

Statement of Richard Grenell
Nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to Germany
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
September 27, 2017

Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member Murphy, and Members of the Committee,

First, let me say that I greatly appreciate the time and commitment you all have made to serve the American people. I am thankful for the sacrifices you and your families have made throughout your tenure in public office.

I would also like to express my gratitude to President Trump for his confidence in me. I am honored and humbled to be here today.

The United States truly is the land of opportunity. The fact that I sit before you all today is a testament to this country's outstanding potential. This country has provided me with every opportunity, from my days growing up in midwestern Michigan to the life I've built with my partner in California, I owe so much to this great nation.

With your consent, I pledge to return the favor. I pledge to serve this country and its interests with honor and distinction; I pledge to respect its constitution; and I pledge to uphold its values, spreading our deeply-held commitment to Democracy, Freedom, and Human Rights. With your consent, I will commit myself to the interests of this great nation, on behalf of all Americans, as the Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany.

All of us owe a great deal to those who helped us along the way. I am here today with my partner of 15 years, Matt Lashey. I want to publicly thank Matt for his many sacrifices, but most of all, for his incredible love and support. Throughout every challenge and opportunity, Matt has supported and encouraged me every step of the way. I would not be able to serve the President and the American people without Matt's commitment and help.

I must also add a thank you to my father, who would have been here sitting right next to Matt if he were alive today. I am so thankful for all my loving family members, who are watching today's proceedings from Michigan, California, Minnesota, and New Jersey.

If confirmed, I would be honored to once again have the opportunity to serve at the State Department. For eight years, I served on the Executive Management Team at the United States Mission to the United Nations, serving at the pleasure of four different—in fact, very different—U.S. Ambassadors.

I know personally how stressful the arrival of a new Ambassador can be for Embassy and Consulate staff. With your consent, I look forward to making that transition a smooth and enjoyable process for the many courageous and patriotic Americans serving their country throughout Germany.

If confirmed, I will seek to deepen and strengthen the historic relationship between Washington and Berlin. Our two great nations share an unbreakable bond, and I look forward to strengthening these ties while championing the values of diversity, transparency, and fairness. In addition to the Embassy in Berlin and the five Consular Offices in Frankfurt, Munich, Dusseldorf, Hamburg and Leipzig, Germany is also home to more than 30,000 American men and women serving in the U.S. military. If confirmed, I will make their safety and security a top priority.

This past Sunday, the German people went to the polls and exercised their right to a representative government in a free and fair election. Chancellor Merkel is now negotiating to form a new government. Whatever the makeup of the new German governing coalition, I look forward to representing the American people as we prepare to deepen our powerful and unbreakable bond with the German people.

As Ambassador, I would commit to broadening cooperation surrounding our shared goals of security and prosperity for both nations. As we seek to remain competitive and safe in an ever-changing world, we must look to strengthen those elements of friendship which have so greatly benefited both nations. We must increase our trade and economic relationships, expand our information sharing, and find new, innovative ways to strengthen our alliance and further the interests of peace around the world.

But, knowing that freedom is not free, I will commit to working with the Chancellor and the new governing coalition to increase the pace at which Germany moves to meet its commitments to NATO.

But in doing so, I will reinforce to the German people our nation's commitment to a strong, united West. No other nation will disrupt the important bond we share with one of our strongest, most dependable global allies.

I am honored to be here today at the pleasure of the President, and I thank you for your time. I look forward to answering your questions and hearing your suggestions.