

**NOMINATION HEARINGS OF THE
115TH CONGRESS—FIRST SESSION**

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

**COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
UNITED STATES SENATE**

ONE HUNDRED FIFTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

—
JANUARY 3, 2017 TO JANUARY 3, 2018
—

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Relations



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U.S. GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE

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CONTENTS

The nominees' responses to additional questions and any other additional material submitted for the record are located at the end of each hearing transcript.

	Page
Wednesday, January 11, 2017	na
Tillerson, Rex, to be Secretary of State, transcript printed under separate cover, S. Hrg. 115-4.	na
Wednesday, January 18, 2017	na
Haley, Gov. Nimrata "Nikki," to be Ambassador to the United Nations, transcript printed under separate cover, S. Hrg. 115-345.	na
Thursday, February 16, 2017	1
Friedman, David, of New York, to be Ambassador to Israel	9
Wednesday, April 26, 2017	71
Mushingi, Hon. Tulinabo Salama, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Senegal and to the Republic of Guinea-Bissau	73
Haskell, Todd Philip, of Florida, to be Ambassador to the Republic of the Congo	75
Tuesday, May 2, 2017	93
Branstad, Hon. Terry, of Iowa, to be Ambassador to the People's Republic of China	98
Tuesday, May 9, 2017	145
Sullivan, Hon. John J., of Maryland, to be Deputy Secretary of State	149
Wednesday, May 17, 2017	207
Brown, Scott P., of New Hampshire, to be Ambassador to New Zealand, and to the Independent State of Samoa	211
Thursday, May 18, 2017	227
Hagerty, William Francis IV, of Tennessee, to be Ambassador to Japan	231
Thursday, June 15, 2017	259
Green, Mark Andrew, of Wisconsin, to be Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development	266
Tuesday, July 11, 2017	303
Bohigian, Hon. David Steele, of Missouri, to be Executive Vice President of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation	307
Washburne, Ray, of Texas, to be President of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation	309
Currie, Kelley Eckels, of Georgia, to be U.S. Representative on the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations	312
Murray, Jay Patrick, of Virginia, to be an Alternate Representative for Special Political Affairs in the United Nations	315

IV

	Page
Tuesday, July 18, 2017	345
Gingrich, Callista L., of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Holy See	349
Sales, Nathan Alexander, of Ohio, to be Coordinator for Counterterrorism, Department of State	352
Glass, George Edward, of Oregon, to be Ambassador to the Portuguese Republic	355
Risch, Carl C., of Pennsylvania, to be an Assistant Secretary of State, Consular Affairs	358
Wednesday, July 19, 2017	389
Arreaga, Hon. Luis E., of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Guatemala	389
Day, Sharon, of Florida, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Costa Rica	391
Urs, Krishna R., of Connecticut, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Peru	393
Thursday, July 20, 2017	415
Hutchison, Hon. Kay Bailey, of Texas, to be U.S. Permanent Representative on The Council of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization	425
Craft, Kelly Knight, of Kentucky, to be Ambassador to Canada	429
Johnson, Robert Wood IV, of New York, to be Ambassador to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	432
Eisenberg, Lewis M., of Florida, to be Ambassador to the Italian Republic and to the Republic of San Marino	434
McFarland, Kathleen Troia, of New York, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Singapore	437
Wednesday, July 26, 2017	491
Raynor, Hon. Michael Arthur, of Maryland, to be Ambassador to the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia	492
Brewer, Maria E., of Indiana, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Sierra Leone	494
Desrocher, John P., of New York, to be Ambassador to the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria	496
Tuesday, August 1, 2017	517
King, Stephen B., of Wisconsin, to be Ambassador to the Czech Republic ..	518
Tuesday, September 12, 2017	531
Ueland, Eric M., of Oregon, to be an Under Secretary of State (Management)	536
Bass, Hon. John R., of New York, to be Ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan	556
Siberell, Justin Hicks, of Maryland, Nominee to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Bahrain	560
Dowd, J. Steven, of Florida, to be U.S. Director of the African Development Bank for a Term of 5 Years	563
Tuesday, September 19, 2017	617
Huntsman, Hon. Jon M. Jr., of Utah, to be Ambassador to the Russian Federation State	624
Mitchell, A. Wess, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (European and Eurasian Affairs)	640
Wednesday, September 27, 2017, (a.m.)	693
Kritenbrink, Daniel J., of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam	695
Fitzpatrick, Kathleen M., of the District of Columbia, to be Ambassador to the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste	698
Wednesday, September 27, 2017 (p.m.)	715
Hoekstra, Hon. Peter, of Michigan, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of the Netherlands	718
Buchan, Richard Duke, III, of Florida, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Spain	721

