Remarks by Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade Gilbert B. Kaplan at the Discover Global Markets Business Development Forum in Salt Lake City, Utah

AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY

December 11, 2018

Introduced by Ian Steff, Performing the Non-Exclusive Functions and Duties of the Assistant Secretary for Global Markets.

Thank you for that kind introduction, Ian. Good afternoon to everyone and welcome.

Thank you for joining us for this incredible conference bringing together key decision-makers, leaders in industry, and American companies ready to expand their sales abroad.

I’d like to thank our event partner, the Utah District Export Council for their endless commitment to making this conference a great success. Additionally, I would like to recognize Composites & Aerospace of Northern Utah, Governor Herbert’s economic development team, state and district staff of Utah’s Congressional delegation, the World Trade Center Utah, Zions Bank, as well as the many other sponsoring organizations you see on the screens behind me and in your program guides.

We are grateful to have each of these sponsors and all of you here today to discuss ways we can further boost trade and investment ties between the United States, South Asia, and the rest of the Indo-Pacific region.

We are also grateful to our Commercial Service personnel who provide an indispensable service connecting companies to opportunities.

I’d like to take a moment now to highlight the Trump Administration’s trade achievements, as well as our plans to expand on our recent successes.
The President and his uniquely qualified team of advisors understand the plight of many industries.

Consequently, this Administration has taken unprecedented measures to give American companies the opportunity to flourish with both tax and regulatory reform, the commitment to international trade reform, a commitment to investment, and strong efforts to create desperately needed workforce and apprenticeship programs.

The President has stated that the following trade issues are of highest priority:

1) Reducing the trade deficit

2) Increasing economic growth

3) Promoting job creation

4) Strengthening the manufacturing base

5) Ensuring that economic security is part of our national security, and

6) Modernizing the trading rules and system to reflect 21st century industries and standards.

There has never been a President who more vigorously enforces our trade laws in order to ensure fair and reciprocal trade or who is more in favor of creating propitious conditions for U.S. manufacturing.

I would like to talk now about a new initiative we are undertaking that we call RESELECT USA.
The President has kept his promise to support U.S. companies. He has created the pro-
growth environment that makes our economy the best in the world.

As you all know, we have seen success – Our economy is creating new jobs, and we are seeing the U.S. manufacturing sector grow again.

A decade ago, economic conditions forced many companies to send manufacturing and American jobs overseas. Some businesses had to scale back operations or close entirely. And, as the President said at his inauguration, communities across the country are marred by “rusted out factories scattered like tombstones across the landscape of our nation.”

Here in Utah, there were more than 123,000 manufacturing jobs in 2008, but only 107,000 in 2011. That’s a 13 percent decrease, which may not seem terrible in the context of the economic downturn, unless your job was one of the 16,000 that disappeared.

This Administration’s policies have created an incredible economic turnaround and resurrected U.S. manufacturing. We will continue to help your companies compete overseas on a level playing field and help restore faith in the American dream.

In that vein, today, on behalf of Secretary Wilbur Ross, I am announcing the ReSelectUSA initiative – a concerted effort to further mobilize Department of Commerce resources to support U.S. companies on their path to growth in the United States.

ReSelectUSA will be part of the Commerce Department’s SelectUSA program, which was established in 2011 to support domestic and foreign business investment in the United States.

The Commerce Department’s SelectUSA program has worked with foreign-owned firms to facilitate more than $45.5 billion dollars in business investment in the United States. SelectUSA has had tremendous success, but now we know we can do more to attract and retain investment from U.S. firms. And we will.
ReSelectUSA is now working on helping U.S. firms that want to return their operations to the United States from overseas, and on supporting U.S. companies’ business expansion within the United States.

ReSelectUSA is part of our commitment to provide a single point of contact in the federal government to help domestic firms like yours deal with impediments, make connections, receive counseling and ombudsman services, and get the market intelligence you need to execute your business plans.

For any domestic company that is looking at expansion opportunities, we want you to look first at the United States.

Our team has experts who can help U.S. companies – your companies – navigate the legal landscape, take advantage of our world-class workforce, and analyze supply chain considerations to help businesses grow where they have the best opportunity to succeed.

And, I am confident that location will often be here in the United States.

Just down the street in Salt Lake City, a company called PolarityTE started with 12 employees. The company was solving global problems, developing regenerative tissue products and biomaterials with potential applications including regrowth of skin, bone, and neural networks.

Thank about the impact of that – helping men and women in uniform and our loved ones recover from burns, wounds, and injuries that current medicine has difficulty fully healing.

