

**NOMINATIONS OF THE 110TH
CONGRESS—FIRST SESSION**

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

**COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
UNITED STATES SENATE**

ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

—
JANUARY 30 THROUGH DECEMBER 19, 2007
—

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Relations



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110TH CONGRESS—FIRST SESSION

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*Note: Reassigned to Committee on Finance January 24, 2008.

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110TH CONGRESS—SECOND SESSION

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*Note: Appointed February 12, 2008.

NOMINATIONS

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2007

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

Glendon, Mary Ann, to be Ambassador to the Holy See
Larson, Charles W., Jr., to be Ambassador to the Republic of Latvia

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:29 a.m., in room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Robert P. Casey, Jr. presiding.

Present: Senator Casey.

Also present: Senators Harkin and Grassley.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT P. CASEY, JR., U.S. SENATOR FROM PENNSYLVANIA

Senator CASEY. Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. The Committee on Foreign Relations will come to order to consider nominations for two important diplomatic posts. The President of the United States has asked that Mary Ann Glendon serve as United States Ambassador to the Holy See, and that Charles Larson represent the United States as Ambassador to Latvia. And I want to welcome Professor Glendon and Mr. Larson here, and if you have family here, and others, we welcome them, as well.

And I know that Senator Tom Harkin—I refer to him as Chairman Harkin, we're on—we serve together, but he's done a wonderful job in a number of posts that affect people's lives, but he and I just came through the process of having the Farm bill voted on by the United States Senate, and as the Chairman of the Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry Committee, he's done a wonderful job on a very difficult piece of legislation. Not to mention, some of the people, like me, he has to deal with in that process. He has served so honorably over many years in the United States Senate, we're honored to have him here.

And I guess I just wanted to provide some background, but I wanted to make sure that we're—I was cognizant of Senator Harkin's time and his schedule.

Senator, I'm just asking you if you're—do you have—how much time do you have to—

A couple of minutes, okay.

Maybe we'll do, instead of providing some background, maybe I'll just go right to you.

**STATEMENT OF HON. TOM HARKIN,
U.S. SENATOR FROM IOWA**

Senator HARKIN. I'd appreciate that, very much.

Senator CASEY. And you can provide your statement or testimony, and then we'll move forward.

Senator HARKIN. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. And I appreciate, first of all, your expediting this hearing for these two candidates—one of whom I know, the other one I don't, but I congratulate her for her position, and for expediting this, and hopefully we can get the full committee to further expedite it.

Mr. Chairman, first of all, thank you for your kind words on the Farm bill. That was a long exercise, and I want to personally thank you for all of the good work that you did on the committee and helping us pull it together and finally get it through, and hopefully we'll get it done here sometime in January, as we get through the conference committee.

But I just wanted to be here this morning to introduce to you, Mr. Chairman, and to the committee—through you to the committee—Chuck Larson, the President's nominee to be our next Ambassador to Latvia.

I've known Chuck Larson and his father for quite some time, His father served as the U.S. District Attorney in the 1980s, first under President Reagan, then under President Bush, and then there was a hey, this there, for the 1990s, and then his dad came back again as District Attorney under President Bush.

And I can just tell you—so Chuck comes from a family of really dedicated public service—people that are interested in public service, and Chuck himself has taken up that himself.

He served—graduated from the University of Northern Iowa when he was a member of the legislature, member of the House, Iowa House for a long time, I think, from 1993 to 2003, a member of the Iowa House. He chaired the Judiciary Committee and, in fact, had pushed through one of the toughest antimethamphetamine laws anywhere in the Nation, and we've had a real problem with that in Iowa, and Chuck did a great job in leading the charge on that.

He also chaired the Iowa House Economic Development Committee, making Iowa a more competitive environment to attract and retain some high-paying jobs.

Now then, from 2003 to 2007 he served in the Iowa Senate, and served as chairman of the Iowa Republican Party from 2001 to 2005. Again, to show you his dedication to public service, while he was a State Senator he was also in the Army Reserves, and served for a year in Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Was awarded the Bronze Star for meritorious service in combat, and the combat action badge. He was stationed in LSA, Anaconda in the heart of the Sunni Triangle, in charge of the command's legal affairs and spearheaded its humanitarian missions.

As I've stated earlier, I've known Chuck Larson for over, well over a decade—more than that. He is a qualified public servant, and I urge this committee to report his nomination with a positive recommendation.

And if I just might add, parenthetically, Mr. Chairman, you see I have some, I have perhaps some personal interest in this also.

You see, Chuck Larson is a very active, dedicated Republican, served as chair of the Republican Party. I happen to be up next year, I figure if he's in Latvia, I might have a better time of it next year. [Laughter.]

But he's served with distinction as chair of the Republican Party, and I can say this—he's landed a few blows on me in the past, but they were always, as I always say, in-bounds and between the goal posts—which is the way political contests ought to be conducted. And he's done so in his own political career in Iowa, the same way.

So, I just have no hesitation at all in endorsing him—great family, great person, great father, good family, two kids, and I can't think of a better representative of what we stand for in America, to represent us abroad than Chuck Larson, so I just give him my wholehearted support for this. And we'll get him to Latvia so he's not around Iowa next year. [Laughter.]

Thanks, Chuck.

Senator CASEY. Mr. Chairman, we want to thank you for being here, especially today when it's rather quiet in the Capital after a late night, and we were passing legislation late into the evening last night, actually almost into the early morning, and it's another sign of Chairman Harkin's dedication that he's here at all this morning, not heading back like some others are. And we're just grateful that you're taking the time to be here.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I appreciate it very much.

Senator CASEY. Thank you, Senator.

Senator HARKIN. See you later.

Mr. LARSON. Thank you, sir. Have a great Christmas and New Year.

Senator HARKIN. Hopefully we can get this thing done in a hurry.

Senator CASEY. I, first of all, wanted to formally welcome both Professor Glendon and Mr. Larson to the hearing today. I think, speaking about both of you—and I'll try to speak about each of you individually, but together you both provide a whole broad range of experience that you bring to this hearing and to this confirmation process that spans all kinds of life experience, subject matter expertise and experience in public affairs and public policy. So, we're grateful that you've demonstrated the willingness to put yourself forward to be confirmed and to serve the United States Government and the people of our country.

