

Statement of Paul Piquado

**Nominee for Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Import Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
Nomination Hearing before the Senate Finance Committee**

September 12, 2011

Thank you, Chairman Baucus, Ranking Member Hatch, and members of the Committee. I am deeply honored to be here today as President Obama's nominee to be Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Import Administration. I am thankful to have had the privilege to serve in the Import Administration as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy and Negotiations for the past year and a half, and I am humbled by the confidence that the President has placed in me in nominating me for this position. I would also like to thank Former Secretary of Commerce and now Ambassador Gary Locke and Under Secretary Francisco Sanchez for their leadership and support of my nomination, as well as the members of the Committee and committee staff with whom I have met during the past weeks.

I would also like to publicly thank and acknowledge my parents, John and Dorothy Piquado who, as school teachers, instilled in me at a very young age an interest in international affairs and public service, my grandfather Carl Piquado who, with my grandmother Alice, raised six children working as a stonemason, my sister Laura, and especially my wife Meredith Weaver for her tremendous support and love. Many others, including my extended family, and friends and colleagues too numerous to name—many of whom are here today—also deserve recognition for their support and to whom I am forever grateful.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I will have the great privilege of leading the dedicated team of public servants at the Import Administration. The Import Administration plays a critical role in helping to ensure that America's businesses and workers have the opportunity to compete against their foreign counterparts on a level playing field by remedying distortions in the market that are caused by the unfair dumping or subsidization of goods sold in the United States. The agency also plays an increasingly important role in maintaining important export markets for U.S. firms overseas both by helping to ensure that foreign trade remedy actions that may target U.S. products are conducted transparently and in accordance with international rules, and by administering the Foreign Trade Zones program.

These activities are critically important to help safeguard jobs and support the competitive strength of American industry both in the United States and overseas. Given this, if confirmed, I will be guided by one single objective, to ensure that the laws and programs within the jurisdiction of the Import Administration are applied and enforced as fully and robustly as possible, in a manner that is as open and transparent as possible. The robust enforcement of the trade laws is one of the pillars of President Obama's National Export Initiative, which is an initiative that is designed to double U.S. exports within 5 years in support of millions of jobs.

President Obama said that "When the playing field is even, nobody can beat us." I agree. America's businesses and workers are among the most productive, skilled, and educated in the world, and they do not fear competition. All they want is to know that everyone, including their foreign competitors, plays by the same rules and that free trade is also fair trade. The trade remedy laws, which were first created by Congress nearly a century ago, provide parties that demonstrate that they have been subject to unfair trade with a reliable and impartial mechanism to help achieve this goal. If confirmed, I will work every day to ensure that the AD/CVD laws are vigorously applied, whenever and wherever the evidence demonstrates that foreign governments or firms have unfairly subsidized or dumped products sold in the United States.

I am particularly motivated to take up this important role in part because I have spent a good portion of my professional career working on international trade matters, and I understand the very real impact that unfair trade can have on the economy and jobs in communities across the country.

As the principal advisor to Governor Rendell on trade and investment policy, I had the opportunity to help develop strategic guidance on an array of international trade and economic policy matters intended to promote job creation and ensure that Pennsylvania's businesses and workers could compete and win in the global economy. This included working to assist firms that were suffering from the effects of unfairly traded goods. In addition, in my current position I have had the opportunity to help oversee the formulation and implementation of policies governing the administration of the AD/CVD statutes, and, working with counterparts in the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, to help develop the government's positions in ongoing trade remedy negotiations. Before entering government service I also had the opportunity to advise parties on a variety of trade matters including, among other things, working on World Trade Organization disputes. I believe that this experience will greatly assist me in performing my responsibilities as Assistant Secretary should I be confirmed.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Hatch, I would like to thank you and the other members of the Committee for the great privilege of being considered by this body for this important position. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with you to ensure the trade remedy laws are transparently and vigorously enforced. Thank you and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.