

United States Senate Committee on
**AGRICULTURE
NUTRITION
& FORESTRY**

Opening Statement of Chairwoman Debbie Stabenow (D-Mich)
Hearing on Nominees for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission
March 6, 2014

As prepared for delivery

Good morning. The Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry will now come to order.

We're meeting this morning to consider the nomination of Timothy Massad to be the next Chairman of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, as well as the nominations of Sharon Bowen and Christopher Giancarlo to be Commissioners at the CFTC. Thank you all for being here today. I'm glad to see so many of your family members here today to support you.

The last time we met as a Committee to confirm a new Chair, we were in the middle of a global financial crisis so deep that 8 million jobs were lost.

Today, the economy is adding jobs and our financial markets are getting safer, thanks in part to the work of the Commission. The Wall Street Reform and Accountability Act ushered in a new era of accountability and transparency in the markets, but that only works if the law is implemented and enforced, and a significant part of that falls to the CFTC.

You have been nominated to implement the law this Committee helped write and Congress passed to help ensure we don't have another global financial crisis. If confirmed, you will have the responsibility of making sure the futures, swaps, and options markets are safe for trading and free of fraud and manipulation.

These markets are important to the everyday lives of Americans, including companies and consumers in my home state of Michigan. You will need to make sure these companies, like commercial end users, energy firms, and agricultural producers, are able to use these markets to manage their risks and to find fair prices for a wide range of products, from corn to natural gas to aluminum.

If confirmed, you will also need to ensure that the agency is keeping a watchful eye on market participants like clearinghouses, exchanges, and swap dealers, to make sure they are managing risk carefully and doing all that they can to prevent market abuse.

And you will have an obligation to make sure that we never see another MF Global or Peregrine Financial shatter faith in either the markets or the ability of regulators to oversee those markets.

This is an enormous responsibility, and it is our job to make sure you are up to the task.

The Commission has much more responsibility than it had even a few years ago, and unfortunately, with very limited resources. The agency needs to harmonize with regulators around the world, and balance between moving forward with strong reform and being sensitive to different regulatory approaches and timelines for reform. The agency needs to work closely with other US agencies, to share information and remove unnecessary differences in regulation. And, the agency needs to keep up with technological changes, like automated trading, and challenges, like cybersecurity threats.

I have enjoyed meeting each of you before this hearing, and look forward to your answers today. If confirmed, I fully expect you to work with this Committee and Congress, and to show a commitment to open dialogue, and pragmatic, problem solving.