And I know you look forward to, even, the challenges that you'll be confronting, not just the challenge of the confirmation process, but the challenge of serving. And I know you see that as both an opportunity for meeting challenges, but also as an opportunity for meeting challenges, but also an opportunity to render capable and effective and competent public service.

I wanted to start with the Ambassador of the Holy See, that position, Professor Glendon. I think as the seat of the Catholic Church we know that the Holy See is unique among diplomatic postings around the world. Its influence reaches into the lives of over a billion individuals worldwide, who look to the Vatican for spiritual guidance, including one out of every four Americans. As a Roman Catholic, I am one of those of every four Americans.

Worldwide, the Catholic Church has been at the forefront of efforts to promote human rights, to protect human dignity, and to provide humanitarian assistance across the world.

The Church, I think, has challenged people of all faiths to care about and to fight for the least, the last, and the lost in our society, and of course that goes for the world over. We know that under the leadership—just by way of important examples—under the leadership of Pope John Paul II, the Holy See played a particularly significant role in ending decades of Communist rule in Eastern Europe. And although our Government over the years, and I think even at present, doesn't always agree with the Church on every issue, I think when you talk about the priorities I just mentioned—whether it's the role played by the church in ending communism, the role in Eastern Europe, the role it plays in human rights and human dignity or the work that it does on humanitarian causes around the globe—I think on those priorities, the Vatican has been an invaluable partner for the United States of America, and we expect that to continue.

Professor Glendon, I think based upon your own experience, just your resume alone, you're well-prepared to continue that long and cooperative relationship between the United States and the Holy See.

Due to your extensive past work on behalf of the Catholic Church, and your experience and expertise in domestic and international law, you are already well-acquainted with many of the issues that you'll confront as ambassador.

You've gained wide respect as a legal scholar of the first order. I'm a lawyer—I've never been accused of being a legal scholar—but I have great respect and regard for those in our legal circles who have that capacity.

But, I think, in addition to the academic underpinning of your experience, you've been honored as an advocate, and I think you've been honored as a servant. And, of course, by taking on the responsibility of putting yourself forward as a candidate, a nominee to be an ambassador, you're, of course, amplifying and enlarging and public service that is so important in the United States today.

I want to recognize in a personal way the work that you did with my father, when he was the governor of Pennsylvania and thereafter, he remained active as an advocate in the nonprofit world after he left his 8 years as governor, but I personally want to thank you for the way that you worked with him, and the respect that you accorded him.

And I know that he had high regard for you, as I mentioned a couple of moments ago, as a lawyer. He was a really, really good lawyer, and had great respect for good lawyers. But he also, I think, respected your integrity and your honesty and your commitment to principle.

Like him, you've never shied away from taking tough stands. You've been honest about where you stand, and I think he was a great example of that, on a whole range of public policy matters going back, in his case, going back a couple of decades in public office.

He was a someone—if I can just add a personal note here—probably the only person in, I think, certainly the history of Pennsyl-

vania, but maybe the history of any other State, who ran for governor of Pennsylvania in four different decades. Not all of those successful, but he had a great determination and a great identification with the underdog. And I think if—the church, when it's at its best—in this country, and worldwide, does that when it's focused on the underdog, the person who doesn't have a voice, or at least doesn't have power.

So, we're grateful for that personal connect that you made to him, and I'm especially grateful.

I think your work as ambassador would probably require that you draw upon those skills and that experience and that passion that you bring, and that you have brought to your work. So, we're grateful for your presence here today and looking forward to your testimony.

Mr. Larson, I want to thank you for your willingness to serve. It doesn't happen very often that a United States Senator from the other party gives the kind of testimony that Senator Harkin just gave on your behalf, and I think that speaks volumes about both of you. It doesn't happen enough in Washington, and usually when it happens there is no coverage of it—or limited coverage.

But I've been a witness, and those of us here today are bearing witness to that kind of—not just bipartisanship, but I think an affirmative statement about your qualifications.

The country of Latvia is one of the many countries in the world—as we were speaking about the Vatican—benefit from the Vatican's efforts to roll back the Iron Curtain. This country has amassed—Latvia has amassed—an impressive list of accomplishments even more recently, since reestablishing its independence from the Soviet Union, joining NATO and the European Union. It's been at the forefront of regional efforts to promote democracy—so important across the world—and its economic growth rate is the envy of Western Europe.

Latvia has also been an important security partner for the United States of America, and has currently almost 100 troops serving in Afghanistan.

Despite these achievements, Latvians face considerable challenges, as you know. Like other countries in the region, it struggles with corruption, the problem of energy dependence on Russia, and the successful integration of a large Russian minority.

Resolving these issues won't be easy, and the people of Latvia deserve our support as they work to meet these challenges.

Mr. Larson, your past experience as a prosecutor—and dare I say it, a politician, which I think actually is a good qualification, despite what we read in newspapers sometimes—and also as a soldier will be valuable preparation for representing our country, the United States of America, as an Ambassador to Latvia. The legal, political, and security challenges facing Latvia's young democracy will draw upon all of your varied professional skills, and we thank you for your willingness to serve.

And I would say to both of our nominees today, both of your nominations come at a critical time in the history of American diplomacy. Now, more than ever, the United States needs ambassadors who exemplify the principles that made our Nation great, and still make it great. Providing that type of representation in the

Holy See, and in Latvia, will require all of your energy, creativity, and determination, but I'm confident that both of you are up to that task.

We'll turn to our nominees at this moment, and I ask you both to deliver your statements in the order you were introduced, Professor Glendon, you can start. And if you can be somewhat brief and succinct, that would be helpful, and if you feel the need to summarize your testimony, please know that the text of your full statement will be included in the hearing record.

And I know that this—and we probably don't do this enough—this is not just a day for the particular United States Senate committee, or just a day for the discussion about a confirmation—this is a personal moment, and an important personal moment in your life, so if you have family or friends that you'd want to introduce—I'm glad the room isn't full of hundreds that we have to introduce, but if you have someone or a group of individuals you'd like to introduce, certainly we'd welcome your using that, your time to present them at this time.

