

**Statement of Marie Royce
Nominee to be Assistant Secretary of State,
Educational and Cultural Affairs
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
March 7, 2018**

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Cardin, distinguished members of the Committee, thank you for inviting me here today.

I want to thank President Trump and Secretary of State Rex Tillerson for their confidence in me, and if confirmed – it will be a privilege to represent you and the American people globally.

I would like to thank Ed, my husband of 33 years, for his love and inspiration. And I would like to recognize my mother Mary Barbara, my father-in-law Ed Sr., and my late father Ronald Porter and Aunt Peg. To my family and friends in California, I could not ask for better support.

I am a passionate champion of people-to-people exchanges.

Time and trust in ECA programs like Fulbright, and the International Visitor Leadership Program have built important relationships.

- One in three current world leaders are alumni of US government exchange programs.
- So are over 500 former heads of state, and 84 Nobel Laureates.

As a Professor at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, I participated in international exchange efforts through educating teachers and students from abroad. I saw the impact of our ideals, values and policies on their world view, and on their perception of U.S. foreign policy. Because of the prevalence of disinformation in many parts of the world, these ECA exchanges bring real world experiences in the U.S. that fosters credibility and trust. These people-to-people ties are an important way to show that U.S. disagreement with a given regime overseas are with the government of the country, not with the people. Thus academic, cultural and athletic exchanges cultivate mutual understanding as well as friendly and peaceful relations between the people of the United States and the people of other countries.

In my time as a business executive in telecommunications working in emerging markets in Africa, Europe, South America and Asia, I obtained a deep appreciation of the role played by our educational programs. So often, those I met in key decision-making roles had been the beneficiaries of ECA's bilateral agreements with

foreign partners, governments, businesses and NGOs. They had experienced the richness of America's political, economic, and cultural life. As a result, they were receptive to what America had to offer.

As a delegate to Hungary and Poland in the American Council of Young Political Leaders (ACYPL) program, I experienced the effectiveness of these bi-partisan programs. ACYPL, promotes mutual understanding and cultivates long lasting relationships among next generation leaders. It was an honor for me to later serve as Secretary of the Board.

I served as a Trustee of Meridian International, which works closely with the State Department and other U.S. government agencies to provide exchange and policy programs that strengthen U.S. engagement with the world, and prepares leaders to address complex global problems.

My professional career began with Procter & Gamble in sales management, and research and development world-wide. At P&G, I helped create and launch a mentoring program for women and minorities to help close gender and racial gaps in the workplace, and attract diverse talent.

I raise this point because American diversity, and the advances in opportunity for women and minorities in our society serve as an example for those struggling for full rights abroad. Prospects for empowerment, democracy and the rule of law worldwide are advanced when young people can participate in our public diplomacy programs. Involvement of American and international participants from traditionally underrepresented groups create opportunities that are open to all. This inclusion is an American value, and advances American interests. From creating mentoring programs at Cal Poly Pomona, P&G, and Marriott International, to creating a program for Muslim women in Afghanistan and later Iraq, I have volunteered my time to those who have faced discrimination and lacked opportunities.

As a private sector appointee on the Advisory Committee on International Communications and Information Policy (ACICIP) at the Department of State, I developed long-distance mentoring programs through video-conferencing and SKYPE for women in the developing world to match them up with women professionals.

I have more than 30 years of experience in the private sector with Fortune 500 Companies, and as a small business owner, creating and launching start-ups and new initiatives and serving as a key business liaison to 80 countries. As a former Full-time University Professor I led an international grant program between two universities.

If confirmed, I would aim to strengthen our people-to-people ties even further. I am honored to be appointed to this important position, and I will focus all my efforts on improving the vital mission of these programs. Thank you very much, and I look forward to answering your questions.