

**Written Statement of Thomas L. Carter**  
**Nominee for U.S. Representative to the ICAO**  
**Submitted to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee**  
**October 18, 2017**

Chairman Isakson, Ranking Member Shaheen and Members of the Committee,

It's truly an honor for me to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee for United States Representative to the Council of the International Civil Aviation Organization or ICAO as it's commonly known. I'm very grateful to the President, Secretary Tillerson, and Ambassador Haley for their confidence and support, and I must admit that I've attended many hearings like this over the years but it's truly humbling to be an actual nominee.

I'm accompanied today by some very significant people to me personally and none is more important than the leading lady in life, Mary Graham, of Charleston, SC. I also have three other particularly dear friends from my Senate days of old who, although we're evenly divided between Democrats and Republicans, we have remained close friends and confidants for over 30 years. They're very special to me so I'd like to introduce Ann Sauer, Charlie Smith and Jane Mattias. They, along with Mary, are my most reliable friends and advisors.

Since its creation at the Chicago Convention in 1944, ICAO has been a critical partner of the United States in efforts to promote the development of this crucial industry and keep pace with the evolution of its safety and security requirements. Throughout its existence, ICAO has served as an effective forum in which the nations of the world can find common approaches to complex aviation challenges, such as emerging technologies, airspace management and air navigation, and environmental issues including aircraft noise and engine emissions. Over the past decades, we have witnessed an increase in terrorism, cyberattacks, and the rapid spread of pandemic disease, all of which have emerged to threaten civil aviation and our national safety and security. ICAO is working to mitigate these threats but it can and must do more. ICAO's member states look to the United States for leadership on these and other aviation related issues, and if confirmed, I will reinforce that leadership to promote American national security, strengthen aviation safety and security, and enhance protections for travelers.

ICAO's breadth and purpose is best illustrated through the preamble written to establish the ICAO during the Chicago Convention of late 1944, the member

states quoted “it is desirable to avoid friction and to promote that co-operation between nations and peoples upon which the peace of the world depends.”

Certainly, if anyone ever nominated for this position could fully appreciate the value of such a concept, I hope that it might be me. My life of 65 years has been a unique combination of military and civilian flying, key positions dealing with national security policy and private sector experience relating to aviation-related products and capabilities.

I had the incredible experience as an Air Force pilot to command heavy jets internationally while flying both numerous peacetime humanitarian missions as well as into an active combat zone with dozens of paratroopers aboard. My special operations experience included dropping Delta Team members from altitudes in excess of 20,000 feet and Navy Seals in the water at night off the coast of foreign countries. These were some of the most important flights of my aviation career. Later, when realizing that my Air Force Reserve flying career might be coming to an end, I signed on to USAirways where I flew three separate aircraft types and eventually upgraded to Captain on the Boeing 737.

Interspersed with this flying, I also had the incredible experience to have served Republican Leader Bob Dole as a staffer dealing with national security issues. Those Senate years were absolutely some of my most rewarding of my life as I coordinated critically important issues between the leadership, Armed Services, Appropriations and yes, this very committee, then lead by Senator Pell.

Ironically, I then lead Chairman Pell, Ranking Member Helms and many other of your committee members to the Persian Gulf one month after Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait in August of 1990 as a Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense. Getting off a helicopter in the middle of the afternoon in the Saudi desert where the temperature was 125 degrees is forever seared into my memory and I would add, the soles of the penny loafers I was wearing as well.

In my most recent work in the private sector, I was very active with the major associations dealing with international and domestic aviation issues and due to my personal flying experiences mentioned earlier, was frequently sought out for expertise on policy positions.

All of this is to say that, if confirmed by this committee, I hope that my life’s work since leaving Memphis, Tennessee in 1975 as a first-generation high school

and college graduate has prepared me to represent this great country and all of you in a dignified and knowledgeable manner.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for this opportunity to answer any questions your committee members might have of me.