So, at this time, Professor Glendon, the floor is yours.

**STATEMENT OF MARY ANN GLENDON, NOMINEE TO BE
AMBASSADOR TO THE HOLY SEE**

Ms. GLENDON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for this hearing. It's a real honor and a privilege to be before you today as you consider my nomination to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See and I will try to be brief.

My hope is, if I am confirmed by the Senate, that my 30 years of experience in a variety of international settings could aid me in promoting American interests and the American image, the best of American values with the Holy See.

Most of my legal work, my research, and my pro bono activity have, as it happens, been concentrated in areas that are common interest to the Holy See and the United States, and so if I were confirmed, I would expect to be vigorously involved in the collaboration that already exists between the United States and the Holy See on such issues as human rights, religious freedom, trafficking in human persons, development and alleviation of hunger, disease, and poverty.

From the beginning of my legal career—which was quite a long time ago—I've been engaged in cross-national dialogs. I studied European law at the University of Brussels and interned at what was then the European Common Market, now the European Union, and since then I've had leadership roles in many organizations that are dedicated to improving international relations.

I'd just mention three experiences, in particular, that seem to be relevant to the Holy See post. I was elected the President of the UNESCO-sponsored International Association for Legal Science by a multinational membership, a worldwide membership. I was a member of the Board of Directors of the Southern Africa Legal Assistance Program, which during the apartheid era, provided scholarships and other kinds of aid to aspiring African lawyers, and I'm a member of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, a group whose members are drawn from five continents and a variety of religious backgrounds—I've been their President since 2004. And cur-

rently, I'm involved with Harvard Law School's efforts to internationalize its curriculum.

In all of those capacities, I have organized many international conferences here and abroad, and I would hope that that sort of activity would be part of the work of the Ambassador to the Holy See.

Among my writings relevant to the post, I will mention just one, my history of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which is a diplomatic history and a biography of Eleanor Roosevelt, covering the years when she chaired the Human Rights Commission and represented the United States in the United Nations.

I would also like to mention that my participation in the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, my pro bono work for the Catholic Church has, I believe, given me a certain insight and understanding of the Holy See that should be helpful to me in advocating for our Government, and help to fortify the cooperation that has already been achieved.

Mr. Chairman, the Holy See is a vital partner for the United States. It's a vital partner because of its global reach and impact, its presence in areas that are of concern to the United States that affect U.S. interests and the U.S. image abroad. The Holy See is actively engaged on five continents in humanitarian work, as you said, Mr. Chairman, for the least, the lost and the last, for the defense of human dignity and for the promotion of dialog among diverse faiths and cultures.

Its concerns in those areas form a natural alliance with many of our policies, and if confirmed, I would work vigorously to develop those areas for our mutual benefit.

I believe that Pope Benedict's forthcoming visit to the United States in April will provide an excellent opportunity for us to develop our mutual interests, and explore new areas of cooperation.

In sum, Mr. Chairman, if I were confirmed, I would devote my best efforts to building on the relationship that already exists, reinforcing those ties. It would be a privilege to be entrusted with that responsibility, to carry on the work of Ambassador Rooney, and the other fine representatives that have served the United States at the Holy See since we began diplomatic relations in 1984.

And finally, Mr. Chairman, I would look forward to working with you and with your colleagues in Congress to serve the American people and to advance our national interests abroad. And I would be very pleased to answer any questions that you have.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Glendon follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARY ANN GLENDON, NOMINEE TO BE
AMBASSADOR TO THE HOLY SEE

Mr. Chairman, and members of this distinguished committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as you consider my nomination to serve as United States Ambassador to the Holy See. I am grateful for President Bush's nomination, and for the support of Secretary Rice.

If confirmed by the Senate, my hope is that my experience in a variety of international settings will aid me in promoting American interests with the Holy See. Most of my legal work, academic writing, and pro bono activity has concentrated in areas where the United States and the Holy See have common concerns. If confirmed, I would expect to be vigorously involved in the collaboration that has already been established on a range of issues, such as human rights, religious freedom, trafficking in human persons, development, and the fight against hunger, disease and poverty.

For many years, my work in international legal studies has engaged me in cross-national dialogs in those areas. After studying European civil law at the University of Brussels, I worked as a press liaison in the headquarters of the European Common Market, now the European Union. Over the course of my academic career, I have had leadership roles in many organizations dedicated to improving international relations.

Three experiences in particular that I would mention are the UNESCO-sponsored International Association for Legal Studies (to which I was elected president by a multinational membership), the board of directors of the Southern Africa Legal Assistance Program (which aided aspiring African lawyers in the apartheid years), and the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences (a group whose members are drawn from five continents and from a variety of religious backgrounds). Currently, I have been closely involved with Harvard Law School's efforts to adapt its curriculum to the needs of students who will be practicing law in increasingly globalized environments.

An important part of representing our country as ambassador is bringing people together on matters of common interest to the United States and the Holy See. I have been the principal organizer of numerous international conferences over the past 20 years for Harvard Law School, for the International Association of Legal Science, and for the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences.

Among my writings on subjects relevant to the post for which I have been nominated, I would mention especially my history of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a book that combines diplomatic history with a biography of Eleanor Roosevelt covering the years when she represented the United States in the United Nations.

I would also like to mention that since 1994, when I was appointed to the Pontifical Academy of Social Science, I have acquired a knowledge and understanding of the Holy See that will aid me in advocating for our Government, while helping to fortify and expand the cooperation that has already been achieved.

Mr. Chairman, the Holy See is actively engaged on every continent in the defense of peace, justice, and human rights. Because of this global perspective, the Holy See is a vital partner for the United States.

The Vatican is committed to defending fundamental human rights, promoting human dignity, and working to advance dialog among people of differing faiths, races, and ethnicities. These priorities create a natural alignment with our policies that, if confirmed, I intend to exploit to its fullest potential in our mutual benefit.

The Pontiff's visit to the United States next April will provide an excellent opportunity to expand areas of cooperation and explore new ones. President Bush and Pope Benedict met in Rome in the summer of 2006 and this visit will deepen the tie between the two leaders.

