promotion authority, and the strengthening of U.S. trade laws, and look forward to building on this cooperation if confirmed.

Central to my experience has been close coordination with U.S. industry. My previous positions have required a deep understanding of the impact of foreign government policies on U.S. business operations and employment across a range of sectors. Through my work in the private sector and open and regular engagement with stakeholders while in government, including individual companies and trade associations, I have developed that understanding and worked to shape U.S. policy responses that would secure the benefits of open foreign markets for U.S. industries and their workers.

In addition to developing and refining the skills needed to execute this position, I have had the privilege of working before at ITA as the Director of Policy. In that position, as in the position I currently occupy as Counselor to the Secretary, I worked closely with a number of the teams in Global Markets and with many members of the U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service. I am deeply familiar with the functions of Global Markets, the depth of expertise brought to bear by Global Markets professionals (including in the U.S. and foreign field) for U.S. companies, and the importance of coordinating the organization's work with other business units in ITA, as well as across the bureaus in Commerce. While I will undoubtedly have more to learn in the position, I believe my significant experience with Global Markets would allow me to make immediate contributions to ITA and the Department if confirmed.

21. What do you believe are your responsibilities, if confirmed, to ensure that the department/agency has proper management and accounting controls, and what experience do you have in managing a large organization?

Proper management and accounting controls, especially for a government organization like Global Markets, are critical to ensuring efficiency, fairness and accountability to the American people. Global Markets is the largest business unit in the International Trade Administration (ITA), with many team members located outside Washington, DC and outside the U.S., and requiring the application of both Foreign Service and Civil Service guidelines to staff in the organization. In addition, domestic and foreign travel, as well as consultation and appropriate partnerships with stakeholders, are critical to the effective functioning of the organization. These and other key features of Global Markets underscore the need for active, attentive and thoughtful management of the organization. If confirmed, I will work with other leaders in the Commerce Department to ensure the development and implementation of proper management and accounting controls, including the observance of procedures and policies, enforcement of reporting rules, and establishment of appropriate metrics to evaluate performance.

In my career I have developed the skills needed to perform this task, if confirmed. I have led teams, including members that reported directly to me as well as others in my business unit, to define objectives, develop organization-wide positions and implement new initiatives. I have also driven teams across business functions and across agencies to identify and work towards a shared goal, overcome differences, and produce concrete outcomes for stakeholders. When managing my own team, I have supervised and evaluated their performance; helped develop metrics to support such evaluation; implemented tools to facilitate communication and information-sharing among the team; established priorities and revised them to respond to changing business needs; and ensured compliance with established policies and procedures including budgetary requirements. If confirmed, I would apply this experience to the needs of Global Markets to ensure the full and proper implementation of management and accounting controls.

22. What do you believe to be the top three challenges facing the department/agency, and why?

I believe the top three challenges facing Global Markets are the following:

1. **Reaching many more small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), including minority- and women-owned businesses, to become exporters.** Notwithstanding the dynamic U.S. domestic market, exporting can help support the long-term viability of U.S. SMEs. With the dramatic growth in a middle class overseas, consumers outside the U.S. represent a critical opportunity for SMEs that should not be ceded to our competitors. However, despite Global Markets' commitment to supporting SME exports, less than one percent of SMEs export from the U.S. SMEs face particular challenges entering their first export market given their limited resources and bandwidth. With many countries still struggling to gain their economic footing after Covid, and looking inward to protect their markets, the commercial and policy environments for SMEs have become even more challenging. Global Markets is well-positioned to help U.S. SMEs overcome these challenges but can do more to reach a broader SME population that would benefit most from its export services.
2. **Helping U.S. companies compete in export markets against third-country products.** U.S. companies can successfully compete against goods and services from anywhere in the world. However, their competitors from third countries often have advantages of government support that are not matched by the U.S. Government. In some cases, with allies as well as with countries like China, those competitors have significantly greater commercial diplomacy resources available to promote their exports and advocate on behalf of their sales to governments. In other cases, those competitors are supported by State-led policies that offer subsidies and export financing. Global Markets can develop new strategies to evaluate the reach of these competitors in various export markets and identify actions the U.S. Government can take to re-create a level playing field in those markets.
3. **Aligning Global Markets' engagement with foreign governments to better support U.S. competitiveness.** The Biden-Harris Administration is implementing a series of actions to ensure the long-term competitiveness of the U.S. economy, including by investing in

critical American industries and establishing resilient supply chains. Global Markets can reinforce these actions by partnering with like-minded governments in these and other areas. In this way, enhancing bilateral trade and investment with key allies can help both countries reduce their dependence on China and other less reliable suppliers.

B. POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

1. Describe all financial arrangements, deferred compensation agreements, and other continuing dealings with business associates, clients, or customers. Please include information related to retirement accounts.