As the company grew, it looked at opportunities to expand. As any smart business would do, PolarityTE looked at opportunities around the globe. But after working with local partners like the World Trade Center Utah, the company decided the best place to grow was right here in Utah.

Why? Because manufacturing in the United States allows the application of advanced manufacturing techniques while protecting intellectual property. Because – like we see
right here in Utah – the United States offers access to talent, capital, and facilities that allow a company like PolarityTE to grow from 12 employees to 130, and to keep innovating.

More than 75 percent of those employees have advanced degrees, while their average wage is more than twice the national average.

Not every company across the country has the advantages of a partner like World Trade Center Utah in its backyard, and ReSelectUSA can work to provide the research, data, and assistance to support companies across the United States in understanding the competitive advantages of this country and to stay on a path to grow right here.

That’s what you look for from government, that’s what you deserve as business leaders, and that’s what the Trump Administration is delivering: the conditions to help you grow.

This message naturally falls in line with our efforts here at Discover Global: Indo-Pacific.

We have all gathered here to talk about opportunity in the Indo-Pacific region and opportunity in the aerospace and defense sectors.

As some of you might know, this is the 5th year that the International Trade Administration has organized the Discover Global Markets (“DGM”) event series and the 18th individual DGM event. This series has reached almost 5000 US firms, providing almost 8000 one-on-one business appointments.

Our U.S. Commercial diplomats and U.S. Commercial Service trade specialists are here to provide market intelligence on opportunities for your company; by introducing you to potential business partners and helping you develop strategies to conquer your next export market.

As Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade I’ve had the opportunity to travel domestically and internationally, meeting with heads of states, government representatives, and stakeholders including American companies large and small.
I can say that a spirit of ingenuity, resourcefulness, and innovation has been a constant as I've met with these American companies.

The same spirit is attractive to foreign countries and foreign companies that want to buy from us, that want to partner with us, that value the American model for business and trade, and embrace our standards and ideals.

I recently traveled to Singapore; Vietnam, where I visited Hanoi; and to India, where I visited Mumbai, Jaipur, and New Delhi, and met with many industry stakeholders.

There is great potential for U.S. companies to expand their presence in the Indo-Pacific and find ways to contribute their expertise, technical know-how, and innovative technologies to help this region achieve their ambitious economic development goals.

This past July, Secretary Ross and Secretary Pompeo officially rolled out America’s Indo-Pacific Strategy. To follow up on that, we are proud to host this Discover Global Markets Indo-Pacific conference here in Salt Lake City this week.

In May 2019, we will lead the Trade Winds Forum & Mission to India, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh where U.S. exporters can gain first-hand market insights and solidify their Indo-Pacific business strategies.

Next year’s trade mission will be the 11th Trade Winds, and it is the first time after twelve years that a large U.S. Government mission will focus on the Indo-Pacific region.

There, we expect to organize over 1,000 government-to-business meetings and 500 business-to-business meetings.

Participating in Trade Winds in India, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh could be a great follow-up to your participation here. I recommend conferring with our staff during your one-on-one meetings about whether Trade Winds is right for your company, and about the many incentives available to support small businesses participating in the Trade Winds mission.
Finally, I’d be remiss not to highlight Secretary Ross’s and the Department’s work in the growing arena of space commerce, seeing as today’s conference is focused on the convergence of aerospace, defense, and security.

The greater Salt Lake City region and the State of Utah are home to a large concentration of these key industries.

Since the National Space Council was re-established this past year, it has met four times, and the Department of Commerce’s role to promote and work with the space industry has grown significantly.

The Secretary wants to make America the flag of choice for space commerce.

Space Policy Directive 2, or SPD-2, signed by President Trump this year, directed the Department of Commerce and other agencies to execute regulatory reforms that will advance business opportunity in space.

On the same day President Trump signed SPD-2, we immediately announced our intent to create a new Space Policy Advancing Commercial Enterprise, or SPACE Administration, under Secretary Ross’s direct supervision.

The new SPACE Administration will provide services within the Department for promoting, administering, and regulating commercial space activities.

As I touched on earlier, we have experienced a historic economic turnaround with new policies of the Trump Administration. We are working to continue this trend of growth.

We at the Department of Commerce, and at the International Trade Administration, are fully committed to a trade vision that translates into new opportunities for the private sector and a higher standard of living for all Americans, including through ReSelect USA.

If you are manufacturing abroad, ReSelect the United States.
If you are considering plant expansion, Look First at the United States.

I am grateful for your time today.

Thank you for being a part of our Discover Global Markets: Indo-Pacific conference. Please take advantage of the wonderful resources and opportunities available here over the course of the next two days.

I hope you have a fruitful and productive experience.

Thank you.