

**Testimony of Randy Berry**  
**Nominee for Ambassador to the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal**  
**Senate Committee on Foreign Relations**  
**June 28, 2018**

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, Members of the Committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as the President's nominee for U.S. Ambassador to Nepal. I am very grateful to President Trump and Secretary Pompeo for their confidence in me.

I am a proud fifth-generation Coloradan, and grew up learning the value of a strong work ethic and commitment to responsibility by watching my parents, still at the helm of our legacy family-run cattle ranch in Custer County, now nearly 120 years since its founding. Raised in the shadow of the Sangre de Cristo range of the southern Rockies, my life as a Foreign Service Officer over the last 25 years has taken me around the world and back. Nepal, like my home state and America itself, is a place defined by diversity of landscapes and people, and is home to another of the world's great mountain ranges - the Himalaya.

South Asia has figured prominently in my career, from my very first assignment in Bangladesh in 1993 to my current role as Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, where I have worked hard to advocate the principles of human rights and religious freedom across South and Central Asia. A decade ago, I had the privilege of serving at our Embassy in Nepal as Deputy Chief of Mission. When I first arrived in Kathmandu in 2007, the country was still a monarchy and had just emerged from a ten-year conflict that claimed nearly 20,000 lives. Today, Nepal has embarked on an ambitious peace process, promulgated a new constitution, and is making a remarkable and long-awaited transition to stability.

Years of U.S. diplomatic engagement, development assistance, military cooperation, and disaster preparedness and risk reduction have advanced our interests while helping open the way for Nepal to become a more peaceful, stable democracy. With the successful conclusion of historic elections in 2017, Nepal now stands at a turning point. The new government has prioritized reforms to unleash economic growth and development and announced a zero-tolerance stance on corruption.

Mr. Chairman, my vision for the bilateral relationship between Nepal and the United States builds on this progress and sets out some key priorities. If

confirmed, I look forward to leading our dynamic team of American and Nepali staff at the U.S. Embassy to deepen our partnership and further our shared interests and values.

First, we will work to promote American security by supporting a stable, secure, democratic, and sovereign Nepal. We will encourage transparent and accountable governance, highlight the importance of respect for human rights and religious freedom, urge the full implementation of a credible transitional justice process, and advocate political inclusion of Nepalis of all backgrounds. By supporting Nepal's own priorities, we will position ourselves to work together more effectively to counter transnational organized crime, bolster border security, and strengthen the rule of law.

Second, we will work to increase American prosperity by supporting Nepal's development as a reliable economic partner. Though modest in overall volume, American exports to Nepal have doubled over the past five years. Nepal's commitment to reform, and our Embassy's efforts to promote a transparent investment climate, provide American firms even greater opportunity in this growing market. USAID support for a more productive agricultural sector and a better business environment showcases the best of American innovation while helping Nepal realize its economic potential. The jointly funded \$630 million Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) compact signed last September will develop and sustain key parts of the country's electricity and transportation infrastructure, better integrating it into the regional economy.

Third, we will support Nepal's efforts to transform itself into a more self-reliant, independent, and resilient partner. If confirmed, I will continue U.S. efforts to empower civil society, women, the media, and the public to become more active participants in the country's future. As U.S. assistance continues to support the Nepali government's reconstruction program in the wake of the devastating 2015 earthquake, we will also work to help enable Nepal to engage within the South Asian region and in international fora in a manner consistent with its sovereignty. In so doing, we will support the Administration's Indo-Pacific strategy, which seeks to build strong inter-regional economic and security links.

Mr. Chairman, none of this will be possible without the strong and continued support of Congress for the United States' efforts in Nepal. I thank this Committee and others in Congress for that support and, if confirmed, look forward to working with you and other members over the coming years.

Thank you and I look forward to your questions.