

WRITTEN STATEMENT ON OVERSIGHT OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
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SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE & TRANSPORTATION
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Chairman Inouye, Vice Chairman Stevens, distinguished Members...it is my pleasure to come before you today to talk about the Department of Commerce, an agency which I have proudly led for more than two-and-a-half years.

Above the doors of the Department is President Thomas Jefferson's mandate to "Cultivate peace and commerce with all." This mission has been at the forefront of our nation's consciousness since the earliest days of our democracy, even before the Department's founding, and is indeed the foundation for America's system of free enterprise.

More than a century after the Department's creation, we continue to pursue Jefferson's vision. The roots of the Department are firmly grounded in promoting commerce and economic growth, and exercising stewardship over our oceans and waterways.

Over the course of the past six years our economy has faced a series of challenges, from a recession to the attacks of 9/11. But America's resiliency has shown through and our economy has overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles. We are now in a strong economic position and the values of democracy and open markets which have given us a position of global leadership have again carried us through.

Environment Stewardship while assisting Economic Development

Today I would like to start by discussing our role as stewards of our nation's environment. Nearly 60 percent of the Department's budget (*FY08*) is dedicated to increasing knowledge and rational use of the natural environment. Through the **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration** (NOAA) the Department holds crucial responsibility for our nation's oceans and waterways, our marine fisheries, our weather service, and a host of other resources aimed at utilizing our national geographic and geophysical attributes to strengthen our economy while protecting our valuable resources.

This Administration has demonstrated a clear commitment to our environment, dedicating unprecedented resources toward stewardship of our oceans and waterways.

The U.S. Ocean Action Plan, which President Bush announced in late 2004, has resulted in a number of significant accomplishments that have served to advance our understanding of oceans, coasts, and Great Lakes; enhance the use and conservation of our ocean, coastal and Great Lakes resources; manage coasts and their watersheds; support maritime transportation; and advance international ocean science and policy.

As part of that coordinated effort, we have established the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument, the largest fully protected marine conservation area in the world; introduced the Coral Reef Conservation Amendment Act of 2007; worked with Congress to reauthorize the

Magnuson-Stevens Act, which requires an end to overfishing by 2010; and worked with scientists, resource managers, and other interested parties across the country to prioritize ocean science efforts to ensure that future actions continue to be based on sound science.

Aquaculture is an innovative response to the projected global shortage of 40 million tons of seafood by 2030. Of the 4.9 billion pounds of seafood consumed in the United States in 2006, roughly 83 percent was imported. We need both a strong commercial fishing industry and a robust aquaculture industry to meet growing demands for a safe, reliable source of seafood, to reduce U.S. dependence on seafood imports, and to strengthen the economies of some of our coastal communities. We are pleased that Chairman Inouye and Vice Chairman Stevens introduced the National Offshore Aquaculture Act of 2007 to address this economic growth opportunity, and we look forward to working with the Committee and Congress to ensure passage.

Beyond the conservation and stewardship missions that NOAA carries out, the Department, through NOAA's **National Weather Service**, touches the daily lives of every American by providing up-to-the-minute weather information, which helps protect people and property through the dissemination of forecasts, observations and climate data.

Additionally, through NOAA, the Department serves the vast needs of our nation's oceans and waterways – a vital part of our economic and transportation infrastructure. Earlier this year, we proposed the reauthorization of the Hydrographic Services Improvement Act, a bill to promote safe, efficient and environmentally sound maritime commerce in U.S. waters with accurate nautical charts and other navigational tools. This bill coincides with the 200th anniversary of the Coast Survey, another of President Thomas Jefferson's great gifts to this country. Waterborne commerce contributes \$1 trillion to our nation's GDP and supports more than 13 million jobs. We thank the Commerce Committee for passing this important legislation in July.

The scientific understanding gained through NOAA's renowned researchers, coupled with the broader scope of this Department's mandate, have placed Commerce at the forefront of this Administration's efforts to tackle the long-term challenges and opportunities brought by climate change. The Department plays a central role in measuring and understanding changes in our climate as well as crafting international and domestic policies that will help the American people and the global community mitigate and adapt to a changing planet. As President Bush said, "My Administration's climate change policy will be science-based, encourage research breakthroughs that lead to technological innovation, and take advantage of the power of markets. It will encourage global participation and will pursue actions that will help ensure continued economic growth and prosperity for our citizens and for citizens throughout the world."

