United States Senate Committee on Finance
November 10, 2026
Hearing to Consider the Pending Nominations of Francis Browne; Christopher Abbott; and Robert Stebbins

Questions for the Record submitted to Christopher Abbott from Senator Grassley.

Question 1: I recently led a letter to the Department of Commerce on behalf of the Iowa congressional delegation concerning a trade dispute that has arisen between the United States and Mexico. In retaliation for tariffs the U.S. has imposed on certain seasonal agricultural imports from Mexico, Mexico has launched an investigation into antidumping and countervailing duties against U.S. pork products. It's a big concern for Iowa pig farmers that Mexico could issue tariffs against U.S. pork products. If confirmed, will you work to bring an end to the tit-for-tat agricultural trade investigations between the United States and Mexico?

Yes.

Question 2: In your work for the Department of Commerce, you have specifically sought to address the transshipment of products subject to antidumping and countervailing duties. China has been one of the worst offenders of shipping their subsidized products through third party countries before entering the United States. Transshipment is an issue that not only undermines global fair trade but also hurts domestic manufacturers.

Could you please expand on the work you have done to address this issue? Is there more the United States could be doing to encourage our trading partners to recognize U.S. antidumping and countervailing duties against China?

During my time performing the non-exclusive functions and duties of the Assistant Secretary, I approved multiple referrals to Customs and Border Patrol in situations where E&C staff identified suspected evasion of AD/CVD duties. These were the first referrals to CBP by the Commerce Department under the Enforce and Protect Act, which was passed by Congress in 2015 and signed into law in 2016. This is particularly significant as Commerce is uniquely positioned to identify AD/CVD duty evasion given its role in conducting annual reviews of AD/CVD orders. Additionally, I have significantly increased the number of employees in the office responsible for making these referrals.

I also approved the Department to countervail transnational subsidies. This is a significant step to ensure that foreign companies cannot evade countervailing duties by moving their operations across a border while continuing to receive the same subsidies they had been receiving previously.

Finally, I have discussed trends and concerns I see with respect to circumvention with other trade-remedy authorities. This work is supported by Commerce's transparent AD/CVD process, which makes both our decisions and our reasoning publicly available. I have heard of multiple instances of foreign governments and foreign companies relying on these decisions to support or initiate their own investigations, including into potential transshipment.

Questions for the Record submitted to Christopher Abbott from Senator Cornyn.

Question 1: Texas has the most Foreign Trade Zones (FTZs) of any state in the nation. The FTZ program supports American manufacturing, especially in critical industries such as superintelligence, semiconductor fabrication, and advanced testing and packaging. However, if Interim Approvals for Foreign Trade Zones are not properly considered, manufacturers face unnecessary delays and costs for their operations, including strategic contributions to economic and national security.

Will you commit to full, fair, and expeditious consideration of Interim Approval requests for companies that meet all prerequisite requirements for such applications?

Yes. During my time performing the non-exclusive functions and duties of the Assistant Secretary, I granted several interim approval requests for companies following a review of their production notifications. If confirmed, I will continue to give full, fair, and expeditious consideration to interim approval requests.

Question 2: I am concerned that the duties on Mexican tomatoes are failing to spur additional American production and are simply being passed onto consumers. Since the imposition of 17.7% duties on Mexican tomatoes following the termination of the U.S.-Mexico Tomato Suspension Agreement last year, Americans have seen grocery store and restaurant prices rise. Unfortunately, domestic tomato production has not been able to meet consumer demand, in part due to a lack of field labor.

If confirmed, do you intend to work with Commerce staff and Mexican counterparts to reconsider the U.S.-Mexico Tomato Suspension Agreement?

I understand the importance of the Tomato Suspension Agreement on the industry. Because of that, I have closely monitored trends in the tomato industry in the United States since the Agreement was terminated. This included having a price chart updated weekly with recent tomato prices while I was performing the non-exclusive functions and duties of the Assistant Secretary. In my prior position, I also regularly made myself available to industry to hear their concerns, and I would continue to do so if confirmed. However, AD/CVD laws provide a mechanism for suspending an investigation, not for entering into an agreement after an investigation has concluded and an antidumping order has been imposed. As a result, an agreement replacing the Tomato Suspension Agreement would likely need to rely on other authorities outside the purview of the Office of Enforcement and Compliance. I am also happy to speak with you or your staff more on this issue.

