

**Opening Statement for Matt Murray**  
**Nominee for Rank of Ambassador during tenure of service as U.S. Senior Official**  
**for Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation**  
**Before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee**  
**May 17, 2023**

Chair Van Hollen, Ranking Member Ricketts, it's an honor to appear before the committee today as the nominee for the Rank of Ambassador during the tenure of my service as U.S. Senior Official for Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation.

I'd like to thank President Biden and Secretary Blinken for the trust they have placed in me, as well as for the signal this nomination sends to the Asia-Pacific region of the United States' commitment to APEC.

If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with the Senate to advance our goals in this important multilateral organization.

I am proud to have served the United States as a State Department Foreign Service Officer for the past 25 years. And I am blessed to have made this journey together with my wife, Sharla, and our three sons – Joshua, a middle school English teacher in York, Pennsylvania; Noah, a Cadet at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point; and Daniel, an aspiring computer scientist and engineer, who will begin his university studies at Virginia Tech this fall.

Together, our family has experienced 6 foreign postings and 11 international moves with all of the highs and lows such a life entails. Like all Foreign Service families, our family endured many challenges in service to our country, and I always will be grateful to Sharla, Joshua, Noah, and Daniel for their selfless service.

Sharla and I both learned a commitment to service from fathers who grew up poor but worked incredibly hard to provide for their families and contribute to their communities, and from mothers who espoused the virtues of education -- my own mother, Susan, was an elementary school teacher for more than three decades.

Sharla and I both attended Anne Arundel County Public Schools in Maryland and both attended college and graduate school with the aid of scholarships.

Today's hearing therefore is further evidence to our family that the American Dream is still achievable for hard-working families across our great country.

I first traveled to the Asia-Pacific region as a student intern with USAID in Jakarta, Indonesia, in 1995. That summer was life-changing for me, as I was inspired by the region's economic dynamism and opportunity.

Since joining the State Department in 1998, I have dedicated most of my career across five Presidential administrations to enhancing U.S. economic engagement with, and upholding international rules and principles in, the Asia-Pacific region, including through APEC.

APEC's 21 member economies account for nearly half of global trade, including seven of the United States' top 10 trading partners, and companies from APEC economies have invested more than \$1.7 trillion in the United States.

Our economic prosperity therefore relies on continued U.S. leadership in this pivotal region. APEC includes partners on both sides of the Pacific with a wide range of economic conditions, and it provides a platform to engage 21 economies, including importantly, Taiwan, which is a full member of APEC.

APEC historically has been an incubator for innovative solutions to economic challenges, and the United States hosted the first-ever APEC Leaders' meeting in Seattle in 1993. Thirty years later, we are hosting APEC again this year, building on the impactful U.S. host year in 2011 when we advanced significant policy initiatives on women's economic empowerment, green growth, and regulatory reform.

Of course, APEC today faces daunting challenges, including: global economic headwinds and the need for our region's economies to recover fully from the COVID-19 pandemic; Russia's war against Ukraine, the PRC's efforts to undermine the rules-based international order; environmental challenges that need to be addressed, especially the climate crisis; and the imperative to develop digital rules

for the 21st century. And we need to ensure economic growth is inclusive and strengthens communities across our region, including in our own country.

Ultimately, our work in APEC must prioritize helping communities at home. Our whole-of-government interagency effort in APEC is a diplomatic effort, but it will mean nothing if we're not lifting up communities across the United States.

Our focus in APEC should be on creating American jobs, supporting businesses large and small, attracting foreign investment, advancing the industries of the 21<sup>st</sup> century by promoting better rules and norms, setting a path to sustainability, and ensuring workers and underrepresented groups are full participants in the economy of the future.

Given these ambitious goals against the backdrop of the significant geopolitical and economic challenges the Asia-Pacific region faces, I would argue that U.S. engagement in APEC is more important than ever before.

If confirmed, I would pledge to be an Ambassador for all Americans in this effort -- consistent with the U.S. APEC host year theme of, "Creating a Resilient and Sustainable Future for All."

Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.