In the 10 years since the Kyoto Protocol was negotiated, there has been a false premise among some that countries must be committed to Kyoto to be taken seriously in discussions on climate change. The President does not subscribe to this view, and instead has led with actions and results. This Administration has devoted \$37 billion to climate change research and technology since 2001 and has requested an additional \$7.4 billion for FY 2008.

The President recognizes technological advances, more than anything else, are needed to truly reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, which is why this Administration launched the Climate Change Technology Program, led by the Department of Energy and supported by Commerce. In his most recent State of the Union Address, the President set aggressive goals to reduce our dependence on gasoline by 20 percent over the next 10 years through a series of mandatory, voluntary and incentive-based programs. This Administration is also fully committed to deploying technologies domestically and internationally through programs such as FutureGen and the Asia-Pacific Partnership for Clean Development and Climate, where Commerce plays a leading role in promoting exports of clean technology. By implementing an aggressive yet practical strategy, we are on track to meet the President's goal to reduce greenhouse gas intensity 18 percent by 2012, while continuing to grow the American economy. Indeed, preliminary data from the Energy Information Administration show that in 2006 energy-related carbon dioxide emissions fell 1.3 percent while the economy grew 3.3 percent.

On May 31, 2007, the President called upon the world's major economies to work together to develop a post-2012 framework and identify a global goal on long-term greenhouse gas reductions. The United States will host the first of a series of meetings with other countries—including rapidly growing economies like India and China—to establish a new framework, which will recognize that economic growth, energy security and climate change must be addressed in an integrated way. Our progress towards a global emissions reduction goal will be underpinned by midterm national targets and programs that are tailored towards each participant's current and future energy needs and that will be subject to a robust review process. In addition, participants will work on sectoral approaches to energy intensive industries and concrete steps to promote the development and deployment of clean energy technologies. As part of his international initiative, the President also proposed strengthening climate-related initiatives at the UN that benefit all countries, including adaptation to climate change, deforestation and technology. Finally, the President's initiative addresses practical action necessary to advance the global development and deployment of clean energy technologies. This could include low-cost capital sources to finance investment in clean energy, mechanisms to share government-developed technology at low cost, or in some cases, no cost at all, and elimination of market barriers.

At Commerce, we play a role in all aspects of the policy solutions to climate change. NOAA plays a central role in measuring changes in our atmosphere and in our climate. We are extremely proud of our scientists, and their research and modeling formed the basis for much of the science encapsulated in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's Fourth Assessment, that has been released this year. Through a number of research programs, the agency is focused on providing decision makers with a clear understanding of the global climate system. At the direction of the President, NOAA is leading U.S. efforts to implement a truly global-observing system. Building off of the data provided by our observation systems, NOAA is focusing research to understand key climate processes, improving our modeling capabilities and developing and delivering climate information services. NOAA is working to improve our understanding of global climate change and develop tools to enable regional and local leaders to make effective planning decisions. These tools could also one day be used to monitor and verify that claimed emissions reductions are also taking place.

The **International Trade Administration (ITA)** is leading U.S. Government efforts to spur the deployment of clean energy technologies and the **National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)** is leading efforts to create international standards for biofuels as well as for improving energy efficiency. Ultimately, the solutions to the challenges of climate change will rest with strong and vibrant economies that can make the investments necessary to transform our energy infrastructures.

A Strong and Vibrant U.S. Economy

This Administration's pro-growth policies of lower taxes and a less restrictive government, coupled with the hard work and ingenuity of American workers, has put our economy on solid footing. We have experienced sustained economic growth and enhanced job creation, resulting in increased revenues and a reduced deficit.

The U.S. economy has experienced 23 consecutive quarters of growth, over which time growth has averaged 2.7 percent annually. When adjusted for inflation, our economy is 17 percent larger than it was in 2001. Our unemployment rate is a low 4.5 percent, which is below the average of each of the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, and payroll jobs have increased by more than eight million since August 2003. And, because of President Bush's tax cuts, the average American taxpayer will keep an additional \$2,200 of their hard-earned money this year.

While we are weathering a correction in the market, we remain near historic levels of home ownership, with 75 million American families owning their own homes.