Questions for the Record submitted to Christopher Abbott from Senator Tim Scott.

Question 1: You have emphasized strengthening antidumping and countervailing duty enforcement, including investigations into transnational subsidies. What additional authorities or

resources, if any, does the International Trade Administration need to better address evolving foreign subsidy practices, particularly those involving state-owned enterprises?

Investigations into transnational subsidies are a key area of focus, and I would welcome the opportunity to work closely with Congress to strengthen Commerce's authorities with respect to transnational subsidies. One particular issue where additional authorities could be beneficial is enhancing our ability to induce cooperation by foreign governments providing transnational subsidies.

Question 2: You have previously served as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Manufacturing during the first Trump Administration. How did that experience shape your views on the relationship between trade enforcement and the broader efforts to strengthen U.S. manufacturing?

In my prior experience during the first Trump Administration, I heard from companies on a wide range of issues that highlighted the importance of a thoughtful, broad-based approach to industrial policy to support U.S. manufacturing. Trade enforcement is an important piece of a strong industrial policy, but is most effective when combined with streamlined regulations, a carefully-designed, pro-growth tax code, targeted policies to address discrete supply chain vulnerabilities or market externalities, and a government that responds quickly to industry concerns to support new investment.

Questions for the Record submitted to Christopher Abbott from Ranking Member Wyden.

1. Describe in detail your involvement in the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation's (DFC) 2020 loan to the Eastman Kodak company.

See below.

   a. Did you make the initial contact with Kodak to initiate the loan negotiations?

To the best of my recollection, I was the first person in my office to speak with Kodak, but my initial conversation would have been to assess the company's manufacturing footprint and capabilities.

      i. If so, why did you make this contact?

See above.

      ii. If not, who did?

See above.

   b. How and why was Kodak identified in the first place as a suitable company to launch a pharmaceutical unit?

To the best of my recollection, Kodak was identified as a candidate to support the pharmaceutical supply chain because it had extensive chemical manufacturing knowledge and infrastructure as well as idled capacity.

c. Describe in detail your participation and role in negotiating the loan agreement.

To the best of my recollection, I spoke with Kodak about its capabilities and connected the company with DFC officials, but DFC officials negotiated the letter of intent to enter into a loan agreement.

d. Did you connect Kodak with Phlow?

To the best of my recollection, Kodak and Phlow were connected with each other before I spoke with Kodak.

i. If so, why did you make this contact?

See above.

ii. If not, who did?

I do not recall.

e. Did Peter Navarro cancel a call with Kodak on June 4, 2020?

I do not recall.

i. When was the last time you were in contact with employees or representatives of Kodak?

I have not been in contact with Kodak for several years, but I do not know the exact date.

ii. When was the last time you were in contact with employees or representatives of Phlow?

I have not been in contact with Phlow for several years, but I do not know the exact date.

f. At any time did you purchase Kodak stock?

No.

i. If so, when did you make this purchase and what was the value of the purchase?

Not applicable.

ii. If so, when did you sell the stock and what was the value of the sale?

Not applicable.

g. Did you, at any time, discuss matters related to Kodak with anyone outside of the administration? If yes, who and for what purpose?

To the best of my recollection, Kodak worked with Phlow to prepare its proposal, including establishing a letter of intent to enter into an offtake agreement for pharmaceutical precursors Kodak manufactured, which I believe I discussed with both companies together.

2. Describe your role in negotiating the contract for 42,900 Philips ventilators while serving in the White House.

To the best of my recollection, I played a supporting role and coordinated meetings but was not responsible for directly negotiating the contract.

a. The Philips contract was ultimately terminated by HHS, and a House oversight subcommittee found the government overpaid by $500 million. On a per ventilator basis, this contract was five times more than what the Obama administration had paid, can you explain why this was the case?