If confirmed, I would devote my best efforts to build relations at all levels and deepen the ties that have existed between the United States and the Holy See ever since formal diplomatic relations were established in 1984. It would be a privilege and an honor to be entrusted with the responsibility of carrying forward the fine work of Ambassador Rooney and all the other U.S. representatives who have served so ably in that post.

Mr. Chairman, Embassy Vatican is at the front lines of this important shared agenda. Though few in numbers, its outstanding staff does excellent work on a modest budget. If confirmed, I will work with them to move forward our current priority issues and seek new areas in which to engage the Vatican.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I look forward to working with you and your colleagues in Congress to serve the American people and advance our national interests. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

Senator CASEY. Professor, thank you very much, I appreciate your testimony.

Mr. Larson.

**STATEMENT OF HON. CHARLES W. LARSON, JR., NOMINEE
TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA**

MR. LARSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I, first, want to thank you for the time you've taken on the eve of the holiday and the New Year after a very long session, which I can appreciate from my service in the legislature, so I'm very, very thankful. I also want to thank the Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff for

their hard work in organizing today's hearing, and Senator Harkin, for his kind words. This has been a tremendous experience and I only have the highest regard and compliments for Senator Harkin and his staff—they have literally bent over backward to assist me, and without their support, I recognize that this hearing would not be occurring on such short notice.

I'm deeply honored to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee to be the next United States Ambassador to the Republic of Latvia. I'm grateful to President Bush and Secretary Rice for the confidence and trust they have placed in me, and if confirmed, I pledge to maintain that trust by working to advance and defend American interests in Latvia, while deepening the ties between our two nations.

For 14 years, I served the citizens of Iowa as a representative, as well as a Senator in the Iowa legislature. Through that experience, I learned the importance of being responsive to the legitimate needs of the people.

As State representative, I had the opportunity to chair several committees. My work as chair of the House Judiciary Committee increased my appreciation for the essential role of the rule of law, and the importance that it plays in a democratic nation.

As chairman of the House Economic Development Committee, I participated in a mission to Japan, South Korea, and Hong Kong, and witnessed the importance of trade in strengthening relationships between nations. My respect and appreciation for cultures outside of the United States began in my youth, when I lived in Saudi Arabia for 2 years, and further developed when I spent a year in France.

In 2004, I deployed to Iraq as a citizen-soldier with the United States Army, serving as the Command Judge Advocate for an engineer and aviation command for 1 year.

In addition to my military justice duties, I spearheaded our command's humanitarian mission, working with Iraqis to build 12 new schools, 3 city halls, and to distribute more than \$100,000 in school and medical supplies to approximately 17,000 Iraqi children.

Through this work, a bond of trust developed between the Iraqis and American forces, and a foundation was laid to develop some of the key elements of democracy at the lowest level.

My experience in Iraq ingrained in me the critical importance of security and counterterrorism, as well. The welfare and protection of American citizens will continue to be one of my key priorities, if confirmed.

Overall, my legislative and cross-cultural experiences have taught me the importance of diplomacy, strengthening political and economic ties with other nations, and of achieving results by moderation, tact and compromise. It is in that knowledge that I will apply to my position, if confirmed as United States Ambassador to Latvia.

Since regaining its independence in 1991, Latvia has rapidly moved away from the political economic structures and sociocultural patterns of the former Soviet Union. Today, Latvia fully embraces democratic and open market principles. It's a member of the IMF, the World Bank, the Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe, and in 2004 Latvia officially joined the Eu-

ropean Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and in 2006 it hosted NATO's summit in its capital of Riga.

As a NATO ally, Latvia has stood shoulder-to-shoulder with us in the war on terrorism. This country of 2.3 million has deployed more than 10 percent of its national armed forces to coalition and NATO peacekeeping missions abroad. Having supported the liberation of Iraq for several years, Latvia has now shifted its deployment focus to Afghanistan, where it plans to increase its deployments from the current 98 soldiers to 200 by October 2008, with no caveat.

In addition to using its troops to promote democracy in the world, Latvia provides developmental assistance and expertise to other countries of the former Soviet Union, as they work to build their own democratic states. Latvia's microfinance projects provide economic assistance to Georgia, Moldova, Belarus, and Ukraine. Latvia also funds projects to transfer to these countries the knowledge it gained from the political reforms it undertook in order to accede to NATO and the European Union.

If confirmed, I will work to support and encourage continued robust Latvian engagement in the fight against terror, and the promotion of freedom worldwide.

Latvia still has to work to overcome the legacy of World War II and the Soviet rule, particularly in promoting social integration, historical reconciliation and the rule of law.

Almost 29 percent of Latvian's residents are ethnic Russians, and a large portion of them are noncitizens. The Latvian Government has been making an effort to achieve a more complete social integration of this minority population. Latvia's policies on minority language, education, naturalization and citizenship requirements for voting are consistent with international norms.

I hope to use my position as ambassador to support the government in outreach efforts, not only with the Russian community, but all minority interests.

Latvia is also making progress in coming to terms with the horrors of the Holocaust. The Latvian Historical Commission, under sponsorship of the Government of Latvia has promoted Holocaust awareness throughout all elements of society. Although the restitution of Jewish property has been substantially completed, approximately 200 communal and heirless private properties have yet to be compensated for. If confirmed, I will work with the government and the local Jewish community to further address Holocaust legacy and property restitution issues.

Latvia continues to take steps toward strengthening the rule of law, and increasing transparency. Latvia similarly has taken important steps to ensure a productive relationship with neighboring Russia, including forming an intergovernmental commission with Russia to address bilateral issues. Today, the two countries exchanged the instruments of ratification on a historic treaty, delineating their common border, in fact that occurred yesterday with very, very positive comment.

Mr. Chairman, members of this committee, I know the high importance each of you place on service to the United States of American. I, too, place a high value on service to our country, whether as a citizen-soldier, or as an ambassador.

If you confirm my nomination, I pledge to dedicate myself to promoting the ideals of the United States, while protecting and developing our relationship with Latvia. Thank you for granting me the honor of appearing before you today, I'm pleased to answer any questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Larson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. CHARLES W. LARSON, NOMINEE TO BE
AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I am deeply honored to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee to be the next United States Ambassador to the Republic of Latvia. I am grateful to President Bush and Secretary Rice for the confidence and trust they have placed in me. If confirmed, I pledge to maintain that trust by working to advance and defend American interests in Latvia while deepening the ties between our two nations.

