BACKGROUND

In the Agricultural Act of 2014 (Act), Congress directed the Secretary to “propose a reorganization of international trade functions for imports and exports of the Department of Agriculture (USDA).” The Act states that the proposal should “include a plan for the establishment of an Under Secretary of Agriculture for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs.” A consideration in producing this proposal is that the Under Secretary “would serve as a multiagency coordinator of sanitary and phytosanitary issues and non-tariff barriers in agriculture with respect to imports and exports of agricultural products.”

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Congress mandated USDA to engage the National Academy of Public Administration (the Academy) in a seven-month project in order to produce a report that includes an assessment of options to be considered for the potential creation of this new Under Secretary position.

The Academy will work with USDA to (1) evaluate the issues that the reorganization is intended to address; (2) identify the most feasible options for how USDA could structure and organize the new Under Secretary position; (3) identify the issues and challenges of creating and implementing the new position; and (4) issue recommendations for how this reorganization could be established within USDA.
PANEL

Susan Offutt.* Chair. Chief Economist, U.S. Government Accountability Office. Former Administrator, Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture; Executive Director, Board on Agriculture, National Academy of Sciences/Nation Research Council; Chief, Agriculture Branch, Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the U.S. President; Leader, Technology Research Assessment Section, Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture; Assistant Professor, Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

Rafael Borras.* Senior Advisor, AT Kearney. Former Under Secretary for Management, Department of Homeland Security; Vice President, URS Corporation; Regional Administrator, Mid-Atlantic Region of the U.S. General Services Administration; Deputy Assistant Secretary for Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce; Deputy City Manager and Commissioner of Human Services of New Rochelle, NY; Deputy City Manager, City of Hartford, CT.


I.M. (Mac) Destler.* Professor and Director, Ph.D. Program, and Director, Program on International Security and Economic Policy, School of Public Affairs, University of Maryland. Former positions with Carnegie Endowment for International Peace: Senior Fellow, Institute for International Economics; Director, Project on Executive-Congressional Relations in Foreign Policy; Consultant on Reorganization of the Executive Office of the President, U.S. Office of Management and Budget; Senior Fellow, The Brookings Institution.

Bob J. Nash.* CEO, Bob J. Nash & Associates. Former Senior Advisor, James Lee Witt Associates; Deputy Campaign Manager, Hillary Clinton Campaign for President; Vice-Chairman, ShoreBank Corporation; Assistant to the President and Director of Presidential Personnel; Undersecretary of Agriculture for Rural Development, U.S. Department of Agriculture; Chair, Rural Telephone Bank Board; Member, Commodity Credit Corporation; President of the Arkansas Development Finance Authority, Arkansas Governor's Cabinet; Lead Senior Staff, National and Regional Organizations, Governor Clinton; Senior Executive Assistant for Economic Development, Governor of Arkansas' Office; Vice-President, Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation; Administrative Officer, National Training and Development Service (NTDS).

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