

Statement of Nicole Yvette Lamb-Hale

Nominee for Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Manufacturing and Services

U.S. Department of Commerce

Nomination Hearing before the Senate Commerce, Science, and

Transportation Committee

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Chairman Rockefeller, Ranking Member Hutchison, and distinguished Members of this Committee, I am honored and humbled to appear before you today as President Obama's nominee to serve as Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Manufacturing and Services. Mentors have told me over the years that every career should be rounded out with public service. I could not be happier to have the opportunity to serve my country at this critical period in its history.

I thank President Obama for the enormous trust he has placed in me and Secretary Locke for his enthusiastic support of my nomination.

Over the past few weeks, I have had the pleasure of meeting with Members of this Committee and your staffs. I appreciate the time that you shared with me, your insights into the challenges faced by U.S. industry and your perspectives on potential solutions. If I am confirmed by the Senate, I look forward to collaborating with you.

I also thank Senator Debbie Stabenow of the great State of Michigan for her gracious introduction today. I appreciate the leadership and commitment of Senators Stabenow and Levin in preserving manufacturing in the United States.

At this time, I would like to introduce the Members of the Committee to my family. Joining me are my husband, John Hale, III whose love and support of me have been unwavering; my children, John Hale, IV and Ashleigh Hale, who are my greatest accomplishments; my mother, Zinnette McRae Lamb, who has always been the wind beneath my wings; and my other relatives, close friends and business colleagues-several of whom traveled great distances to support me here today. I would also like to thank my late father, Rawleigh Glendale Lamb, whose constant encouragement inspired me to reach for my dreams, and my 92 year old maternal grandfather, Zin Osman McRae, from the great state of Arkansas, who set such a wonderful example for our family to follow.

As I prepared my remarks, I could not help but reflect on the path that led me here today. I was born and raised in metropolitan Detroit, the cradle of the U.S. automotive industry. My father was an executive at Chrysler Corporation until his death in 1990. I have vivid memories of the financial crisis suffered by Chrysler in

the late 1970s. I recall the fear experienced by my parents as they contemplated the impact of the potential loss of my father's job on our family—a fear that they could not hide from me and a fear that is faced by many families today resulting from the loss of jobs in the U.S.

Upon my graduation from law school, I returned to Detroit to pursue my legal career. I practiced law for more than 17 years in Detroit before assuming the role of Deputy General Counsel at the Department of Commerce. My client base included original equipment manufacturers, parts suppliers and service providers. Because my area of expertise was business restructuring, I gained a unique perspective on the challenges facing U.S. manufacturing as I shepherded my clients through financial crisis. I saw the impact of fluctuating commodity costs on manufacturers, their challenges with accessing capital and the burden of legacy costs on the capital structures of their companies. I also saw how these issues adversely impacted the ability of my clients to successfully compete in the global marketplace. In addition, I witnessed the negative impact of manufacturing job losses on every sector of the community. If I am confirmed, it is with those experiences in mind that I will approach the role of Assistant Secretary for Manufacturing and Services and work tirelessly to find the way forward for U.S. industry.

I broadly view the role of Manufacturing and Services as three-fold: to convene, to collaborate and to connect. If confirmed, under my leadership, Manufacturing and Services will convene experts both inside and outside of the federal government to develop solutions to the issues faced by U.S. industry. Manufacturing and Services will also collaborate with Congress, with agencies across the federal government and with state and local governments to develop solutions to sustain and increase the global competitiveness of U.S. industry. Further, Manufacturing and Services will work to connect industry to the resources and tools available in the federal government to forge a path to sustainable, highly-skilled jobs for the 21st century economy.

If confirmed, I will proactively work with U.S. industry to foster its growth and support its competitiveness. With input from U.S. industry, I will be laser focused on the domestic and trade-related barriers that impinge on the ability of U.S. industry to succeed on the global stage.

My personal and professional experience gives me a unique perspective on the needs of U.S. industry that will inform my ability to effectively leverage the tools found in Manufacturing and Services. If confirmed, I will work closely with this Committee and your colleagues in Congress to develop effective solutions that will reinvigorate U.S. industry.

I thank you for your consideration of my nomination and the opportunity to address this Committee. I look forward to any questions you may have.

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