

**Statement by David M. Spooner
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U.S. Department of Commerce
December 14, 2005
11:00 a.m.**

Mr. Chairman, Senator Baucus, and distinguished Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

If I may, I'd like to briefly recognize a few family members who are here: My wife Nancy, our children, Emma and Nicholas, my Mom, Roberta, and my sister, Christine. My Dad and I both wish that he could be here today, but a work commitment kept him from traveling with Mom. Mr. Chairman, my extended family out in Iowa is probably all watching the web-cast.

I am deeply honored that President Bush and Secretary Gutierrez have asked me to serve as the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Import Administration. My tenure as the Textile Negotiator in the Office of the United States Trade Representative has imbued me with a deep sense of both the importance of trade to the continued health of our economy and of the importance of enforcing our trade laws and agreements to level the playing field for American workers.

I have deep respect for Congress' constitutional authority to regulate trade. As a former Hill staffer, I appreciate the important role that Congress plays in the negotiations and enforcement of our laws and agreements. For this reason, the Executive Branch has a responsibility to consult regularly with Congress to help ensure that we wield this authority in a manner consistent with Congress' guidance. As an appointee who has spent four years serving as the Administration's liaison to an import-sensitive industry, I also know full well that Congress expects the Administration to faithfully apply our unfair trade laws.

If confirmed, I will make enforcement of our existing dumping and countervailing duty (CVD) orders, and enforcement of our trade agreements, a top priority. I have absolutely no tolerance for fraud or circumvention of our unfair laws. I have not tolerated such malfeasance in my current job, where I have negotiated tough Customs enforcement provisions in our trade agreements, and would not tolerate malfeasance while at the Import Administration. Fraud and circumvention are simply wrong, and continued support for trade frankly depends upon adequate vigilance in enforcing our dumping and CVD orders and textile quotas. American workers can compete with anyone in the world if the playing field is level. It's up to the Administration to level the playing field through trade agreement negotiations, by administering our unfair trade laws, and by adequately enforcing our orders once we act.

If confirmed, and throughout my tenure, I will bear in mind that the work of the Import Administration is not simply the rote application of the law. Every day, the Import Administration makes decisions that impact real people and real companies. Many of the companies impacted by unfair trade are small, family-owned operations struggling to get by. We

have a moral, as well as a legal, imperative to defend these companies against unfair pricing and foreign subsidies.

This Administration seeks to help American companies maintain their competitive edge in the global marketplace. An important part of this effort is the utilization and enforcement of our unfair trade laws.

Thank you for your time. I would be happy to answer any questions that the Committee may have.