And, by asserting fiscal discipline and reigning in discretionary spending, the President's goal to balance the budget by 2012 is on track. An Office of Management and Budget (OMB) report issued in mid-July forecasts a \$43 billion decrease in the deficit this year. For three years in a row the federal deficit has declined and OMB now projects that the budget deficit has fallen to 1.5 percent of GDP, well below the 40-year average of 2.4 percent of GDP. We have also held the growth of annual domestic spending close to one percent, which is well below the rate of inflation. And tax relief we have implemented since 2001 has allowed the American people to keep \$1.1 trillion of their hard-earned dollars, which they can determine how best to allocate.

One important way in which we are strengthening our overall economic position is by creating an export culture in our country. Last year, the growth rate of exports outpaced the growth rate of imports, 13 percent to 10 percent, with a record \$1.4 trillion in exports. And exports year-to-date are up by 10.8 percent over the same period in 2006 to \$644 billion—more than twice the rate of imports.

.Increased exports to markets around the world benefit our country enormously by supporting higher paying jobs for our workers here in America and by boosting productivity, which drives our national prosperity. Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) also help our companies, farmers and manufacturers by leveling the playing field and helping them sell American goods and services to millions of consumers in new global markets.

Truly, America is embracing the global marketplace and taking advantage of the markets that this Administration has sought to open. Yet, while we are taking advantage of the opportunities

of the global marketplace, we know we are not alone in those efforts. Nations around the world have awakened to the possibilities of international trade. And with the addition of three billion consumers in China, India and Russia, which have opened their previously shuttered economies, we have experienced a wave of new customers, new consumers, and new competitors.

Trade accounted for 17 percent of world GDP in 1986. Last year it accounted for 29 percent. We are trading and engaging more—but so is everyone else. That is why we must be focused on the growth and competitiveness of the U.S. economy.

Expanding the Global Marketplace and Boosting U.S. Exports

The Department of Commerce has a tremendous role to play in expanding the global marketplace and boosting U.S. exports. Our recently released National Export Strategy, produced by the ITA in conjunction with other trade agencies, details how the combination of declining trade barriers and advancing technologies has made exporting easier than ever.

Since President Bush took office, Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with 11 countries have entered into force, bringing the total number of countries that we have FTAs with to 14. Exports to the countries with FTAs that entered into force between 2001 and 2006 grew faster than U.S. exports to the rest of the world. And while the FTA countries make up only 7.5 percent of the world's GDP (*excluding the USA*), more than 42 percent of all U.S. exports go to our FTA partners. Clearly, free trade agreements are directly linked to the expansion of our exports.

In Chile, two-way trade over the first three years of our free trade agreement rose by more than 150 percent, including 22 percent so far this year. And the FTA with our CAFTA-DR partners is already showing positive results, with exports up to the five countries up 16 percent last year.

These agreements serve to open markets for U.S. goods, support good jobs for Americans at home and abroad, and importantly, help export good governance, create stable markets and reduce poverty in emerging economies.

After more than three years of negotiations, Congress will consider FTAs with Peru, Colombia, Panama and South Korea. These agreements, if approved, would provide further access to 126 million consumers with a combined GDP of \$1.1 trillion. Each holds important geopolitical significance in strategic regions of the globe—here in our own region, the Western Hemisphere, and in the rapidly rising Pacific Rim.

In order to continue an aggressive agenda of opening foreign markets and leveling the playing field to boost U.S. exports, this President and future presidents must have Trade Promotion Authority, an essential tool to ensure our continued export success. Many of our trading partners, including Asia and the European Union, are acting bilaterally to engage with each other. The United States cannot afford to sit on the sidelines.

Renewed Trade Promotion Authority will help the United States continue to play a leadership role in multilateral and bilateral trade negotiations. A successful conclusion to the Doha Development Agenda will result in economic growth and development, especially in the world's poorer countries, by creating new trade flows and disciplining subsidies.

The Department, through ITA, also takes a direct approach to boosting U.S. exports by helping American companies succeed in the international marketplace.

We have conducted a number of successful trade missions bringing U.S. businesses face-to-face with potential customers, business partners and government officials. Last fall I led a business development mission to China, a vital and growing market for U.S. exports. And ITA led the largest-ever U.S. Government business development mission to India.

