
Thursday, June 7, 2017

BUSINESS MEETING

U.S. SENATE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
115TH CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

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COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
WASHINGTON, DC.

1 The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:15 p.m. in, Room S-216 in the
2 Capitol, Hon. Bob Corker, chairman of the committee, presiding.

3 Present: Senators Corker [presiding], Rubio, Johnson, Flake, Gardner, Young,
4 Barrasso, Isakson, Cardin, Menendez, Shaheen, Coons, Udall, Murphy, Kaine, Markey,
5 Merkley, and Booker.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. BOB CORKER, U.S. SENATOR FROM TENNESSEE

6 **THE CHAIRMAN.** This business meeting of the Senate Foreign Relations
7 Committee will come to order.

8 I want to thank everybody for accommodating this meeting.

9 Today we will consider the nomination of Bill Hagerty to be U.S. Ambassador to
10 Japan.

11 I can say first hand, I've known this guy for years, and I'm telling you that he's
12 probably the most qualified Ambassador that we're going to be nominating and
13 sending to Tokyo.

1 He's going to serve us well as it relates to the U.S.-Japan alliance. I would say, in
2 particular, especially since TPP is not going forward at this time, having someone like
3 him in Japan is going to really accrue to our benefit.

4 I've known him; I've worked closely with him. He was an economic
5 development officer for Tennessee, and during that time, it was one of the number one
6 states for job creation through foreign direct investment in America.

7 And with that, Senator Cardin, I know you have some comments you'd like to
8 make, and I appreciate your accommodating this.

**STATEMENT OF HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN,
U.S. SENATOR FROM MARYLAND**

9 **SENATOR CARDIN.** I had several questions for the record for Mr. Hagerty, as part
10 of our committee vetting process, to make sure that I was satisfied that he's a person
11 who can exercise sound and appropriate judgement.

12 In addition to his views on policy matters, I asked him questions for the record
13 on his position as a volunteer in the role as the director of presidential appointments for
14 the Trump transition team, about his role in bringing on board Michael Flynn, as well as
15 Sebastian Gorka, and I understand I was not alone in my concerns. Senator Corker also
16 asked questions for the record along those lines.

17 Mr. Hagerty and I met in my office, and in that meeting I asked Mr. Hagerty if he
18 had any involvement in these matters. He said he did not.

1 Mr. Hagerty described to me the work he did as part of the transition team. He
2 told me he was focused on Cabinet-level nominees and helping Cabinet members get
3 their agency teams together. Mr. Hagerty told me he was not involved in the White
4 House appointments, which were handled by the White House Chief of Staff.

5 He told me he was not involved with and did no work on the Flynn
6 appointment. He told me he had no contact with Mr. Flynn before he was selected as
7 National Security Adviser. He did have contact with Mr. Flynn after he became
8 National Security Adviser.

9 He told me he has never met Sebastian Gorka and was not involved at all in his
10 selection.

11 Based on my review of his file, as well as his personal record and achievements,
12 as already mentioned by the Chairman, I believe he is well qualified to serve, and I will
13 support his nomination to be Ambassador to Japan.

14 I'd also like to add one additional point, unrelated to the agenda before us. And
15 that is, since our last meeting the Trump administration has indicated that they are
16 looking at releasing some of the properties that were taken from Russia. One of the
17 compounds is located in my state.

18 I mention that because we put on hold the review statute that we had introduced
19 early in the session because we were under the impression that the Trump
20 administration was not considering any reductions of sanctions.

1 So, I think it's now important that we put on a fast track the review statute that
2 Senator Graham and I had filed.

3 We may be taking up Russia sanctions in the Iran bill, and I hope that between
4 now and next week we'll have a chance to talk about this in additional sessions.

5 **THE CHAIRMAN.** If I could say three things, and then we'll vote.

6 Number one, Ben and I are sitting down today at 3:30 to talk through some of the
7 Russia issues, and hopefully we're going to end the meeting with a successful
8 completion.

9 Number two, we plan to pass – I know some of the Democrats, in particular,
10 were concerned about moving to an Iran bill without a condolence resolution of some
11 kind for the ISIS attack, given that Iran expressed the same sentiments after 9/11 – we're
12 going to work one out today and hopefully pass it on the floor.

13 And, number three, again with Hagerty, I know that some people had asked
14 some questions that he was unable to answer, but I can tell you he was part of the
15 professional transition team.

16 I think you all know that there's a government-funded transition team that each
17 side has. That's how his involvement came about. So you can all be very comfortable.

18 **SENATOR CARDIN.** To make it clear, he did answer those questions, directly, in
19 my office in a very open manner.

20 **THE CHAIRMAN.** He's been precluded from doing it in writing.

1 I'd like to ask for a voice vote. And for those who'd like to be recorded no, we're
2 glad to do that.

3 [A Senator makes a motion.]

4 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Is there as second?

5 [A Senator seconds.]

6 **THE CHAIRMAN.** So moved and seconded.

7 All in favor of this nomination moving to the floor, please say aye.

8 [A chorus of ayes.]

9 **THE CHAIRMAN.** All opposed.

10 [No response.]

11 **SENATOR BOOKER.** Mr. Chairman, I'd like to be recorded as no.

12 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Thank you. The ayes have it.

13 And with that, and there being no objection, the committee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 2:25 p.m., the meeting was adjourned.]