	Page
Wednesday, September 27, 2017 (p.m.) —Continued	
Grenell, Richard, of California, to be Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany	725
McCourt, Jamie, of California, to be Ambassador to the French Republic, and to the Principality of Monaco	728
McMullen, Edward T. Jr., of South Carolina, to be Ambassador to the Swiss Confederation, and to the Principality of Liechtenstein	732
Tuesday, October 3, 2017 (a.m.)	763
Juster, Hon. Kenneth Ian, of New York, to be Ambassador to the Republic of India	767
Tuesday, October 3, 2017 (p.m.)	789
Andre, Hon. Larry Edward, of Texas, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Djibouti	792
Barlerin, Peter Henry, of Colorado, to be Ambassador to Republic of Cameroon	794
Whitaker, Eric P., of Illinois, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Niger ..	796
Dodman, Michael James, of New York, to be Ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Mauritania	807
Fite, Nina Maria, of Pennsylvania, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Angola	810
Foote, Daniel L., of New York, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Zambia	813
Reimer, David Dale, of Ohio, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Mauritius and the Republic of Seychelles	815
Wednesday, October 4, 2017	849
Sison, Michele Jeanne, of Maryland, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Haiti	851
Brownback, Hon. Samuel Dale, of Kansas, to be Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom	855
Thursday, October 5, 2017	883
Sands, Carla, of California, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Denmark	884
Kohorst, W. Robert, of California, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Croatia	887
Wednesday, October 18, 2017	903
Carter, Thomas, of South Carolina, to be U.S. Representative on the Council of the International Civil Aviation Organization	905
Newstead, Jennifer Gillian, of New York, to be Legal Adviser of the Department of State	907
Singh, Manisha, of Florida, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Economic and Business Affairs)	910
Evanoff, Michael T., of Arkansas, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Diplomatic Security)	911
Wednesday, November 1, 2017	955
Goldstein, Irwin Steven, of New York, to be Under Secretary of State (Public Diplomacy)	957
Lawler, Sean P., of Maryland, to be Chief of Protocol of the Department of State	960
Johnson, Lisa A., of Washington, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Namibia	962
Gonzales, Rebecca Eliza, of Texas, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Lesotho	964
Evans, James Randolph, of Georgia, to be Ambassador To Luxembourg ...	966
Tuesday, November 28, 2017	1013
Poblete, Yleem D.S., Ph.D., of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Verification and Compliance)	1019
Ford, Christopher Ashley, D.Phil., of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (International Security and Non-Proliferation)	1022

VI

	Page
Thursday, November 30, 2017	1071
Bierman, Hon. Brock D., of Virginia, to be an Assistant Administrator of the United States Agency For International Development	1076
Braithwaite, Rear Admiral Kenneth J., USN (Ret), of Pennsylvania, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Norway	1080
Trujillo, Hon. Carlos, of Florida, to be the Permanent U.S. Representative to the Organization of American States	1083
McClenny, M. Lee, of Washington, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Paraguay	1086
Tuesday, December 19, 2017	1123
Vrooman, Peter Hendrick, of New York, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Rwanda	1125
Danies, Joel, of Maryland, to be Ambassador to the Gabonese Republic and to the Democratic Republic of Sao Tomé and Príncipe	1128

APPENDIX

Alphabetical listing of nominees considered by the committee, including im- portant dates	1151
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NOMINATIONS

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2017

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:30 a.m., in Room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Bob Corker, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Corker [presiding], Johnson, Gardner, Young, Barrasso, Portman, Cardin, Shaheen, Coons, Murphy, Kaine, Markey, Merkley, and Booker.

Also Present: Senator Enzi.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. BOB CORKER, U.S. SENATOR FROM TENNESSEE

The CHAIRMAN. Foreign Relations Committee will come to order. And, in keeping with the great way that Senator Enzi runs his committee, we start on time here, too. And, as a matter of fact, Senator Cardin and I will defer our opening comments, out of respect for you, so that you can make your introduction and go on about your business. But, you honor us by being here. We thank you for that. And the floor is yours to introduce one of our nominees.