For 14 years, I served the citizens of Iowa as a representative as well as a Senator in the State legislature. Through this experience I learned the importance of being responsive to the legitimate needs of the people. As a State representative, I had the opportunity to chair several committees. My work on the House Judiciary Committee increased my appreciation for the essential role the rule of law plays in a democratic nation. As chairman of the House Economic Development Committee, I participated in a mission to Japan, South Korea, and Hong Kong, and witnessed the importance of trade in strengthening the relationships between nations.

My respect and appreciation for cultures outside the United States began in my youth, when I lived with my family in Saudi Arabia for 2 years and further developed when I studied in France for a year.

In 2004, I deployed to Iraq as a citizen soldier with the United States Army, serving as the command judge advocate for an engineer and aviation command for 1 year. In addition to my military justice duties, I spearheaded our command's humanitarian mission, working with Iraqis to build 12 schools, 3 city halls, and to distribute more than \$100,000 worth of donated school supplies to approximately 17,000 Iraqi school children. Through this work, a bond of trust developed between the Iraqis and American forces and a foundation was laid to develop some of the key elements of democracy at the local level.

My experience in Iraq ingrained in me the critical importance of security and countering terrorism, as well. The welfare and protection of American citizens will continue to be one of my key priorities.

Overall, my legislative and cross-cultural experiences have taught me the importance of diplomacy, of strengthening political and economic ties with other nations, and of achieving results by moderation, tact, and compromise.

It is that knowledge that I will apply to my position as United States Ambassador to Latvia. Since regaining its independence in 1991, Latvia has rapidly moved away from the political-economic structures and sociocultural patterns of the former Soviet Union. Today, Latvia fully embraces democratic and open market principles. It is a member of the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe. In 2004, Latvia officially joined the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and in 2006 it hosted the NATO Summit in its capital, Riga.

As a NATO Ally Latvia has stood shoulder-to-shoulder with us in the war on terrorism. This country of 2.3 million people has deployed more than 10 percent of its national armed forces to coalition and NATO peacekeeping missions abroad. Having supported the liberation of Iraq for several years, Latvia has now shifted its deployment focus to Afghanistan, where it plans to increase its deployment from the current 98 troops to 200 by October 2008, with no caveats.

In addition to using its troops to promote democracy in the world, Latvia provides development assistance and expertise to other countries of the former Soviet Union as they work to build their own democratic states. Latvia's microfinance projects provide economic assistance to Georgia, Moldova, Belarus, and Ukraine. Latvia also funds projects to transfer to these countries the knowledge it gained from the political reforms it undertook in order to accede to NATO and the European Union. If confirmed, I will work to support and encourage continued robust Latvian engagement in the fight against terror and the promotion of freedom worldwide.

Latvia still has work to do to overcome the legacy of World War II and Soviet rule, particularly in promoting social integration, historical reconciliation, and the rule of law. Almost 29 percent of Latvia's residents are ethnic Russians, and a large portion of them are noncitizens. The Latvian Government has been making an effort

to achieve a more complete social integration of this minority population. Latvia's policies on minority language education, naturalization, and citizenship requirements for voting are consistent with international norms. I hope to use my position as ambassador to support the Government in its outreach efforts with not only the Russian community but all minorities.

Latvia is also making progress in coming to terms with the horrors of the Holocaust. The Latvian Historical Commission, under sponsorship of the Government of Latvia, has promoted Holocaust awareness throughout all elements of society. Although the restitution of Jewish property has been substantially completed, approximately 200 communal and heirless private properties have yet to be compensated for. If confirmed, I will work with the Government and the local Jewish community to further address Holocaust legacy and property restitution issues.

Latvia continues to take steps toward strengthening the rule of law and increasing transparency. Latvia similarly has taken important steps to ensure a productive relationship with neighboring Russia, including forming an intergovernmental commission with Russia to address bilateral issues. Today, the two countries exchange the instruments of ratification of a historic treaty delineating their common border.

Mr. Chairman, members of this committee, I know the high importance that each of you places on service to the United States of America. I too place a high value on service to our country, whether as a citizen soldier or as an ambassador. If you confirm my nomination, I pledge to dedicate myself to promoting the ideals of the United States while protecting and developing our relationship with Latvia.

Thank you for granting me the honor of appearing before you today. I am pleased to answer any questions.

Senator CASEY. Thank you, Mr. Larson. We'll start the round of questions now. The rounds normally at a hearing like this go per Senator, 7 minutes or even 10 minutes, but usually about 7 minutes. I don't want to alarm you, though, I'm not going to multiply 7 by every chair here, so—I have some discretion today as chairman, but also as the lone Senator sitting here, so I might have some—a couple of questions beyond the 10 minutes, but I'm grateful for your testimony.

I guess I'll start, Professor Glendon, with you. A couple of questions. One would be—we live in a world now where, because of what we're seeing playing out not only in the Middle East, but especially there and across the world, conflicts that have some of their origin in religious differences, in fact, sometimes even disputes—violent disputes—about the meaning of one, tenets of one particular religion, we're seeing that all of the time.

And I guess, in light of the conflict, but also just in terms of the integrity of our debates about these issues, I wanted to ask you about—I guess, one or two questions about how you'd assess the Holy See's kind of broader relationship with the Muslim world. I know it's an expansive question but it becomes very important, because I think the Holy See becomes—not an arbiter, but becomes an important player in those kinds of situations where you have not just countries competing for power or resources, but also when it comes to relationships, or the kind of ecumenical efforts that we try to make, not only in this country but as a world leader.

But, I guess, I want to get your just, general sense of the relationship between the Holy See and the Muslim world.

Ms. GLENDON. I'd start by recalling that the Holy See has had a long, long experience with dialog with the Muslim world. It's a dialog that's had its phases and its ups and downs. But, at the present time, that dialog has been marked by a very intensive search by the Holy See for discussion partners who are open to the idea of meeting on the plane of reason—this has been a particular mark of the Pontificate of Benedict that he looking for persons who

can advance their religiously grounded viewpoints in a manner that is intelligible to all men and women of goodwill.

