

**Opening Statement of Dr. Julie Callahan**  
**Nominee to serve as the Chief Agricultural Negotiator**  
**United States Senate Committee on Finance**  
**October 29, 2025**

Chairman Crapo, Ranking Member Wyden, and distinguished Members of the Senate Finance Committee, it is a great honor to appear before you today. I am grateful and honored to have been recommended by Ambassador Greer and nominated by President Trump to serve as the United States Trade Representative's Chief Agricultural Negotiator.

I would like to thank my husband Scott, and our kids, Vanessa, Maria, and Nathaniel, and my extended family, who are a constant source of inspiration, strength, and support, and I would not be where I am today without them.

I was able to hone my diplomacy and negotiating skills at an early age, as the youngest of five girls, growing up in a house with one full bath. I also learned the importance of hard work, discipline, and self-sufficiency from my paternal grandmother, who was widowed at an early age, and worked full time, raising her children at a time where single parenting was not common, and my maternal grandfather who was one of ten, and supported his mother and siblings by becoming a plumber's apprentice in his early teens when kids today would be just starting high school.

I would also like to thank the incredible mentors and role models that I have had over my nearly 20 years as a civil servant, and to the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the organization that brought me to Washington, DC on a science diplomacy fellowship, my first entry into the Executive Branch. I have been blessed with the opportunity to work with and learn from many immensely talented individuals, at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the U.S Food and Drug Administration, and at USTR, and I am truly grateful for that.

I would also like to express my thanks to the Members and staff that I have met with over the past few weeks in preparation for this hearing, and that I have met with over several years in my role as the Assistant USTR for Agriculture. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you on the critical trade issues facing farmers and ranchers across our great country.

The experiences that have shaped my career, and the agricultural trade negotiations that I have participated in over two decades, have deeply affected my world view. When I look at a map of the world, I see tariff and non-tariff barriers – as well as opportunities.

American agriculture is second to none, in terms of quality, safety, and efficiency – from advanced genetics and livestock production practices, the commitment to sustainable practices that allow for increased yields with fewer inputs, biotechnology that allows for no-till practices and innovative products to meet consumer demand. But that said, American agriculture is under great stress. Farmers and ranchers rely on export markets to break even, and often find themselves on the receiving end of unfair trade practices that threaten their very existence.

Frankly, many trading partners do not treat the United States as well as we treat them. And moreover, many treat our competitors better than they treat us. I cannot tell you the number of times that trading partners have told me that agriculture is “too sensitive” to include in negotiations. For example, they say “we can’t open our market to U.S. dairy because it is so sensitive,” yet they are importing billions of dollars of EU dairy products. That’s just not right.

The President’s America First Trade Policy offers a path to reset our trade relationships in a holistic manner, and re-establish a level playing field for American farmers. I understand that despite the President’s success in lowering inflation, unleashing American energy, and unlocking new market access, farmers continue to struggle. China is using agriculture as a weapon, and American farmers and ranchers are feeling the pain.

If confirmed, I will work with this Committee, others in Congress, those in the Administration, and all interested parties to craft and implement an agricultural trade policy that promotes fair and reciprocal trade that benefits all sizes and sectors of the agricultural economy.

If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to achieve the best possible results for your constituents and American farmers, ranchers, fisheries and food manufacturers across the United States.

Thank you for your consideration, and I would be happy to answer any questions.