STATEMENT OF HON. MICHAEL B. ENZI, U.S. SENATOR FROM WYOMING

Senator ENZI. Thank you, Chairman Corker and Ranking Member Cardin.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before the committee this morning on behalf of Eric Ueland, the President's nominee to serve as the Under Secretary of State for Management. He has been my budget director. He is an excellent manager. He has tremendous historical knowledge, and he is able to coordinate many efficiently.

Eric was born and raised in Portland, Oregon, and attended college in San Francisco. He remains loyal to his West Coast roots. After graduating college, he had actually considered teaching diplomatic history. While he never had a chance to pursue that interest, the opportunity to serve at the State Department in a role that supports the creation and execution of U.S. foreign policy will be a great privilege.

He began work in the legislative branch in 1989, and served in a variety of positions, including running the office of the Senate Majority Leader and serving the Senate Assistant Majority Leader,

as well as now overseeing the Senate Budget Committee for the past 4 years. He is careful in that work, precise in his analysis, thoughtful with others, and dogged on behalf of his bosses and their goals. He has worked for and with Republicans and Democrats, Senators and Congressmen, and Democratic and Republican administrations. He is comfortable working across the partisan divide and building coalitions to bring legislation across the finish line.

As a successful Senate staffer going to a significant Department position, he will be an asset not just for the Department, but for Congress, as well. His understanding of how we work, his appreciation for the challenges we face, and his ability to dive in with us as a partnership to find solutions for our shared responsibility on behalf of America's foreign policy, all that will stand us in good stead.

A key to Eric's value for me has been his interest in very carefully learning how a law or process actually works. Examples include his facility with Senate rules and precedents, and the Budget Act, our budget enforcement regime, and the reconciliation process.

I have also mentioned his historical knowledge. He is always open to new information and new learning, and reflecting it accordingly. I know we will have that same ability and talent as he enters the executive branch to learn the operation of the Department, the rules under which it works, how it interacts with Congress and partners across the executive branch, and how to best and appropriately carry out his responsibilities on behalf of the Secretary and the administration.

We all know that the makeup of the Senate requires that Senators cooperate with each other and provides many opportunities for Senators and staff to both learn that lesson and then put it into action. I believe that experience will inform Eric's ability to work with the Department's various stakeholders, including diplomats, the Civil Service, and partners across the Federal Government and internationally, and members and staff here at the committee and in Congress.

Eric is also a careful manager who has had responsibility here in the Senate at several offices, with budget formulation and execution, personnel recruitment and retention, and supporting professional development of his staff. The scope of the Department and the challenges it faces might larger than managing a Senate personnel office or leadership office or committee office, but I believe Eric's management style will be applicable at the State Department, too.

Eric can successfully handle the new challenges and opportunities that he will face, and I am confident he will be a strong and capable Under Secretary for Management on behalf of the Secretary and his senior team and for our diplomats around the world.

So, I commend Eric's nomination to the committee, and urge his favorable consideration.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you for being here. And, as you know, you are welcome to go and continue your other duties. I know you have a important meeting this afternoon at 2:30, but, again, thank you so much for being here.

And I think what the ranking member and I have decided is that we will give opening comments for both panels now.

So, thank you so much for being here. And we will see you later today.

The position that Senator Enzi was just mentioning is vitally important to the functioning of the Department. Fourteen bureaus and offices report to the Under Secretary for Management, including Diplomatic Security, Consular Affairs, and Overseas Building Operations. The Under Secretary is responsible for the allocation of State Department positions, funds, and any other resources required to implement the foreign policies of the United States Senate.

In addition to making the trains run on time at the Department, the Under Secretary has the critical task of securing our people and families abroad. This is never an easy undertaking, but it is particularly challenging now, given the complexity of our current threat environment.

The Department is also in the middle of an extensive reorganization process, which will require heavy involvement and deft leadership from the Under Secretary. This committee has been concerned by some of the Department's recent management challenges, has tried to play a constructive role in making the Department more efficient and effective through our State Department authorization bill. I hope our nominee shares our goal of a stronger and more agile State Department. And I look forward to your cooperation on the authorization bill, should you be confirmed.

On the next panel of nominees, we have The Honorable John Bass to be Ambassador Afghanistan; Mr. Justin Siberell to be Ambassador to Bahrain; and Dr. Steven Dowd to be U.S. Director of the African Development Bank.