The present state of affairs with the Muslim dialog, I believe, is that in December, Benedict extended an invitation, or proposed a conference between Holy See and Muslim representatives in response, I believe, to a letter that 138 Muslim leaders sent to him, and that process certainly affords some hope of achieving agreement on some very basic things, such as religion is never, ever an excuse for violence.

Senator CASEY. And I know there were some questions raised recently about the—Pope Benedict had made several statements that cast doubt on whether he would welcome Turkey's entry into the European Union, what's your understanding of the Vatican's current position on that, and anything else you'd want to add about how you see that issue?

Ms. GLENDON. My understanding is that the Holy See is very concerned about religious freedom, and of course, the European Union is committed to certain basic standards of religious freedom, and I believe the Holy See's position is that countries should meet those standards, or show significant progress toward meeting those standards.

Senator CASEY. And I guess I also wanted to get your sense of—when you make a list of some of the challenges the world faces, virtually, you can't point to one that the Holy See is not involved in or making efforts to try to improve the condition of human dignity or the condition of people that are suffering. And, this is a very difficult question to answer succinctly, but I would ask you if you could kind of highlight or even rank—when you look at the globe and you look at the challenges that so many people face, whether it's poverty or AIDS or violence, go down the list—what do you think is the most challenging for the Holy See and how do you see your role in helping this country relate to what the Holy See needs to focus on in terms of those—the biggest challenges, when we think of poverty or the others I mentioned?

Ms. GLENDON. Well, that's a really challenging question, Mr. Chairman--

Senator CASEY. It could take a couple of hours.

Ms. GLENDON. In view of your indication you'd like a brief response, I will refer to the Pope's World Day of Peace message, the text of which was just issued.

And he highlighted three concerns, and I would expect that these would be the same concerns that he will bring to the United States when he visits here in April, and they were, of course, peace—as you would expect in a World Day of Peace message. Concern for the environment, climate change, and the third—something that has always and everywhere been at the heart of the Church—the concern for poverty, disease, lack of development.

The Holy See, I think, in its interventions on occasions like the World Day of Peace or the speech that the Pope is likely to give at the United Nations—it is constantly calling the developed world to be attentive to be attentive to what you referred to as the least, the last and the lost, and that's a major theme in the World Day of Peace message.

As for what the United States Embassy could do, I think those areas are all areas where—they are three of the many areas where the Holy See and the United States share common concerns and have already established cooperative relationships.

My own view is that in 2008, an excellent way of our highlighting those concerns and achieving something fairly important in—not only in the relationship between the two entities, but to advance the issues, in general, is 2008 happens to be the 60th anniversary, both of the Genocide Convention, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and it would seem to me that that provides the occasion for the United States and the Holy See to join forces in advances their own commitment, and promulgating the principles that underlie those two documents.

Senator CASEY. Thank you very much, and I may come back to you.

I'm going to move to Mr. Larson about some questions about Latvia—one of the issues that I mentioned in some of my opening comments was the issue of corruption. If you could speak to your knowledge of that and efforts underway, if any, to address that—because we, any democracy faces that in the early, in the infancy of a democracy, but even, as we know here in the United States, even very well developed, in our case a republic that has had centuries of development now, more than two at least, we still have that problem here—local governments, State government, and even the Federal Government—what's your sense of that, and what's your sense of kind of a mission that you'll have to try to impact it positively?

Mr. LARSON. That's an excellent question, Senator, and as you know, the foundation of a democracy is the rule of law, and having confidence in the government, and I can tell you that many of the emerging democracies in Eastern Europe, or even in Iraq—one of the greatest problems we were confronted with was the rule of law and stopping corruption.

Latvia has worked very aggressively, they have an Office of Anti-Corruption that is investigating and trying to root it out. There have been many reforms put in place in the 1990s to help combat that, and if confirmed as ambassador, I will work to leverage resources, technical assistance that we have here in the United States from the Department of Treasury, FBI, and the Department of Justice to assist them in their investigations to provide that the technical assistance that could be key in building the cases and key to success in developing the rule of law is to prosecute and to root it out, and to help set an example that will give confidence to the people of a nation and their government.

Senator CASEY. You mentioned Treasury, FBI—who's the third?

Mr. LARSON. The Department of Justice, Treasury.

Senator CASEY. Okay, and I want to get back to that, but I know we have, who just came in the room, Senator Grassley, who I think may want to provide some testimony.

Thank you, Senator, appreciate you being here.

Sure, we're honored to have Senator Grassley here who, as a—in my case as a first-year Senator you have to do your best not just to learn where the hearing rooms are and what to do every day, but you have to try to learn from those who have been here ahead

of you, and he's been a great inspiration to a lot of people here, even those who have been here longer than I have. And we've worked together on a number of issues, and whether it's in the Agriculture Committee, I've watched his work for many years in the Finance Committee, so we're grateful for his presence here, and his testimony.

Thank you, Senator.

**STATEMENT OF HON. CHUCK GRASSLEY,
U.S. SENATOR FROM IOWA**

Senator GRASSLEY. You know, many times since I've been in Congress, I've had an opportunity to introduce many Iowans to the Senate and to various committees of the Senate, and even this committee, but very seldom can I say I've introduced people who are friends of mine. I hope they've all been friends, but I mean a real friend, and Chuck Larson's an example of a real friend—both personally as well as politically, and so I'm glad to be here to introduce him and have that special relationship with him.

I want to commend you and the committee for considering Chuck Larson for this ambassadorship, and of course, holding a hearing at this late stage to fill this position in Latvia is very important, because Latvia—even though a new country, well, relatively new in the sense of not being out of the Soviet Bloc very long, and you held this hearing so early because this just came before the Senate on November 30, so thank you.

You'll find out as ambassador or anything else he's done that Chuck Larson is an intelligent, accomplished leader, first being elected to the Iowa General Assembly in 1992, and I told him at that time—his mother was campaigning for him—if he wins this because his mother is working so hard for him, because I know how that is, my mother worked hard for me when I was first running for the Iowa House of Representatives half a century ago.

