POSITION DESCRIPTION

**United States Trade Representative, Executive office of the president**

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| **OVERVIEW** |
| Senate Committee | Finance |
| Agency Mission | The Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) is responsible for developing and coordinating U.S. international trade, commodity and direct investment policy, and overseeing negotiations with other countries. |
| Position Overview | The USTR serves as the principal trade advisor, negotiator, advocate and spokesperson on trade issues. He or she leads U.S. negotiations and dialogues with trading partners, including U.S. engagement at the World Trade Organization, and is responsible for enforcement of trade agreements. |
| Compensation | Level I $199,700 (5 U.S.C. § 5312)[[1]](#endnote-1) |
| Position Reports to | The President of the United States |
| **RESPONSIBILITIES** |
| Management Scope | The Office of the U.S. Trade Representative contains 24 separate offices.[[2]](#endnote-2) The fiscal 2016 budget for the office was an estimated $54 million, and there are around 240 full time employees.[[3]](#endnote-3) |
| Primary Responsibilities | * Works through the National Security Council and National Economic Council; develops and leads execution of the long-term trade strategy of the United States
* Leads and manages the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative
* Serves as the chief trade advocate and spokesperson for the president
* Testifies before, and negotiates with, Congress, including leading efforts to secure trade promotion authority and passage of trade agreement legislation
* Interacts with foreign trade ministers and with business, labor and other external stakeholders
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| Strategic Goals and Priorities | [Depends on the policy priorities of the administration]  |
| **REQUIREMENTS AND COMPETENCIES** |
| Requirements | * A person who has directly represented, aided, or advised a foreign entity (as defined by section 207(f)(3) of title 18) in any trade negotiation, or trade dispute, with the United States may not be appointed as United States Trade Representative or as a Deputy United States Trade Representative. (19 U.S.C. § 2171)
* Trade policy experience
* An understanding of the critical role of trade policy within broader U.S. foreign policy, as well as in domestic economic policy and U.S. competitiveness
* Academic credentials in law, history and/or public policy (preferred)
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| Competencies | * Diplomatic and analytical skills to negotiate complex agreements and lead other trading partners to consensus
* Strong interpersonal skills; ability to work across agencies
* Political acumen, a strategic nature and communication skills to manage disparate domestic interests and build legislative coalitions necessary to enact the president’s trade agenda
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| **PAST APPOINTEES** |
| Michael Froman (June 2013 – 2017): Assistant to the President and Deputy National Security Advisor for International Economic Affairs; Senior Fellow, Council of Foreign Relations; Senior Executive, Citigroup; Chief of Staff and Deputy Assistant Secretary for Eurasia and the Middle East, Department of Treasury |
| Ron Kirk (March 2009 – June 2013): Mayor of Dallas, Texas; Secretary of State, Texas; Partner, Vinson & Elkins LLP |
| Susan Schwab (June 2006 – March 2009): Deputy U.S. Trade Representative; President, University of Maryland Foundation; Dean, University of Maryland School of Public Policy |
| Rob Portman (May 2005 – May 2006): Member of Congress, Ohio’s 2nd District |

1. The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (Public Law 115-31, May 5, 2017), contains a provision that continues the freeze on the payable pay rates for certain senior political officials at 2013 levels during calendar year 2017. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. https://ustr.gov/about-us/organization [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. https://ustr.gov/sites/default/files/files/about/FY2016%20USTR%20Congressional%20Budget%20Submission.pdf [↑](#endnote-ref-3)