Earlier this year ITA also led a clean energy trade mission to India and China to promote U.S. export of technologies which will help address environmental concerns in those countries, while boosting U.S. exports. We also announced recently a trade mission to Vietnam which will take place this fall.

In addition to enhancing competitiveness through a successful export strategy, the Commerce Department has recently launched the “Invest in America Initiative” to encourage foreign firms to invest directly in the U.S. economy. U.S. subsidiaries of foreign companies employ more than five million American workers in jobs that pay 32 percent higher wages than the national average. And while we have historically been the world’s most attractive destination for foreign direct investment (FDI), it again is another area of the economy in which we are facing stepped up competition and therefore must take on a more aggressive, proactive posture.

While promoting exports, the Department also advances U.S. national security and foreign policy objectives. Our **Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS)** accomplishes this work by implementing an effective export control and treaty compliance system, while promoting continued U.S. strategic technological leadership. BIS ensures that U.S. exports of certain sensitive items are kept away from dangerous countries, organizations and individuals in a manner that preserves the innovative and productive capacity of American industry. Importantly, we believe the Export Administration Act of 1979, which expired in 2001, must be renewed to ensure a streamlined and strengthened export control system, particularly in light of modern threats.

Ensuring a Level Playing Field for U.S. Workers and Industry

As global trade barriers come down and international economies become more integrated, it is critical that our companies compete on a level playing field.

We welcome the innovation and efficiencies that result when our companies and industries compete. However, we must insist that our trading partners play by the rules. When they have not, we have taken an aggressive stance in safeguarding our companies from unfair practices, while preserving the benefits of open, market-driven economics.

From day one, this Administration has demonstrated it will use every tool at its disposal to enforce our trade laws. We play by the rules and it is only fair to expect others to do the same. That is why, in March of this year, I announced the Commerce Department’s preliminary decision to apply the U.S. anti-subsidy law to imports of glossy paper from China.

China is a rising economic power—our second largest trading partner—and represents a tremendous opportunity for U.S. businesses. But when we find unfair trading practices, as we did with the glossy paper case, we will work to ensure an equitable, level playing field. These actions also serve to encourage important reforms in China, spurring its government to hasten change and keep pace with international standards and practices.

To that end, ITA has initiated more anti-dumping cases against China than any other Administration. The Administration has also filed five WTO cases. These actions show our continued commitment to create an environment of true competition for American manufacturers, workers and farmers.

The responsibility for change is in the hands of the Chinese. We have communicated that the safety of our food, medicines and other products from our trading partners is of paramount importance. This is a watershed moment for China. China must address U.S. safety concerns. It is in the interest of all parties for China to be part of the international trade community and be fair and open in its economic dealings.

One of this Administration's top priorities is to ensure that our trading partners fully comply with their trade agreements with us, and that our businesses, workers, and farmers get the full benefits of the agreements we negotiate on their behalf. The most timely and effective way to achieve compliance goals is often through prompt diplomatic efforts.

To that end, Commerce's Trade Agreements Compliance program draws on the joint expertise of all Commerce Department resources to help U.S. exporters, particularly small and medium-sized businesses that face foreign trade barriers. Beginning in FY 2001, we have initiated over 620 compliance cases and closed over 450.

A final way by which we help keep the playing field level for American companies and workers, is by ensuring the protection of their intellectual property (IP). IP industries represent 40 percent of U.S. economic growth and employ 18 million Americans in good, high-paying jobs. Intellectual property accounts for over one-third of the value of all publicly traded U.S. corporations, an amount equal to almost half of the U.S. GDP. In fiscal year 2006, the **U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO)**, a Commerce agency, granted 183,187 patents.

Protecting those patents is an economic and national security objective, which is why we have a coordinated effort which includes USPTO, the **National Intellectual Property Law Enforcement Coordination Council** and ITA. That effort is the **Strategy Targeting Organized Piracy (STOP!)** which holds the ambitious goal of ending trade in counterfeit goods. We have also placed Intellectual Property Rights attachés in strategic markets around the world such as India, China and Russia to promote intellectual property enforcement.

Innovative and creative people in this country and around the globe are producing new products, medicines, and art. As a result, our lives are safer, healthier, more productive and richer. We know that losses to our economy due to IP theft are enormous, harming workers, threatening consumers and striking at our most competitive industries. Through STOP! we are working to end this scourge, and we will continue working with our trading partners around the world to

ensure that the protection of intellectual property is a vital part of our bilateral and multilateral relationships.

