

**Opening Statement of Mr. Ian Paul Steff, Nominee for Assistant Secretary of Commerce for  
Global Markets and Director General of the United States and Foreign Commercial Service**

**June 5, 2019**

**United States Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs**

Good morning, Chairman Crapo and Ranking Member Brown, Members of the Committee.

It is the greatest of honors to sit before you today. If confirmed, it would be my privilege to serve as the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Global Markets and Director General of the United States and Foreign Commercial Service. I thank President Trump for this nomination. So too, I am grateful for the continued support of Vice President Pence, both in my former capacities in my home state of Indiana, and now in Washington.

Speaking of Hoosiers, I am proud to be joined by my wife, Brittany. I remain forever grateful for your incredible encouragement, compassion, and flexibility as we serve the nation we love and raise our two little stars, Daniel and Owen. I am also joined by my parents, Wayne and Lisa. Our childhood home was filled with love, faith, respect, hard work, and an enduring sense of service to one's country. Thank you, Mom, Dad, Gram, Aunt Lori, Aaron and to all those family members, friends, and teachers who helped me along the way.

My story started under a few feet of snow, thirty miles south of Buffalo, New York, on my grandparents' dairy farm. My two younger brothers, Eric and Levi often reflect on the comradery we developed shoveling that never-ending lake-effect byproduct, raising our pet ducks, and commiserating over our beloved Buffalo Bills. Childhood summers encompassed exploring the pastures and woods, working on our neighbor's berry and plant farm, and waiting for the rumble of

Dad's cycle as he returned home from his job in highway maintenance. This is a glimpse of our small slice of country and my upbringing in rural America.

Rural? Yes. Encouraged to dream big? Every step of the way. And dream we did. I devoted nearly every penny earned on the farm to my stamp and coin collection. Years later, as I arrived at American University to begin my academic career in international affairs, I knew unequivocally that my future involved fostering relations with the foreign markets and the people personified in the postage and currency I accumulated. That dream and future continue to be realized.

If confirmed, I would be incredibly honored to lead a world-class team of professionals that provide export counseling to small and medium-sized businesses, while identifying new foreign markets for their products and services; advocate on behalf of U.S. companies competing for foreign government procurements; attract foreign direct investment, while working to grow the U.S. manufacturing base; and reduce, remove, and prevent foreign trade barriers that impede market access for U.S. goods in a free, fair, and reciprocal fashion.

As the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Manufacturing since June of 2017, I've seen the impact the Global Markets team has on U.S manufacturers and service providers. This vast network of more than 1,300 trade and investment specialists in headquarters and the U.S. Field, combined with the presence of the Foreign Commercial Service in over seventy foreign markets, deliver daily.

Simply put, I have come to know the Global Markets team as: "A Team that Works, A Team That Chooses to Compete, and a Team that Delivers." These professionals deliver "one deal at a

time” and have a tremendous impact measured at over \$120 billion in FY 2018 in the areas outlined above.

In my former professional capacities, I accrued experience in economic development, executive leadership, and trade policy. In my past economic development roles, I worked successfully to attract foreign direct investment. SelectUSA, which would be under my purview if confirmed, is a valued economic development partner to states.

Likewise, during my time in the semiconductor industry, I witnessed the contributions of the Commerce Department to ensure foreign market access. I regularly engaged with the Commerce team while managing the leading chip industry association’s international engagements and technology programs for a decade. I have seen the challenges posed by unfair foreign trade measures and massive market distorting practices that crippled companies looking to compete internationally.

Earlier in my professional career, I worked on the Trade Subcommittee staff of the House Ways and Means Committee. I have a profound appreciation for the vital role of Congress when it comes to ensuring the global competitiveness of U.S. industry.

While my stamp and coin collections are now the responsibility of my two young Hoosiers, I have no doubt that they and our country have a limitless and prosperous future based on the unparalleled accomplishments of the Global Markets team at Commerce. I aspire to help this team continue to achieve its mission. If confirmed, I will devote every working moment to its success on behalf of our nation’s exporters. Distinguished members of the Committee, thank you for your consideration.