

Remarks at 21st Annual U.S.-China Joint Commission on Commerce and Trade (JCCT)

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Commerce Secretary Gary Locke

Opening Remarks at 21st Annual U.S.-China Joint Commission on Commerce and Trade (JCCT)

I'd like to welcome Vice Premier Wang and your delegation to Washington, DC during this holiday season. As co-chairs of the JCCT, we are stewards of the U.S.-China trade relationship. Stewardship is defined as the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care.

That "something" is a bilateral trade relationship which is robust and supports millions of jobs for our people. The JCCT is the vehicle where we exercise this careful and responsible management.

This is a profound responsibility as U.S.-China trade grows in both opportunity and complexity.

Pick up the newspaper on any given day and you'll surely see a catalog of the latest disagreements between China and the United States. But those in this room know that our disagreements do not define us. Our disagreements are in fact the inevitable byproduct of two trading partners whose commercial relationship has been growing steadily for four decades.

There are so many areas of mutual interest for the U.S. and China to pursue. There is:

- joint research to be done on energy and environmental problems;
- Commercial cooperation to be had between our businesses; and
- A responsibility for us to spur innovation, not only to create jobs and opportunity; but to deal with global challenges like climate change, poverty, disease and economic inequality.

These are issues that no nation can or should solve alone. The discussions we have and the decisions we make today will help determine:

- How well Chinese and U.S. scientists discover together;
- How well our businesses innovate together; and
- How well our governments can deal with the growing challenges of the 21st century.

As I look around the room today at all of our hard-working staff, it is clear tremendous effort has gone into the careful and responsible management of our trade relationship.

I have no doubt these efforts will lead to a successful and productive dialogue today.

Thank you.