

Statement of Faryar Shirzad
Nominee for Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Import Administration
Before the Senate Committee on Finance
March 29, 2001

Mr. Chairman, Senator Baucus, members of the Committee,

I want to thank you for taking the time to hold this hearing during this extraordinarily busy period in the legislative calendar. Having had the opportunity to serve as trade counsel to this committee for the past three years under Chairman Roth, I know very well the demands on your time.

I would, however, like to take a few minutes to thank the many people whose support made my nomination possible. Most importantly, I would like to express my gratitude to President Bush and to Secretary Evans for this tremendous honor. The President and the Secretary have made trade a top priority for this Administration, and I am honored that they would ask me to join them in this important effort.

I would also like to thank you Mr. Chairman, along with Senator Baucus, Senator Lott, Senator Nickles, Senator Helms and others in Congress, for your expressions of support as I was being considered for this position. I am honored by the confidence you have shown in me and I will, if confirmed, work hard every day to ensure that your confidence was well placed.

I also want to thank your former colleague and my former boss, Senator Roth, who was, for me, the embodiment of what public service should be about. I will always be grateful to him for the opportunities he provided me in serving this wonderful committee and for the help and guidance that he continues to offer me even now.

On a personal level, I would like to recognize and thank my family, many of whom are here with us today. Most important for me is my wife, Nancy, who has given me more love and support than any one person deserves, and, together with our son David, is the absolute treasure of my life. I also want to recognize and thank my parents, Nasser and Parvaneh Shirzad, for all that they've done for me and for setting an example of love, honor, integrity, and hard work that I have tried very hard to follow in my life.

I am also humbled by the outpouring of interest and support that the Iranian-American community has demonstrated in connection with my nomination. The United States has welcomed hundreds of thousands of Iranians with open arms over the past twenty-five years, and has given us the opportunity to achieve the American dream, like generations of immigrants before us. It is gratifying that my nomination has served, even in a small way, as a reminder that we really are a part of the American family.

I am sitting here with a sense not only of humility, but also of responsibility, recognizing that the position for which I have been nominated is so important to the formulation and the conduct of our trade policy. The availability and vigorous enforcement of our trade laws is essential in preserving the confidence of the American people in the fairness of the trading system. Over the long run, trade liberalization will only be successful if the American people believe that they are realizing the benefits of trade and that they have the opportunity to compete on a level playing field, both here and abroad.

I am mindful that decisions in trade remedy cases often have a very significant impact both here and abroad. My first priority will be to ensure the integrity of the trade remedy process and to ensure that these laws are enforced in faithful adherence to Congress's intent.

This committee has a distinguished history of leadership on trade matters, a tradition that is in good hands with your leadership, Mr. Chairman,

and that of Senator Baucus. If I am confirmed, I hope that you will look to me as someone that you and your staffs can work with as we move forward together on developing and implementing a trade agenda that works for all Americans.

Thank you.