A more concerted effort is planned by the administration to address U.S. interests in Afghanistan through a more focused and more firm diplomacy with Afghanistan's neighbors and others. Our embassy country team in Kabul must be properly prepared, equipped, and led to make the most of this new U.S. effort to create better outcomes that serve our national security interests. I believe Ambassador Bass has that experience, and I look forward to hearing how he plans to utilize our resources to meet the President's expectations.

Bahrain is an important ally of the United States and the Middle East, and hosts a critical military base for our forces in the region. Sadly, the country is also facing unrest amongst its majority Shi'a population against a Sunni-led monarchy, resulting in government crackdown of its dissidents. I look forward to hearing from Mr. Siberell about his goals and the vision for U.S. engagement in Bahrain in this complicated political environment.

The African Development Bank provides resources developing countries that, if utilized properly, present opportunities to help those countries grow their economies, improve their standards of living, which ultimately serves our U.S. interest. If confirmed the U.S. Director at the African Development Bank, Mr. Dowd would play an important role in representing the United States interests at an operational level, helping to ensure money is spent wisely, and protecting our investments.

With that, I would like to recognize our distinguished Ranking Member for his comments.
 Senator Cardin.

**STATEMENT OF HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN,
 U.S. SENATOR FROM MARYLAND**

Senator CARDIN. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you for scheduling this hearing.

I want to welcome all four of our nominees, and thank each of them for their willingness to serve our country in critically important positions. It is a great sacrifice for public service, and we thank you for that. And we know it is a family issue, that the family has to be supportive of that effort, so we thank the members of the family for being willing to share your family member with our country.

Mr. Ueland, it is good to see you, member of the Senate family. It is always nice to have a member—you get certain privileges—not all, but you get certain privileges by your association with the United States Senate. You have been nominated to a position of great trust and importance for the proper functioning of the Department of State, the Under Secretary of Management. This is—it is not a job that often generates flashy headlines, but it is a job that is absolutely critical, often behind the scenes, in a quiet way, for the proper functioning of our foreign policy.

And as I consider the challenges that you face that I have—I have been struggling, over the past several months, to understand the management philosophy of the Department's current leadership. I am struggling to understand the administration's approach to the Department's budget, management, reorganization, and personnel. There is a significant obligation on you, as we consider your nomination, to help this committee better understand how the administration is thinking about and approaching these issues, and helping us to work through our concerns as we move forward.

As I have expressed before, I remain deeply concerned that the administration's approach to reorganization of the State Department is a solution in search of a problem. It has the appearance of a precooked and ideological-driven exercise. Both this committee and the Appropriations Committee have expressed our concerns and made it clear that the road to reorganization runs through Congress.

I also want to flag a couple of issues where we have had concerns over the past few months, including the way the Department handled the Rangel and Pickering Fellows, the suggestion that the Consular Affairs and the Population, Refugee, and Migration Bureau be moved wholesale from the Department to the Department of Homeland Security, and the apparent lack of urgency in filling critical positions, such as the Assistant Secretary for Diplomatic Security. I do this, not to relitigate concerns with you, but, rather, to suggest that real, pressing needs for proper management guidance at the Department.

When we see things like the Department seeking to reduce its workforce through attrition, where critical functions and expertise are lost, it suggests an operation that either does not understand or does not care about using proper management tools to steer that

process. So, as I said, I have concerns about the management of the Department. I am hopeful that you will be able to reassure this committee on the core issues of how you intend to bring to bear your experience in order to institute functional management and processes for the Department.

My overriding concern is that, without proper management and leadership at the Department, the United States is at risk of effectively leaving the stage as a global leader. The Department of State plays a vital role at the heart of our Nation's foreign policy by maintaining our global stature, ensuring the security of our citizens, enhancing our prosperity, and supporting our allies and partners around the globe who share the ideals and values that are the heart of what makes America a unique and exceptional Nation. I trust that we would—you would agree that, if the Department does not function properly, the United States role in the world, our national security, is at risk. Your job, if confirmed, will be to see that that does not happen. So, I look forward to the discussion that we will have during this hearing.

I also wanted to welcome the three nominees that will be on the second panel. For Ambassador Bass, thank you for being willing to come back for a second hearing before this committee. And usually one is all people can tolerate. So, thank you for your willingness to continue to serve our country. I think the President has selected a very well-qualified person for this critical and difficult posting.