I continue to participate in a Visa defined contribution plan, but the plan sponsor no longer makes contributions.

2. Do you have any commitments or agreements, formal or informal, to maintain employment, affiliation, or practice with any business, association or other organization during your appointment? If so, please explain.

No.

3. Indicate any investments, obligations, liabilities, or other relationships which could involve potential conflicts of interest in the position to which you have been nominated. Explain how you will resolve each potential conflict of interest.

In connection with the nomination process, I have consulted in coordination with the Department of Commerce Ethics Office and the Office of Government Ethics. Any conflict of interest will be resolved according to the terms of an ethics agreement that I have entered into with the Commerce Designated Agency Ethics Official, which will be provided to this Committee. In the event that an actual or potential conflict of interest arises during my appointment, I will consult with Commerce ethics officials and take the measures necessary to resolve the conflict.

4. Describe any business relationship, dealing, or financial transaction which you have had during the last ten years, whether for yourself, on behalf of a client, or acting as an agent, that could in any way constitute or result in a possible conflict of interest in the position to which you have been nominated. Explain how you will resolve each potential conflict of interest.

None.

5. Identify any other potential conflicts of interest, and explain how you will resolve each potential conflict of interest.

Any conflict of interest will be resolved according to the terms of the aforementioned ethics agreement.

6. Describe any activity during the past ten years, including the names of clients represented, in which you have been engaged for the purpose of directly or indirectly influencing the passage, defeat, or modification of any legislation or affecting the administration and execution of law or public policy.

- **Visa Inc.: Implementation of financial services provisions in U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA)**
- **Visa Inc.: Negotiation and implementation of financial services provisions in China Phase One trade agreement**
- **Visa Inc.: Negotiation of financial services issues in U.S.-India trade negotiations**
- **Visa Inc.: Negotiation of financial services issues in OECD tax negotiations**
- **Visa Inc.: Negotiation of financial services issues in U.S.-UK trade negotiations**
- **Visa Inc.: Negotiation of financial services issues in U.S.-Kenya trade negotiations**
- **Visa Inc.: Negotiation of financial services issues in WTO e-commerce negotiations**
- **Visa Inc.: Financial services issues in connection with meetings of the G7, G20 and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum**
- **Visa Inc.: Financial services issues in Argentina, Bangladesh, Belarus, Brazil, Burma, China, European Union, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Korea, Nepal, Nigeria, Serbia, Singapore, South Africa, Ukraine, Vietnam**
- **Visa Inc.: Sanctions or potential sanctions in connection with Burma, China, Russia, Turkey and Venezuela**
- **Steptoe & Johnson (client: Varian): Exclusion from Section 301 tariffs for U.S. medical equipment**
- **Steptoe & Johnson (client: wish.com): Protection of intellectual property rights for online platform**
- **Steptoe & Johnson (client: U.S.-India Strategic Partnership Forum): Application of tariffs under the Generalized System of Preferences**

None of my lobbying activities met the threshold for registering as a lobbyist under the Lobbying Disclosure Act at any point in the past 10 years.

C. LEGAL MATTERS

1. Have you ever been disciplined or cited for a breach of ethics, professional misconduct, or retaliation by, or been the subject of a complaint to, any court, administrative agency, the Office of Special Counsel, professional association, disciplinary committee, or other professional group? If yes:

No.

- a. Provide the name of agency, association, committee, or group;
 - b. Provide the date the citation, disciplinary action, complaint, or personnel action was issued or initiated;
 - c. Describe the citation, disciplinary action, complaint, or personnel action;
 - d. Provide the results of the citation, disciplinary action, complaint, or personnel action.
2. Have you ever been investigated, arrested, charged, or held by any Federal, State, or other law enforcement authority of any Federal, State, county, or municipal entity, other than for a minor traffic offense? If so, please explain.

No.

3. Have you or any business or nonprofit of which you are or were an officer ever been involved as a party in an administrative agency proceeding, criminal proceeding, or civil litigation? If so, please explain.

No.

4. Have you ever been convicted (including pleas of guilty or *nolo contendere*) of any criminal violation other than a minor traffic offense? If so, please explain.

No.

5. Have you ever been accused, formally or informally, of sexual harassment or discrimination on the basis of sex, race, religion, or any other basis? If so, please explain.

In August 1994, when I was 20 years old, I worked as a counselor at a summer camp in Massachusetts. During the program, a high school

participant claimed that I had made him uncomfortable after asking me to administer medical treatment (application of calamine lotion) to a rash on his back. While the student did not file a formal complaint, he mentioned this to another student, who brought it to the attention of program leadership.

I informed the program leadership of what had happened, and that I had not done anything inappropriate or against program rules, but I had also allowed myself to be in a position where I was alone with this participant and could not substantiate my proper behavior. As a result, I decided, with their agreement, to resign from the program.