While we work to ensure a level playing field, we continue to acknowledge that isolationism won't protect people or protect jobs. Our strategy is to grow exports, not limit imports. Protectionism doesn't protect the economy or jobs. Only innovation, entrepreneurship, competition and investment will protect and grow jobs.

Providing the Data Needed to Keep our Economy Growing

Another important channel through which the Department of Commerce actively helps promote U.S. economic competitiveness is by providing an information infrastructure that supplies businesses, government entities and private citizens with the information they need to make informed decisions.

Through the **Economics and Statistics Administration (ESA)**, which is home to the **Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA)** and the **Census Bureau**, the Commerce Department provides the information infrastructure for vital economic and demographic data ranging from retail sales and quarterly gross domestic product calculations to housing and population figures. The Commerce Department heightens our nation's competitive position by providing an accurate, timely portrait of our people and the economy, thereby helping to support effective investment decision-making, maintain macro-economic stability and guide public policy decisions. Most importantly, I can report that the 2010 Census is on track. The Census Bureau has re-engineered this decennial count of U.S. residents using technology—like GPS and handheld computers—to make the enumeration ever-more accurate.

The decennial census is the largest non-military mobilization the Federal government conducts. It directly affects how many seats each state has in the House of Representatives and how those district lines are drawn. An accurate census count is also vital in determining how over \$200 billion in federal funds are allocated to local and state governments. The goal of the Census Bureau, the Administration, and of this Congress is to count every resident of the United States once, only once, and in the right place. To do that, we have had the support of Congress over the decade to fund a re-engineered census that uses improved technology and methodology to deliver a good count and enhanced data about the characteristics of our people. We need your support this year and throughout the funding cycle.

The President's Budget for 2008 continues the re-engineering and funds two critical components. The first I want to mention is the dress rehearsal next April. Already, Census is preparing for the dress rehearsal in Stockton, CA, and Fayetteville, NC, by checking household addresses and noting new construction. A census dress rehearsal is just like one on stage. This is the time to check the lighting and tweak a line or two. It is not the time to rewrite the plot. Given the scope and complexity of a decennial census, new operations cannot be added that are not tested in the dress rehearsal. I would note that we are getting good feedback from Stockton and Fayetteville about the handheld computers that will be used in 2010.

In addition, the President's Budget includes money to kick off the integrated decennial communications plan. It is critical to the census that we reach out to communities that are more

difficult to count. Communities may be harder to enumerate because of language barriers, mistrust of government, or simply because people are busier and it is a challenge to find them at home. For these reasons, we need to educate the public about the importance of the census and enlist local leaders and neighbors to support our efforts. The integrated communications plan will do just that.

Encouraging and Enhancing Innovation and Competitiveness

Innovation is the engine that fuels our nation's economy. The United States is home to the most highly skilled, creative and motivated workforce in the world. That human capital coupled with the pro-business environment we have cultivated, which encourages risk-taking and entrepreneurship, have kept us on the cutting edge of global innovation.

However, to maintain that leadership position we must not be complacent. That is why the President created the American Competitiveness Initiative (ACI), in which the Department of Commerce plays an important role. The ACI commits \$136 billion over 10 years to increase investment in R&D, strengthen education and encourage innovation. The sum total of these efforts will contribute to strengthening our ability to stay competitive.

NIST, which is part of Commerce, promotes basic research funded by the Federal Government, an essential component of the ACI. And while we encourage R&D at the governmental level, we also must promote the involvement of the private sector, which is why the ACI aims to make permanent the R&D tax credit.

Smart business and investment decisions are made with predictability and visibility into the future. By providing a long-term outlook for R&D, the Federal Government can help bring the private sector more actively into the business of basic science, sharpening our Nation's competitive edge.

To further support innovation, we continue working with this Committee as the NIST reauthorization legislation (HR 2272 and S. 761) makes its way through the conference process. Both of these bills recognize the importance of NIST's research to our Nation's global competitiveness, and authorize much-needed increases in the NIST core (laboratory and construction) funding accounts. We encourage Congress to authorize levels for the NIST core that meet the Administration's request.