While in the Iowa House, he served as chairman of the Judiciary Committee, and chairman of the Economic Development Committee, and then he was elected to the United States Senate. And then while he was in the Senate, he was called into full-time military service, because he had been in the military, going way back to 1987. He's currently a Major, as you know, from his BTA, and he had to miss sessions of the Senate because he served in Iraq. He was deployed for a year with the 332nd Engineering Group, he also happens to be a graduate of law school, and he has practiced law, and he has practiced law, and he's been a business man.

Chuck Larson has served Iowa, then, not only as a State Senator and not only as a member of the military, but in a lot of specific ways, as well.

So, I'm pleased that he's now been called by the President to serve his country once again, in this particular case, as an ambassador. I'm confident that my friend, Chuck Larson, will represent the United States well, and excel in this position just as he has throughout his career.

So, Mr. Chairman and members of your committee, I want you to know that I strongly support this nomination, and I hopefully have the ability, since, you know, we're getting toward the end of one President's constitutionally limited term of office that we can

get him approved so he can serve a full time over there for the rest of this President's term, and who knows, if our side of the aisle is lucky enough, he might be able to serve longer than one year.

So, thank you very much for considering this, and thank you very much for wanting to serve.

Mr. LARSON. Thank you, Senator.

Senator GRASSLEY. And let me say congratulations to you, too, for your important nomination.

Ms. GLENDON. Thank you, Senator.

Senator GRASSLEY. You bet.

Senator CASEY. Senator, thank you very much, and we appreciate your presence here on a day when many are not, and we're grateful for your leadership and it's a great testament to this nominee and to the State of Iowa, that both of the United States Senators were here today to provide that testimony, so we're grateful. Thank you, Senator.

Mr. Larson, I wanted to also explore the relationship, obviously, that I think many people have had concerns about and they're well-founded, the relation between Russia and Latvia, and in particular in the area of energy—gas and electricity and what that means in terms of political leverage.

How concerned are you by Latvia's significant and really heavy dependence on Russia for its energy supplies, and how do you see that playing out in the time that you would serve, upon confirmation as ambassador?

Mr. LARSON. That's an excellent question and key to it is the development and improvement of the relations between Latvia and Russia. Yesterday, the Russian-Latvian border treaty was signed with very, very, positive comments by Foreign Minister Zavrov from Russia he invited the President of Latvia to Russia next year. So, we're seeing, overall, not only positive comments, but improvements in relations.

The two nations have developed an intergovernmental commission that's addressing approximately 10 issues right now that affect both of their communities.

Latvia is working aggressively to diversify their sources of energy. They've received assistance and expanded their hydroelectric to provide approximately 25 percent of their needs, but you're correct, Mr. Chairman, the vast majority of their electrical needs is coming from Russia, natural gas, as well.

They're exploring opportunities with Finland to expand electrical transmission from Finland, through Estonia to Latvia and Lithuania, and Poland, Lithuania, and Latvia are also investing in a new nuclear plant that will be based in Lithuania and provide expanded electrical transmission for them.

So, I believe the key is for expanded diversification, and if confirmed, I will work with U.S. companies to help provide technical assistance, potential investment opportunities for U.S. companies, and additionally, I'll draw from my own State, where we have a very diversified renewable fuels agenda, and some of the leading experts in the Nation are in Iowa for biodiesel, ethanol, and what-not, and I know that they have a tremendous interest in Latvia, as well.

I guess, I want to ask you a follow-up on the use of the—in place now, an intergovernmental committee?

Mr. LARSON. There's a commission—

Senator CASEY. Oh, commission, sorry.

Mr. LARSON [continuing]. Made up of representatives from both countries, yes, sir.

Senator CASEY. Can you tell me more about that?

Mr. LARSON. It's a bilateral commission that has about 10 issues underway that they're actively working on—

Senator CASEY. Representation from Russia?

Mr. LARSON. Both Latvia and Russia, yes sir.

Senator CASEY. And, but you fell confident that they are on a path where they have a—at least a plan or a strategy to diversify, sufficient to diminish or reduce that dependence?

Mr. LARSON. I believe that they are actively pursuing that plan right now, from an electrical transmission perspective with Finland, and also from a more expanded source of energy, with a plan to, in Lithuania, to provide nuclear energy.

Senator CASEY. You mentioned in your testimony the, obviously, the horrific history—the world history, really—with regard to the Holocaust, but in particular, in Latvia, the attempt to raise both awareness, but also the property restitution issues it's surrounding. Can you tell us more about that just in terms of where it is now, and how you see it developing?

Mr. LARSON. There's great education that needs to be done. When I served in the Iowa Senate, I spearheaded an effort to bring part of the traveling Holocaust Museum to Iowa, because I recognized that not every Iowan would have the opportunity to visit the museum and learn. And at the crux of the issue is that the best way to ensure that we do not experience, as a society, another Holocaust, is education. And that's where the Latvian Government is proactively working to educate the people about what occurred, and to help ensure that it does not happen again.

There remains some tension, tension I think would be appropriate, that we see in many European countries regarding anti-Semitism. And so, more work needs to be done.

Additionally, although the vast majority of the private property issues have been resolved, as far as restitution, there is still approximately 200 communal properties, or heirless properties that I mentioned, where restitution has not been made. And as ambassador I will—if confirmed—will do two things in this area, and I'll work very closely with the local Jewish community to help encourage expanded education, and then second, that the issue of communal property must be resolved.

Senator CASEY. And there's still a good bit of work to be done there?

Mr. LARSON. There is, there is.

Senator CASEY. Thank you. I'm going to go back to Professor Glendon, and maybe go back to Mr. Larson, as well.

Professor, one issue that obviously has consumed a lot of our time in the Senate, and the same is true of the House, which is as it should be, is the war, the war in Iraq. And I know that there's a—upon confirmation, you'd be in a—maybe not a unique position, but an easy position in terms of what the Holy See has said about

the war and what the administration's position is on the war. How do you see that playing out and how do you—not just with regard to that issue, but how do you approach those issues, where you see—at a minimum, a tension, and in some cases there may be issues where there's a direct conflict. How do you—how do you resolve those kinds of disputes or tensions?