6. Please advise the Committee of any additional information, favorable or unfavorable, which you feel should be disclosed in connection with your nomination.

None.

D. RELATIONSHIP WITH COMMITTEE

1. Will you ensure that your department/agency complies with deadlines for information set by congressional committees, and that your department/agency endeavors to timely comply with requests for information from individual Members of Congress, including requests from members in the minority?

Yes.

2. Will you ensure that your department/agency does whatever it can to protect congressional witnesses and whistle blowers from reprisal for their testimony and disclosures?

Yes.

3. Will you cooperate in providing the Committee with requested witnesses, including technical experts and career employees, with firsthand knowledge of matters of interest to the Committee?

Yes.

4. Are you willing to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Congress on such occasions as you may be reasonably requested to do so?

Yes.

(Nominee is to include this signed affidavit along with answers to the above questions.)

F. AFFIDAVIT

ARUN VENKATARAMAN being duly sworn, hereby states that he/she has read and signed the foregoing Statement on Biographical and Financial Information and that the information provided therein is, to the best of his/her knowledge, current, accurate, and complete.



Signature of Nominee

Subscribed and sworn before me this day of 2021, July 19



Notary Public



ARUN VENKATARAMAN



EXPERIENCE

Senior Director, Global Government Engagement
Visa, Inc.

2019–2021
Washington, DC

Led DC-based team, and developed and executed engagement strategy, in advocacy before the U.S. government and foreign governments, as well as with trade associations, international organizations, and other stakeholder groups, on issues affecting payments services in foreign markets, including international trade, digital economy, tax and sanctions.

Trade & Investment Policy Advisor
Steptoe & Johnson LLP

2018–2019
San Francisco, CA

Advised on intellectual property rights and e-commerce platforms, the application of blockchain to international trade transactions, foreign data and artificial intelligence regulations, and the implementation of U.S. and foreign trade policies.

Director of Policy (Senior Executive Appointee of Obama Administration)
International Trade Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce

2014–2017
Washington, DC

Led cross-functional teams across the Commerce Department to remove trade and investment barriers and strengthen the global competitiveness of U.S. industry, including:

- Advocating for new market opportunities for U.S. firms—including rules on intellectual property, data flow restrictions, customs, financial services, and State-owned enterprises—in negotiations on the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (T-TIP), and U.S.-China Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT).
- Passing Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) legislation in Congress through coordinated engagement with industry, Executive Branch, and Members of Congress.
- Securing improvements in competition law, semiconductor policies, and intellectual property protection from China.

Director for India
Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR)

2010–2014
Washington, DC

Developed, implemented and revised U.S. government strategies to resolve trade and investment policy challenges in India, including:

- Successfully averting billions of dollars in potential blocked U.S. exports with Indian government's removal of solar local content requirements, suspension of import restrictions on information technology products, and revision of telecom licensing policy.
- Leading teams across U.S. government agencies to negotiate with Indian government officials on intellectual property, technology policy, and other issues to effectuate policy change.

Associate General Counsel 2006–2010
Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) Washington, DC

Provided legal advice to USTR policy offices in ongoing bilateral and multilateral negotiations, and represented the United States in litigation at the World Trade Organization on Chinese and European industrial subsidies and China's non-market economy status in antidumping investigations.

Legal Officer, Appellate Body Secretariat 2002–2006
World Trade Organization (WTO) Geneva, Switzerland

Advised the WTO on appeals in litigation between countries under WTO rules and conducted training activities in English and French for developing country government officials.

Associate 1999-2000, 2001–2002
Steptoe & Johnson LLP Washington, DC

Counseled clients on litigation at the Court of International Trade and the World Trade Organization, trade negotiations and market entry strategies.

Law Clerk, Judge Jane A. Restani 2000–2001
U.S. Court of International Trade New York, NY

Drafted legal memos on issues raised in U.S. antidumping and countervailing duty litigation and in appellate proceedings before U.S. Circuit Courts of Appeal when sitting by designation.

EDUCATION

Columbia Law School New York, NY
 Juris Doctor, Harlan Fiske Stone Scholar 1999

The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University Medford, MA
 Master of Arts in Law and Diplomacy 1999

Tufts University Medford, MA
 Bachelor of Arts, *Magna Cum Laude*, Phi Beta Kappa 1995

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Awards

- USTR Kelly Award for outstanding performance and extraordinary leadership (2011)
- USTR Team Awards for leading settlement of litigation on Chinese subsidies and for contributions to passage and implementation of U.S.-Peru Free Trade Agreement (2008)

Languages

- French (oral and written proficiency)
- Spanish (basic oral and written skills)
- Tamil (oral proficiency)