In addition, while the bill does make changes to the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award program, the Administration requests that the Congress amend the Stevenson-Wydler Act to change the name of the award to the "Malcolm Baldrige Quality, Innovation and Performance Excellence Award" to better reflect the award's updated criteria and greater emphasis on innovation and performance excellence.

Another way in which Commerce is addressing America's economic competitiveness is by looking at how we measure innovation. Last fall, I announced the formation of the Measuring Innovation in the 21st Century Economy Committee. The Committee will help develop metrics that can correctly measure American ingenuity, which we know contributes to our advances in productivity and our high standard of living.

We are currently gathering the input of experts from the business, academic and policy arenas to help the Committee as it develops ideas for innovation metrics. I look forward to reporting back on the progress of their work and developing a better national understanding of the impact innovation has on our economy.

An enormous contributor to America's innovative engine has been the explosion of wireless communications in recent decades. Consequently, the demands on the use of the radio frequency spectrum are rapidly increasing at a rate that raises questions regarding the viability of this natural resource to sustain these ever growing demands and to provide additional services.

To address the need to better manage this resource, the **National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)** has launched the Commerce Spectrum Advisory Committee, which is part of the President's Spectrum Policy Initiative. The initiative was established by President Bush in June 2003 to develop a policy for the 21st century that meets the nation's needs and spurs economic growth.

The transition to digital television broadcasts is a historic opportunity to reclaim and reassign valuable broadcast television spectrum to other important uses, including public safety and advanced wireless services. The digital transition will have important benefits to the economy, public safety, and the federal budget.

As part of our efforts to improve public safety through the digital transition, in July we announced a \$1 billion Public Safety Interoperable Communications Grant Program. These are one-time, targeted federal grants with the purpose of helping state and local public safety agencies improve their ability to communicate with each other when responding to hazards.

An essential component of a pro-growth and pro-innovation agenda is permanently extending the moratorium on Internet access taxes. The Administration urges Congress to make permanent the current moratorium which expires in November.

Under the leadership of the NTIA, Commerce is well underway with the planning and preparation for the digital television transition which will help consumers continue to receive free, over-the-air television when full-power television stations cease analog broadcasting in 2009 as authorized by Congress.

Another essential aspect of U.S. competitiveness is immigration. We must acknowledge that the demographics are not on our side. We cannot grow our economy at three percent a year while our population in the prime working years will only grow 0.3 percent per year over the next seven years. We will have to turn to immigration to help meet our economy's needs. The issue of immigration reform—at the high and low skilled ends—will not go away. It is a fundamental economic competitiveness issue and something we must address.

Innovation and competitiveness are also promoted by the Department's **Economic Development Administration (EDA)**. EDA invests in locally developed, regionally based economic development initiatives that achieve the highest return on the taxpayers' investment and directly contribute to regional and national economic growth. EDA places a strong emphasis on making

investments that (1) support innovation and competitiveness, (2) encourage entrepreneurship, and (3) support collaborative regional economic development approaches.

Minority-owned businesses represent a growing segment of the economic landscape. Commerce's **Minority Business Development Agency** (MBDA) and its nationwide network of business assistance centers promote competitiveness by providing technical and managerial assistance, and business consulting services designed to enhance the growth of the minority business community.

And while I am on the subject of MBDA, I would like to take a moment to specifically acknowledge the good work that agency has done in helping restore the Gulf Coast. Soon after Hurricane Katrina devastated the Gulf Coast, MBDA established five technical and managerial assistance business centers on behalf of Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs) in the Gulf region, (Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama). MBDA also hosted a series of Gulf Coast Business-to-Business Linkage and Investment Forums designed to increase MBE capacity in the region by encouraging joint ventures and teaming arrangements between Gulf Coast 8(a) firms and MBDA clients from around the country. As a result, MBDA has provided consulting services and educational outreach activities to thousands of MBEs.

These are just a few of the many areas in which the Department of Commerce is actively working to encourage, enhance and support innovation to build our economy.

The Department of Commerce plays a critical role in the growth, competitiveness and long-term stability of our nation's economy. And, as I said before this very Committee during my confirmation hearing in January 2005, I strongly support the Department's mission of "creating conditions for economic growth and opportunity by promoting innovation, entrepreneurship, competitiveness and environmental stewardship."

It is my privilege to be at the helm of a Department with so many vital roles to play. I look forward to continuing my role at the Department and working every day to keep America leading in the global economy.