No, because I do not recall the price of either contract.

b. A House subcommittee report said that HHS contract officers were excluded from this negotiation until the last minute, is that accurate?

I do not recall.

3. Do you commit to maintain a non-political and impartial antidumping and countervailing duties investigation and review process? How will you ensure the investigation process remains impartial and not impacted by political pressures?

Yes. During my time performing the non-exclusive functions and duties of the Assistant Secretary, I consistently emphasized the quasi-judicial, apolitical nature of antidumping and countervailing duty proceedings to all relevant stakeholders. If confirmed, I will remain committed to the impartial, quasi-judicial nature of these proceedings.

Questions for the Record submitted to Christopher Abbott from Senator Cantwell.

Question 1: How will you ensure that such efforts to address import concerns does not restrict U.S. exports, like our apples, pears, and cherries from Washington to this important market?

I am committed to supporting access to foreign markets for agricultural producers, including Washington's producers of apples, pears, and cherries. This includes supporting American producers in responses to foreign trade-remedy investigations. For example, on January 7, Mexico's trade remedy authority initiated an antidumping investigation into U.S. apples. During my time performing the non-exclusive functions and duties of the Assistant Secretary, my office worked closely with U.S. producers and the Mexican government. That advocacy has been effective so far, as Mexico has still not imposed preliminary duties. If confirmed, I will prioritize continuing to support American exporters facing trade-remedy investigations by foreign governments.

Question 2: Will you, in your role as Assistant Secretary for Enforcement and Compliance, promise to take a strategic approach to resolving trade disputes with foreign countries?

Yes. This was a priority of mine while performing the non-exclusive functions and duties of the Assistant Secretary, and will continue to be a priority if I am confirmed. Under my leadership, in FY26, E&C's Office of Trade Remedy Compliance secured a record 12 terminations and

suspensions of foreign trade-remedy investigations involving U.S. producers, safeguarding approximately $5.68 billion in annual U.S. exports from antidumping and countervailing duties. In addition, in FY26, the Office held nearly 100 meetings with U.S. industry stakeholders and drafted over 450 pages of written submissions in several defensive proceedings against the United States. These actions demonstrate the importance of maintaining a strong and proactive defense of American producers and exporters and underscore my commitment to ensuring Enforcement & Compliance continues to effectively protect U.S. commercial interests at home and abroad

Question 3: In recent months I have been hearing from dairy farmer constituents that preliminary Anti-dumping and Countervailing Duty determinations will significantly increase their feed costs by upwards of 50%. What are you doing to ensure these laws are implemented in a way that protects American dairy farmers from even higher costs, as well as have adequate access to important inputs for their herds' nutrition?

I believe this question refers to Commerce's investigations into certain fatty acids from Indonesia and Malaysia. For Indonesia, preliminary subsidy rates are 16.47–16.48 percent, and the effective antidumping rates range from 12.31–22.96 percent. For Malaysia, subsidy rates are 4.19–4.40 percent, and the effective antidumping rates range from 4.46–7.06 percent. However, these rates are preliminary and may change in the final determinations.

With respect to dairy farmers specifically, it is important to first note that this is a quasi-judicial process that does not provide a mechanism for excluding or exempting products for purely policy reasons. All antidumping and countervailing duty decisions must be grounded in the record and implemented consistent with applicable laws and regulations. However, we did receive comments requesting certain product exclusions, including for fatty acids used in cattle feed. These comments are publicly available on access.trade.gov.

In order to ensure these comments were fully considered, I directed E&C staff to hold a hearing specifically on scope issues while I was performing the non-exclusive functions and duties of the Assistant Secretary. Due to my nomination, I was no longer in the same role when the preliminary scope decision was made. However, if I am confirmed before a final scope decision is made, I will give full and fair consideration to the arguments raised regarding the scope of these orders.

<u>Questions for the Record submitted to Christopher Abbott from Senator Cortez Masto.</u>

Rare earths remain a critical friction point in the trade relationship between the United States and China. Despite pledges to resume rare earth export controls under President Trump's China trade deal, China is not honoring its commitment. My office is hearing from companies in Nevada, and across the nation, that despite any kind of deal the President or U.S. Trade Representative claims to have made, they have not received any relief.

