

Members of the Committee on Industry, Research and
Energy (ITRE)
European Parliament
60 rue Wiertz
Brussels 1047

Brussels, 10 October 2024

Dear Member of the ITRE Committee,

The upcoming hearings of the Commissioners-designate provide an opportunity for Members of the European Parliament to put boosting the EU economy and its attractiveness for investment at the top of the political agenda. As the voice for more than 160 American companies committed to Europe on trade, investment and competitiveness issues, the American Chamber of Commerce to the EU (AmCham EU) has a vital interest in ensuring that the EU's competitiveness ambitions are translated into actionable policies.

AmCham EU's internal committees and taskforces, composed of American company representatives invested in Europe and staunchly supportive of the Single Market, have identified several key questions for the European Parliament's upcoming confirmation hearings of the Commissioners-designate. The following questions are designed to elicit concrete strategies to embed competitiveness in their respective portfolios and guide the evaluation of candidates at the hearings for which the ITRE Committee is jointly responsible:

Executive Vice-President Teresa Ribera (Spain)

- **Green transition and competitiveness:** How would you ensure that the EU meets its ambitious climate targets while safeguarding European industries' global competitiveness, particularly in energy-intensive sectors?
- **Keeping Europe Open for Business:** In your mission letter, you are tasked with modernising EU competition rules and developing a new and simplified EU state aid framework. How would you ensure that any revision to these two key sets of rules preserves open competition and contributes to making the EU an attractive economy for foreign investments?
- **Foreign Subsidies Regulation (FSR):** The Draghi report indicated a need to build DG Competition's capacity to investigate FSR cases, particularly in relation to tax, financial services and digital. How would you build DG Competition's capacity to screen cases under the FSR?

Executive Vice-President Henna Virkkunen (Finland)

- **Unified artificial intelligence (AI) ecosystem and the role of non-EU companies:** How would you ensure that AI factories, along with programmes like the AI Testing and Experimentation Facilities (TEFs), harness Europe's supercomputing capabilities to develop advanced generative AI models using European-curated data, while also ensuring these remain inclusive and open environments that attract investment and talent from non-EU companies?
- **European Defence Union:** How would you strengthen the European Defence and Technological Industrial Base and achieve greater strategic autonomy while also avoiding protectionist measures that could make the EU an unfavourable environment for critical foreign investments and undermine both European security and the competitiveness of industry?
- **Clarity of enforcement:** What resources would you allocate to effectively implement the digital legislation passed in the last mandate? How would you ensure that new regulatory proposals, such as

the Digital Fairness Act (mentioned in the Mission Letter for the Commissioner for Democracy, Justice and the Rule of Law) do not overlap or conflict with the implementation of legislation such as the Digital Services Act?

- **Data Union strategy:** How would you harmonise regulations across Member States and avoid conflicting rules while fostering innovation in highly regulated sectors?

Executive Vice-President Stéphane Séjourné (France)

- **Clean Industrial Deal:** How can Europe move towards decarbonisation without altering the competitive situation of key EU industries, which could potentially result in further deindustrialisation?
- **European preference:** Is it strategic to implement public procurement reforms that include a European preference principle, when Europe can depend on strategic products and technologies supplied by American companies that are committed to Europe and the Single Market?
- **Enhancing the Single Market and reducing barriers:** How specifically would you enhance the internal market, stimulate innovation and remove onerous administrative requirements to facilitate the deployment of sustainable technologies enabling the energy transition?
- **The digital single market and innovation:** How would you balance implementing the complex digital legislation introduced in the last mandate with fostering innovation to ensure Europe remains competitive in the global artificial intelligence race?

Wopke Hoekstra (Netherlands)

- **Investing in climate neutrality:**
 - How would you ensure the EU's pathway to climate neutrality by 2050 is competitive, inclusive and technology-neutral, particularly for industries undergoing green transitions? How would you acknowledge measures already taken by industry to transition to a net-carbon economy?
 - What initiatives would you promote to attract private investment in clean energy projects across Europe?
- **Innovation and effectiveness in taxation:**
 - What would a full tax 'decluttering' exercise look like, what legislative instruments and rules would be involved, and how would this contribute to growth across the EU? Are you committed to advancing work on mechanisms designed to reduce the value-added tax compliance burden for businesses?
 - Do you think the Commission should continue to explore ways to use taxation as a means for EU resources? If so, what should it prioritise: expanding upon existing mechanisms (Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism, Emissions Trading System), actualising proposed ones (financial transaction taxes, behavioural taxes, Business in Europe: Framework for Income Taxation) or proposing new ones?

Andrius Kubilius (Lithuania)

- **European Defence Union:** How would you ensure closer cooperation between the EU and like-minded allies to strengthen Europe's Defence Technological and Industrial Base, focusing on its long-term competitiveness, while producing the capabilities required by Member States' armed forces?
- **Space Regulation:** Would you consolidate the EU-US Space Dialogue to coordinate policies and share information on space activities, address emerging threats, harmonise standards and develop joint

strategies for space exploration and commercial activities? Additionally, how would you concretely encourage transatlantic public-private partnerships to drive innovation and commercial growth in the space sector?

- **Procurement:** How would you define EU companies eligible for procurement in defence in policies and proposed regulations? Would that definition include European companies that are owned by US companies?

Dan Jørgensen (Denmark)

- **Affordable low-carbon energy for the Clean Industrial Deal:** How would you provide more inclusive support for technologies such as sustainable aviation fuels, carbon capture, utilisation and storage and low-carbon hydrogen that would enable a thriving low-carbon economy in the most flexible, resource efficient and cost-effective way, thereby enhancing the competitiveness of European economy?
- **Combating fraud in fuels:** How would you address unfair trade practices, strengthen certification and monitoring of renewable fuels to prevent fraud, and ensure that compliance measures do not hinder the EU's ability to meet its targets for renewable and low-carbon fuels, particularly in the context of rising demand driven by the Green Deal and concerns over unfair competition from imports from third countries?

Ekaterina Zaharieva (Bulgaria)

- **Regulatory barriers to innovation in life sciences:** Recent initiatives such as the Medical Device Regulation, the In-Vitro Diagnostic Medical Devices Regulation and the European Health Data Space have all added new complexities to the healthcare ecosystem in Europe, which disproportionately affect innovative companies, including start-ups, by creating more regulatory complexity. Would you use the proposed Biotech Act and life sciences strategy to improve the regulatory environment for these industries and foster more innovative start-ups in Europe?
- **Supporting life sciences innovation:** How would you support research and innovation in Europe in the life sciences industry in this globally competitive landscape?

We hope these questions will contribute to a robust and constructive dialogue during the hearings. AmCham EU remains at your disposal for any further information.



Roger Coelho
Senior Policy Director
AmCham EU