

Trump Announces Two Key Trade Nominations and WTO Taps U.S. Trade Attorney for Deputy Director-General Post

June 28, 2017

According to a White House Statement issued on June 26th, President Donald Trump intends to nominate two important trade positions within the U.S. Department of Commerce ("Commerce") and the International Trade Commission ("USITC").

- **Peter B. Davidson**, Senior Vice President for Congressional Relations at Verizon Communications, was selected by President Trump to be general counsel of Commerce. Prior to Verizon, Mr. Davidson served as General Counsel to the United States Trade Representative ("USTR"). He has also served as Vice President for Congressional Relations at USWEST and Qwest, and General Counsel and Policy Director to the Majority Leader of the House of Representatives. Mr. Davidson earned his bachelor's degree at Carleton College, and his law degree from the University of Virginia School of Law.
- **Jason Kearns** was selected to be a Commissioner of the USITC for the remainder of a 9 year term expiring December 16, 2024. Mr. Kearns currently serves as Chief International Trade Counsel (Democratic Staff) to the Committee on Ways and Means in the House of Representatives. In this position, Mr. Kearns advises Members of Congress on legislation concerning trade and oversight issues involving the USTR and other agencies involved in international trade policy and regulation. Before that, he served for three years in the Office of the General Counsel to the USTR. From 2000 through 2003, Mr. Kearns worked in the international trade group of the law firm, WilmerHale. Kearns has a master's in public policy from Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government, a law degree from the University of Pennsylvania and a bachelor's degree from the University of Denver.

In addition, the Director-General of the World Trade Organization ("WTO") announced a recent appointment of a senior Dentons senior counsel. More specifically, WTO Director-General Robert Azevedo announced on June 27th that **Alan Wolff** had been named as deputy director-general at the WTO. Mr. Wolff will serve a four year term, replacing fellow American David Shark, a former U.S. trade official who has served in the secretariat since 2013. Director-General Roberto Azevedo lauded Wolff's qualifications, calling him "a strong supporter of trade as a key driver of growth and development and a strong supporter of the multilateral trading system." Mr. Wolff served in senior trade positions as deputy USTR and as USTR general counsel during the Carter and Ford administrations. He currently works as senior counsel at the law firm Dentons. Wolff earned his law degree from Colombia Law School and his bachelor's degree at Harvard University.