

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND
TRANSPORTATION**

Full Committee Nomination Hearing
Tuesday, May 13, 2025, at 10:00 A.M.

REPUBLICAN QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD

COVER PAGE
David Fogel

SENATOR DAN SULLIVAN (R-AK)

I cannot stress enough that Alaska is the superpower of seafood, supporting 1.6 million jobs and providing 10 billion meals each year. However, we still have critical issues affecting the stability of our seafood trade. We are being taken advantage of in the global market. Russia and China are employing unfair trade practices and predatory pricing to cheat the markets and undercut our hardworking American fishermen.

America can compete—and win—if we are given a fair chance in the markets. For that, we need reciprocity in our trade deals with China and Russia. And we need enforcement. We need you to hold these countries to their word, particularly China. During President Trump's first term, we worked with them to strike a pretty decent deal. Under Phase One of that agreement, China was supposed to purchase \$80 billion of American agriculture, and it was a priority for us for that to include seafood.

These numbers were aimed to be above a 2017 baseline of purchases, but China continues to operate well below even that baseline—including 44% below the year after the agreement was signed. But guess what, they haven't. We need you to get China to hold up their end of the agreement, and I promise you, Mr. Fogel, that our fishermen will return to being the seafood powerhouse that they can be. There is a reason that the National Marine Fisheries Service is within the Department of Commerce, and in recent years we have been forgotten in the trade space.

1. I would even encourage you to work with Ambassador Greer at USTR on opening a Section 301 unfair trade investigation on Russia and China with regard to seafood, which was in the President's recent Seafood Executive Order. I am confident that you all would uncover plenty of ways they are cheating the markets and it will give you the leverage you need to impose meaningful sanctions. **Will you prioritize fisheries when you are thinking about trade deals?**

Answer:

If confirmed, I look forward to working with you to ensure that America's critical industries are competitive.

Mr. Fogel, I know we have not had a chance to meet yet one-on-one yet, but I want to bring up the current reciprocal ban on Russian Seafood. I have talked with Secretary Lutnick and just about every other Cabinet Secretary about this. It is the easiest first step you can take in advancing the President's Executive Order on Restoring American Seafood Competitiveness.

Russia has banned U.S. seafood from its markets since 2014. However, for many years, Russia was not subject to any special import duties in the U.S. Meanwhile, Russia has drastically increased seafood production since 2022 and is openly working to flood both U.S. and global markets with cheap seafood to push out U.S. product.

All the while, our hardworking fishermen could not export a single fish to Russia. For nearly 10 years we allowed them to do this and for years, I advocated to address this asymmetrical and very unfair trade relationship. I was finally successful in getting the last Administration to roll out a couple of executive orders to put a stop to this and restore reciprocity. If we can't enter the Russian market, they shouldn't be able to flood ours, too.

EO 14068 in 2022 banned imports of Russian seafood. However, Russia began laundering their seafood through China to circumvent the ban. EO 14114 in 2023 closed this loophole and made it abundantly clear that any seafood harvested in Russia is banned from import into the U.S.—even if it goes through processing in another country.

We are finally beginning to see this ban have effects on the market. American importers are beginning to buy Alaskan “Freedom Fish” instead of Russian “Communist Fish” and prices are beginning to stabilize for our fishermen. There has been a lot of concern with ongoing negotiations over Ukraine that this ban could be lifted as part of a peace agreement. However, I want to be very clear that this is about fair trade and reciprocity—not the war in Ukraine.

2. Mr. Fogel, will you commit to keeping these reciprocal executive orders—EO 14068 and EO 14114—in place? They are critical to keeping our seafood trade fair.

Answer:

If confirmed, I look forward to working with you to ensure that America's critical industries are competitive.