Question 1: Given you will have a role in assessing compliance with trade deals, do you think the China deal is being complied with and what steps will you take to work with these companies to address their concerns?

I am not involved in the issues you have identified. However, I am happy to work with you, your office, and any company with specific trade concerns. When the concerns involve issues I do not work on, I am happy to connect you, your staff, or interested companies with the appropriate points of contact within the government.

If confirmed, your division will administer the Foreign-Trade Zone (FTZ) program. Both Clark County, which includes Las Vegas, and the broader northern Nevada region, which includes Reno/Sparks and the Tahoe Reno Industrial Center, have FTZs. Businesses in Nevada are telling me that they cannot function efficiently due to long wait times for approval of manufacturing authority within FTZs that have resulted from the ad hoc changes that the Trump administration is making to the program.

Question 2: If you're seeing long wait times for approval in your new role, how will you work to address that issue?

The FTZ Board and staff have set records for the number of cases docketed under this Administration. For example, in the first ten months of 2026, the number of cases docketed more than doubled the number of cases docketed in all of 2024. We have reassigned employees from other offices to the FTZ staff and have hired or are hiring new employees to support this work, and we are also working to streamline our review process.

Question 3: Will you commit to informing Congress of any changes to the FTZ Program and how will you ensure there is congressional input before any changes take effect?

I am committed to working closely with Congress if confirmed and will make myself available to Congressional staff to answer questions or discuss changes to the FTZ program. If there are any changes to the program made through a regulatory change, the Administrative Procedures Act ordinarily requires a notice-and-comment period to allow the public an opportunity to provide views on proposed changes before any changes take effect, and I will commit to making myself available to discuss proposed changes during that period.

Questions for the Record submitted to Christopher Abbott from Senator Warren.

Question 1: Some trade experts have raised questions about whether the dumping and subsidy margins calculated by Commerce fully reflect the extent of unfair pricing and government support incurred in other countries, especially in cases of Mexican producers located in an IMMEX zone. If confirmed, how would you ensure that Commerce thoroughly examines the relevant sales, cost, and subsidy information and uses all available statutory tools to calculate accurate dumping and countervailing duty margins?

Commerce regularly receives comments from interested parties with respect to each subsidy alleged, including the IMMEX program, as well as our methodology for calculating dumping margins. I am committed to ensuring each argument is considered carefully. If you have specific concerns regarding our calculations involving the IMMEX zone, I will make myself available to discuss those concerns.

Question 2: Will you commit to recuse from any particular matters involving your former clients and employers for at least four years?

I am committed to following all ethics rules and regulations, including all guidance I receive from government ethics officials.

Question 3: Will you commit to recuse from any particular matters, including particular matters of general applicability, that directly impact your former clients and employers for at least four years?

I am committed to following all ethics rules and regulations, including all guidance I receive from government ethics officials.

Question 4: If confirmed, will you commit not to lobby the Commerce Department — including through unregistered "shadow" or "behind-the-scenes" lobbying — for at least four years after leaving the Commerce Department?

I am committed to following all ethics rules and regulations, including all guidance I receive from government ethics officials.

Question 5: If confirmed, will you commit to not seeking employment or board membership with, or another form of compensation from (including as an expert witness), any company involved in a matter pending under the Commerce Department's responsibility or that lobbied the Commerce Department during your tenure for at least four years after leaving the Commerce Department.

I am committed to following all ethics rules and regulations, including all guidance I receive from government ethics officials.

Question 6: Will you commit not to seek a waiver from the White House regarding any ethics matter?

I am committed to following all ethics rules and regulations, including all guidance I receive from government ethics officials.

Question 7: As you know, U.S. law gives unions and management equal right to petition for relief from unfairly traded imports. These provisions of our law have become increasingly important as multinational companies face threats of retaliation from foreign adversaries and are thus hesitant to publicly support trade cases even when they are being injured by imports.

A. Do you support the right of unions to file antidumping and countervailing duty petitions even if management does not publicly support them?

Yes.

