

Statement of Kelly Craft
Nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to Canada
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
July 20, 2017

Thank you Chairman Corker, Ranking Member Cardin, and Members of the Committee. And a special thanks to my fellow Kentuckians, Leader McConnell who has been such a dear friend to our family for so many decades, and Senator Paul, who as a friend and a Member of this Committee makes me feel right at home.

It is an honor to be with you today as the President's nominee to be the U.S. Ambassador to Canada. I am humbled to be entrusted with this responsibility to lead our engagement with such an important friend, ally and neighbor.

I have not made this journey alone. With me today are: my husband Joe, and two of our children, Jane and Kyle, my brother Marc and his wife Elisabeth, and our close friend John. Our daughter Mia is home preparing for her wedding in two weeks, my sister Micah is watching from our hometown of Glasgow, Kentucky, and our other children and grandchildren are watching from home. Although my parents, Dale and Bobby Guilfoil have passed away, they gave me the gift of unconditional love and an unwavering faith in God, for which I will always be grateful.

I am appreciative of the confidence that the President, the Vice President and Secretary Tillerson have shown in me and, if confirmed, I commit to work every day to live up to their trust, in collaboration with the most talented and dedicated public servants – they are truly exceptional.

On a personal note, I am a testament to the fact that if this young girl, who grew up 671 miles Southwest from here, can be nominated by the President of the United States as the first woman to serve as Ambassador to Canada, anything is possible when you work hard. I know that Senator Shaheen knows what I'm speaking of, as I have been so inspired by her public service.

My first diplomatic experience with Canada was in 2007 when I represented the U.S. Government and the American people at the opening of the United Nations General Assembly. While observing several multilateral negotiation teams, I experienced how the American-Canadian relationship could be a powerful force around the world.

I share the President's belief that the United States is deeply fortunate to have a neighbor like Canada. Just three weeks after his inauguration, on February 13, President Trump hosted Prime Minister Trudeau in Washington.

As the President said that day, "our two nations share much more than a border. We share the same values. We share the love, and a truly great love, of freedom. And we share a collective defense. American and Canadian troops have gone to battle together, fought wars together, and forged the special bonds that come when two nations have shed their blood together." He added that "both of our countries are stronger when we join forces in matters of international

commerce. We will coordinate closely to protect jobs in our hemisphere and keep wealth on our continent, and to keep everyone safe."

Today the economies of the United States and Canada are similarly intertwined. We are each other's number one trading partner.

If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to further enhance our strong economic partnership – the most extensive and integrated economic relationship of any two nations in the world. The nearly \$2 billion in goods and services and 400,000 people crossing our border every day are testaments to the strength of this relationship.

I believe we can do even better. If confirmed, I will seek new opportunities to foster further growth to create more jobs for both countries, while promoting free and fair trade to ensure that American businesses and workers can compete on a level playing field.

A significant part of our economic relationship is our energy partnership – the world's largest, in fact. If confirmed, I will advance our shared goals of energy security, a robust and secure energy grid, and a strong and resilient energy infrastructure. The United States and Canada's highly integrated and interdependent energy markets make North America a potential global energy powerhouse.

Recognizing that our cooperation on energy is inextricably linked with the environment, I will also work to advance our shared environmental goals, stewardship of our common watersheds, landmass, wildlife, farm life, and the air we breathe - from coast to coast to coast as they say in Canada, meaning not only the Atlantic and Pacific, but the Arctic as well.

At 5,525 miles, the U.S.-Canada border is the longest shared border in the world. The two countries are connected by more than 120 land ports of entry, more than 200,000 annual flights, and the numerous commercial and recreational vessels that cross the maritime border. We work closely with our Canadian partners to promote lawful trade and travel, while securing our common perimeter. We in Kentucky know a thing or two about borders, we have seven states with whom we share a border, and the only trouble comes when zealous basketball fans from Tennessee and Indiana to find themselves headed back home after, oftentimes, losing to our own Kentucky Wildcats.

The United States is fortunate to have a neighbor that shares our strong commitment to democratic values and works tirelessly to promote peace, prosperity, and human rights around the world.

Canada is our partner in NORAD and in NATO, and it is with great appreciation that I acknowledge and respect the Canadian troops who have served bravely alongside Americans throughout our shared history. If confirmed, I will be a respectful steward of this partnership with Canada.

Thank you for this opportunity to be with you today. I would be pleased to answer your questions.