

RELEASE IN FULL

From: Sullivan, Jacob J <SullivanJJ@state.gov>
Sent: Friday, October 21, 2011 12:08 PM
To: H
Subject: FW: Senate Confirmations

FYI

This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

From: Craft, William E
Sent: Friday, October 21, 2011 8:57 PM
To: Henninger, Carol A; EEB-A-TPP-Deputies-DL; Szymanski, Michael L; Harris, Jennifer M; Fernandez, Jose W; Charbonnet, Laurent D; McCarthy, Deborah A; Hormats, Robert D; Lane, Nathan P; Sullivan, Jacob J
Subject: RE: Senate Confirmations

FYI, I had a nice talk with new Commerce Secretary Bryson at the FTA Signing ceremony. He LOVED the Secretary's Oct. 14 Econ speech. He made it required reading for all of his senior staff. He is very much looking forward to working with State on the NEI, IPR and other common goals.

Bill

This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

From: Henninger, Carol A
Sent: Friday, October 21, 2011 11:50 AM
To: EEB-A-TPP-MTA
Cc: Craft, William E
Subject: Senate Confirmations

Senate Confirms Punke, Siddiqui, Piquado Among Slew Of Nominees

Posted: October 21, 2011

The Senate early this morning (Oct. 21) confirmed by voice vote 19 pending Obama administration nominees en bloc, including nominations for Michael Punke and Islam Siddiqui to serve in the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative and a nomination for Paul Piquado to serve in the Commerce Department.

Punke was confirmed as the Deputy USTR and the U.S. ambassador to the World Trade Organization, while Siddiqui was approved as USTR's chief agricultural negotiator. They already serve in those positions through March 2010 recess appointments, but their nominations would have expired in December had the Senate not approved them.

Punke and Siddiqui were each renominated last January and approved by the Senate Finance Committee on Oct. 11.

On that day, the committee also approved Piquado, who was nominated in March to serve as assistant secretary of Commerce for import administration.

Senate Republicans had vowed to block all trade appointees until Congress held votes on the pending free trade agreements with South Korea, Colombia and Panama. Both chambers approved the pacts on Oct. 12.

The vote on the three nominees followed the approval last night of John Bryson to serve as the next secretary of Commerce, by a 74 to 26 vote. Bryson was initially nominated for the post in May along with Terry Garcia, who was nominated to be the deputy secretary of Commerce. Garcia withdrew his name late last month due to the ongoing delays in the Senate confirmation process.

Despite the action this week, three trade-related nominations are still awaiting Senate action.

These include the nomination of Alan Bersin to be the commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection. Like Punke and Siddiqui before him, Bersin currently serves in this position via a recess appointment that will expire in December without Senate confirmation.

Bersin has still not been approved by the Finance Committee. Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-MT) has said that he is trying to move this nomination forward, but is facing resistance from Republicans, although one Republican source maintained that there is bipartisan resistance to this nomination.

Among the same cycle of recess appointments as Punke, Siddiqui and Bersin was the nomination of Eric Hirschhorn to be the Commerce undersecretary for export administration. Hirschhorn's nomination was approved by the Senate Banking Committee in April, but has not moved forward since.

Hirschhorn currently serves in that post via a recess appointment. In that capacity, he heads up the Bureau of Industry and Security, which administers dual-use export controls. Thirteen industry associations, led by the National Foreign Trade Council, last month sent a letter to each Senate office calling for approval of the Hirschhorn nomination, which will expire in December without Senate confirmation (*Inside U.S. Trade, Sept. 30*).

Also awaiting confirmation is David Johanson, who was nominated to serve on the U.S. International Trade Commission in April. He was approved by the Finance Committee on Oct. 11 along with Punke and Siddiqui.

This email is UNCLASSIFIED.