B. How would the fact that a case was filed by unions alone affect your injury analysis, if at all?

The injury analysis is conducted by the International Trade Commission, not the Department of Commerce. However, Commerce does assess whether there is sufficient industry support for a petition before beginning an investigation. As you note in your question, support from unions and management is given equal weight in this context.

Question 8: Please share an example of an antidumping or countervailing duty order that, in your view, has effectively addressed unfair trade and helped to maintain the operations of American businesses.

There are many cases of antidumping and countervailing duty orders effectively addressing unfair trade to maintain or expand the operations of American businesses. One example is the pea protein industry, led in the United States by the Minneapolis-based company, Puris. Several articles highlight the impact of the anti-dumping and countervailing duty orders in supporting domestic producers and highlight subsequent investments made by the company. Examples are included below.

https://www.startribune.com/puris-tariffs-china-imports-pea-protein-hpc-dept-commerce-dumping-subsidized/600342938

https://www.startribune.com/minnesota-company-scores-a-win-in-battle-with-chinese-pea-protein-makers-puris-america-china-tariffs/600326655

https://www.expanamarkets.com/insights/article/trust-traceability-at-center-of-heavy-metal-safety-in-plant-protein-ingredients/

https://www.forbes.com/sites/chloesorvino/2026/02/26/how-puris-pea-protein-is-fueling-the-ozempic-generation/

https://blog.puris.com/senator-amy-klobuchar-visits-puris-pea-protein-plant-in-dawson-mn

Question 9: What is your view of how U.S. trade data gathering and reporting can be improved? When Commerce conducts analysis of trade pact impacts or projections about new pacts, what data set do you believe should be employed – domestic exports or general exports? What is your view about how counting re-exports as if they were domestic exports distorts U.S. trade balance data?

During my time performing the non-exclusive functions and duties of the Assistant Secretary, and if confirmed as the Assistant Secretary, my only involvement in gathering trade data is through the steel and aluminum import monitors, which can be found here: https://www.trade.gov/data-visualization/us-aluminum-import-monitor (aluminum); and here: https://www.trade.gov/data-visualization/us-steel-import-monitor (steel). There are certain metals products that are not currently covered by these monitors that could be included in the future to improve data reporting.

The relative importance of data on domestic exports and re-exports depends on the specific circumstance and the reason the data is being used. In general, collecting both sets of data is useful for analytical purposes.

Question 10: Big Tech has long sought protections for the so-called "free flow of data," meaning they want to constrain governments from protecting the personal data of their citizens from being sold to bad actors around the world. In other words, Big Tech wants to keep auctioning Americans' data to the highest bidder, even when that means that their data makes it to the Chinese or Russian government.

A. Do you believe that trade deals should preempt commonsense policies protecting the data of American citizens?

No. Protecting the data of American citizens is a priority. However, trade deals can support American industry while still ensuring American citizens' data is protected from bad actors.

B. So-called "free flow of data" provisions could also help companies evade laws that protect children from seeing inappropriate content online, including legislation passed through the Senate on a bipartisan basis. Will you oppose trade provisions that allow tech companies to bypass laws written to protect our children?

I do not work extensively on this issue and am unfamiliar with the specific concern you have identified. However, I agree that protecting children from inappropriate content is important, and if I am involved in policy deliberations where protecting children is an issue, that would be a top concern for me.

Question 11: Big Tech companies have long claimed that neutrally applicable competition and consumer protection policies are "illegal trade discrimination." In reality, these are facially neutral policies that disproportionately impact "digital products" of dominant companies that happen to be headquartered in the U.S. Deeming such policies "discriminatory" could undermine efforts by U.S. policymakers to pass new legislation and antitrust enforcers to crack down on anti-competitive conduct, including price fixing and self-dealing, by the largest tech companies. Do you believe that all policies impacting the largest tech companies—which happen to be U.S.-based—are inherently "discriminatory"?

While I have no role in setting or advising on the regulations that apply to American technology companies, I believe that it should be the American government—not foreign governments—that is primarily responsible for regulating American technology companies. From a trade-policy perspective, we should not allow foreign governments to deputize themselves as the regulators of American industry.