

Ranking Member Wicker

Opening Statement

Department of Commerce Budget & Oversight Hearing

April 27, 2022

Thank you Senator Cantwell. I too would like to welcome our distinguished witness, Department of Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo. Today's hearing will focus on the Department's budget request for Fiscal Year 2023 and provide oversight of its agencies and programs. I would also like to thank Secretary Raimondo and Deputy Secretary Graves for their visits to my home state of Mississippi.

Madam Secretary, you are to be commended for your leadership and work on a number of important funding requests that are reflected in the administration's FY23 budget request. Although there are too many programs to address in my brief remarks, let me single out my support for the proposed funding increases for the Manufacturing USA program, the Manufacturing Extension Partnership, and the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA). These important programs will help support small businesses, minority entrepreneurs, and manufacturers to create jobs and grow key sectors of our economy.

Congress has offered strong support for these programs – and other initiatives to strengthen domestic manufacturing and supply chains – in the Senate-passed U.S. Innovation and Competition Act and in the House-passed America COMPETES Act. These bills also include funding for the CHIPS Act, a long-overdue initiative to help restore U.S. leadership in semiconductor manufacturing and R&D. The

committee would welcome Secretary Raimondo's perspective on the urgency of funding the CHIPS Act and of Congress delivering a conference report.

Last year's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law placed the Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) at the center of our efforts to expand broadband access and close the digital divide. I look forward to hearing an update on NTIA's preparation to distribute over \$40 billion for broadband buildout to the states, as well as any updates on when the FCC's new broadband maps will be completed.

One key aspect of broadband expansion is improved spectrum coordination. Today's hearing is an opportunity to discuss how NTIA's recently announced Spectrum Coordination Initiative with the FCC will promote more efficient and effective spectrum management policies for federal and non-federal users.

In March of this year, President Biden announced a Trans-Atlantic Data Privacy Framework with the European Union (EU). This new framework would reestablish a legal mechanism for the transfer of EU citizens' personal data to the United States. I hope the Secretary will update the committee on what additional actions we can expect from the Administration as it finalizes this agreement with the EU.

I want to applaud the Department's \$88 million request for the Office of Space Commerce, or OSC. Senator Cantwell and I have supported legislation known as the SPACE Act to codify the OSC's role in tracking of space objects and debris. The committee would appreciate hearing the Secretary's vision for the OSC and the opportunities for U.S. commerce in outer space.

Finally, no Department of Commerce hearing would be complete unless I mentioned red snapper. I hope the Department's request for increased funding to build fisheries survey capacity will help improve how NOAA calculates catch limits. Recreational fishermen should not be unfairly penalized for inaccurate federal data. In my state of Mississippi, we have invested significant time and money to develop a more accurate understanding of how much fish recreational fishermen harvest. I will continue to work with you and NOAA to reach that outcome.

Madam Secretary, there are a lot of topics to cover this morning. I look forward to your remarks and the discussion.