

Committee on Energy and Commerce
Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
of
Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and Commerce Chair Janice D. Schakowsky
Hearing on “The Fiscal Year 2022 Department of Commerce Budget”

June 8, 2021

Welcome everyone to today’s hearing in which we will conduct budgetary oversight of the Department of Commerce. We are so lucky to have the Secretary, Gina Raimondo, with us today.

This Subcommittee has one of the largest jurisdictions of any subcommittee in the House of Representatives. The Department of Commerce has a similarly wide jurisdiction. Yes, the Department impacts every-day Americans in so many ways, seen and unseen.

Today I want to focus on the Secretary’s role in overseeing our country’s manufacturing competitiveness. The COVID-19 crisis laid bare our uneven manufacturing policies over the last 40 years -- policies that overall have made American families poorer and left our country flat-footed in the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our manufacturing sector lacked the capacity to produce many goods needed to respond to the virus, and we also experienced a shortage of essentials, like semiconductors needed for so many American products.

At the heart of these failures were the two worst public policy decisions of the last 30 years – NAFTA 1.0 and Chinese Accession to the World Trade Organization.

That is why President Biden, as part of his Build Back Better Agenda, prioritized re-shoring key American manufacturing capacities and promoting supply chain integrity.

Key pieces of the President’s plan are in the Endless Frontiers Act, currently being voted on in the Senate. I intend to introduce legislation that will strengthen these provisions by promoting a bottom up approach that ensures local communities are included in the crafting of our manufacturing policy.

The American Jobs Plan and American Families Plan reject policies that disproportionately favor the big corporations and executive -- policies that have led to the greatest income inequality in a century.

This worker-first agenda must be promoted and the Wyden-Crapo efforts to entrench Big Tech’s failed business models as part of the Endless Frontiers Act must be rejected.

I look forward to the Secretary’s testimony and yield the balance of my time to Mr. McNerney.