

The Nation's Top Trade Negotiator Is Now on the Job

United States Trade Representative Amb. Robert Lighthizer was sworn in by Vice President Mike Pence at a ceremony at the Eisenhower Executive Office Building on Monday, putting into place the final top-level official who will advocate for President Donald Trump's "America First" economic agenda.

"President Donald Trump made a promise to the American people—to fight for trade that puts America first," the vice president said. "And in choosing Robert Lighthizer as the U.S. Trade Representative, President Trump is keeping his promise to put America first."

"Robert Lighthizer is uniquely qualified for this vital role because he's frankly one of the leading experts on trade in all of America."

After taking his Oath of Office, Lighthizer gave the following remarks:

"It's a great privilege to be in this administration, but to have the vice president administer the oath is a special privilege. And I would like to thank you for all you do, including particularly Thursday's speech, which I thought was quite meaningful and very important."

"I would like to thank the Chairman of the Agriculture Committee, Sen. Roberts, who is really important because he's on the finance committee, however."

"And I'd like to thank Secretary Ross, who was here, but mostly Sen. Dole, who I—when I had my hearing I said, 'I wouldn't be here but for you.' And he said, 'No, no, no.' I said, 'People say that, but it's in fact true this time.'"

“So you’re a great American and a great mentor, and I’m blessed to have you as a friend.

“My close friends, many of whom are here today, know that I read a lot of history and particularly presidential history. And I believe that when all the dust of partisan vitriol has settled and serious people provide thoughtful analysis, the Trump administration will be ranked as one of the greatest in American history.

“I am grateful to have been asked by the President to serve him on this very important issue of international trade. I further believe that when my grandchildren, who are here today, talk to their grandchildren, they will say that President Trump permanently reversed the dangerous trajectory of American trade, put America first, made our farmers, ranchers, and workers richer, and the country safer.

“And I hope I can make some small contribution to that accomplishment.”

Watch the entire ceremony in the video clip above.