Ms. GLENDON. Well, let me start by saying that it seems to me that leaving aside the Holy See's well-known opposition to our invasion of Iraq that in the period of time since then it certainly has supported our goals of achieving a peaceful, religion-respecting, free society in Iraq. And the Holy See has a presence in Iraq that could, in fact, it has access, I think, in the capillaries of the society to keep a sense of what's going on that could be very beneficial for us to get in touch with.

So, I think that despite the initial conflict over the entry into the situation, the Holy See can be a reliable and valuable partner in working our way through toward some kind of peaceful outcome.

Senator CASEY. Your broad experience as a lawyer, I think, should come in handy when you deal with issues like that.

And, I guess I'd ask you what—in terms of your own experience as a lawyer, as an advocate, as someone who's weighed in on public policy, what do you think your most—this is probably not a question anybody wants to answer—but what do you think is going to be your most difficult challenge upon confirmation?

Ms. GLENDON. I think the most difficult challenge, frankly, arises from the short period of time that these ambassadorial appointments are likely to last, and I have given a good deal of thought to what could be accomplished in a short period of time. It seems to me that it's fortuitous that we have these two anniversaries that I mentioned—the Genocide Convention, and of the Human Rights Declaration—it seems to me that in itself would provide a couple of project that would enable us to explain and defend American positions, and to lift up American values, in a way that if it could impress the Holy See it could, through the Holy See, influence the image of the United States everywhere that there are Catholics—all over the world—but also especially in Europe, where I think that the image of the United States needs some improvement.

Senator CASEY. And I know that you're anticipating the visit by Pope Benedict here, in the United States, and I'm not asking you to provide an itinerary—but how does that work in terms of your involvement? How much of your time has to be devoted to helping that journey be well-planned or executed, or is that of—I'm just curious as to your involvement in that, because it's a—I can't even begin to imagine how difficult it is to—for those who were charged with that responsibility to set up that itinerary and make it go smoothly, but I just didn't know the role you have to play in that, or—if any.

Ms. GLENDON. Well, frankly, I'm not sure what exactly the role I would have to play would be, but I would expect it to be the first thing that the new ambassador would have to attend to. And I would hope that—you were kind enough to mention my background as an advocate—I would hope that I would be able to be helpful in translating from one frame of reference to another, I think I would be able to ease communication between the two entities.

Senator CASEY. Well, thank you, I appreciate that, and I don't envy those who are planning that kind of a trip, with the detail and the work that goes into that kind of a trip must be overwhelming, so we wish them all the luck in the world.

I guess, one more Professor, I was going down a list, and I don't want to—we can't cover everything today, but there was one other that I had—oh, with regard to the Peoples Republic of China, I guess there's some speculation that the Vatican might reestablish diplomatic relations with China—do you have any sense of that, yet? Or do you think, is it too early in your consideration of that, or your information about that to comment, but what do you know about that? The likelihood of that happening, if any? Or, what's your sense of that?

Ms. GLENDON. I think the most significant thing is that these conversations are taking place, and that there does seem some disposition on the part of China to discuss the question of the status of the most neuralgic question concerning the internal government as a church, the appointment of bishops—I would expect the negotiation process to be protracted, the questions are difficult, and I do believe that the Holy See is much more interested in religious freedom in China, than it is in establishing diplomatic relations, and that some progress—a good deal of progress—would have to be made on the religious freedom front before a change was made on the diplomatic front.

Senator CASEY. Thank you. I know we're a little tight on time, but Mr. Larson, I guess my last question pertains principally to the issue in Latvia, not just in terms of how it's dealing with Russia as it relates to energy policy and diversification, but just generally, how would you characterize that relationship now, even beyond the issue of energy? Where, you can't pick up an American newspaper without reading yet another story about what's happening in Russia, specifically as it pertains to Mr. Putin and what his intentions are, especially in light of a close ally of his now, being on a path to assume power.

And there's real concern, frankly, in this country, for a lot of reasons. Not just because of things he has said and intentions he seems to have in mind, but what it does for that region, and stability and the relationship between our two countries.

And, I guess as Ambassador to Latvia, you'd be dealing with some of those same concerns, and some of those—weighing those considerations when you're ambassador to that country on behalf of the United States and you have to deal with the Kremlin, and you've got to deal with the leadership in Russia, and how do you see that relationship now, both between Latvia and Russia, but also how the United States handles that?

Mr. LARSON. That's an excellent question. I would describe it, Mr. Chairman, that it's improving, and as Foreign Minister Zavrov said, we cannot turn a blind eye to the historical challenges we've had in the past, and he just made that comment yesterday.

And I think it fairly sums up the growing warmth between the relationships or the growing improvement in their relations. As I mentioned, yesterday we saw a very positive sign that they signed the Latvian-Russian Border treaty; Russia also more recently, last week, suspended their participation in the Conventional Forces Eu-

rope treaty and yesterday they said that they would be willing to return to the table to continue those discussions.

On the Intergovernmental Commission, we're seeing continued dialog as these two nations work to iron out a number of issues that nations would face that border each other. So, I would describe it, clearly, as improving and if confirmed, as United States Ambassador, I would work with the Latvian Government to encourage that continued dialog and improvement of relations, and building relations across borders.

Senator CASEY. We especially appreciate your service to the country in Iraq, and there are few people, I think that have the combination of government service, and service in a current or recent conflict, so I think both sets of experience in addition to other life experience should serve you well.

But, we're grateful, and we're thinking at this holiday season about those who are still serving in Iraq and Afghanistan and around the world, but we're wanting to note as other shave here, your service.

Mr. LARSON. Thank you.

Senator CASEY. Unless there are other comments that either of you would like to make, you could certainly amplify the record by way of written followup or statement if you wanted to. I may have questions that I submit for the record, other members of the committee might, to amplify what we talked about, but we're particularly grateful for your presence here today and your willingness to serve the people of the United States and also the diplomatic posts, the areas of the world you'd be serving in upon confirmation, so we're grateful.

Unless either of you have anything else, I'd ask that we—I make my own motion to adjourn this hearing, but thank you very much.

Mr. LARSON. Thank you.

Ms. GLENDON. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

[Whereupon, at 10:33 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]