I must express my concern, however, over President Trump's long-awaited announcement of a South Asian strategy, last month, which was short on details and has raised many questions on what his implementation will entail. I diverge from the President on his proposed troop increase. I think that this is a singular focus on killing terrorists, ignores the complexity of the situation in Afghanistan and United States interests there. Our approach to Afghanistan must be centered around a bold renewed effort to forge a negotiated political settlement, working with the Afghan and regional actors. We also must spur progress on accountability for human rights abuses and an end to corruption, which undermines the Afghan Government's ability to secure a suitable peace. These goals are the best long-term bulwarks against the risk that Afghan territory could again be used as a base for terrorist activities against us or our allies. I will be introducing legislation shortly that addresses these considerations by hosting the United States diplomatic and programmatic engagements on peace, justice, and reconciliation in Afghanistan. I hope this committee will have the opportunity soon to have a full hearing on Afghanistan and South Asia, giving the pressing U.S. foreign policy interests in that region.

Our Ambassador to Afghanistan will be on the front lines of implementing this administration's strategy, and I welcome the opportunity to hear from you today about your priorities and prospectus on how best to approach this task. I believe that sustained diplomatic engagement by senior U.S. officials is needed now more than ever. We will not solve this conflict through military engagement alone, and our counterterror interests in Afghanistan are intertwined with political, economic, and social issues. So, the diplomatic and programmatic efforts of the State Department of Af-

ghanistan are critical, and our most senior diplomat in Kabul must engage personally and regularly to help move the ball forward on peace, justice, and reconciliation.

Mr. Siberell, for—on—Bahrain and the United States have a longstanding partnership and many shared interests, including confronting Iran's aggression, reversing the spread of ISIS, countering terrorist financing, and maritime security. I listened to the Chairman as he expressed his concerns about Bahrain. Bahrain is a key partner to the United States. Key partner. We have military interests, we have counterterrorism interests. And yet, there are significant human rights concerns that we have with the way that Bahrain treats the Shi'a population. We must engage those issues to have a sustained partnership with Bahrain. And our Ambassador must take the lead to make it clear that we can have partners that have very important strategic interests, but we also must make advancements on the manner in which they handle human rights and protection of universal freedoms, such as the freedom of speech and assembly. These developments that have occurred in Bahrain undermine Bahrain's stability, compromise its ability to be a security partner, and run contrary to U.S. interests.

Finally, I am pleased to welcome Joseph Dowd, nominee to be the U.S. Executive Director of the African Development Bank. Africa is a continent of great promise, but today it is—it—presenting us with great challenges. I noticed you have some interesting early history in Africa, and dealmaking experience in the area of food, infrastructure, and transportation that are key priorities for Africa today. I believe that will suit you well for the position that you have been nominated to.

I look forward to the discussion with all four of our nominees.

The CHAIRMAN. We thank all four of you, for being here and for listening to long opening comments by both of us, but we got it all out of the way, and now we are ready for you.

And so, Eric, if you would, take about 5 minutes to make your comments. Any additional materials, without objection, will be entered into the record. And, with that, go ahead and present your testimony. Thank you for being here.

**STATEMENT OF ERIC M. UELAND, OF OREGON, NOMINEE TO
BE AN UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (MANAGEMENT)**

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

Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Cardin, Senators, good morning. Thank you for the privilege of appearing before the committee.

With me this morning are my wife, Cathleen, and my daughters, Brigid and Charlotte.

My public service, as you mentioned earlier, has centered for many years on the legislative branch. And, thanks to the courtesy of several members, we have all had the chance to see Congress up close as part of that extended Senate family. We thank you very much for that privilege, and for the privilege extended to us from any different predecessors.

I am humbled this morning at the prospect of serving our Nation as Under Secretary of State for Management. I am grateful to both

President Trump and Secretary Tillerson for their confidence in me and for nominating me to serve in this capacity.

Our Nation is now engaged in a robust conversation about her appropriate role on the world stage and how to confront the challenges that we face. The Department serves to express the voice and the vision of the President through the Secretary. If confirmed, I look forward to taking responsibility for the management family at the Department. The 16 bureaus and offices for which the Under Secretary is responsible provide the platform for our Nation's diplomacy, including security, embassy construction, logistics, medical services, human resources, budget and finance, training, and many other critical functions. Our foreign policy must be carried out around the world at 275 embassies, consulates, and other missions on a platform that supports the President's foreign policy.

While the Department does much very well, I know it also faces continued challenges in several areas which fall under the management portfolio. For example, the security of staff in facilities overseas remains an issue. The Department, with congressional support, continues a strong construction program for new secure embassies and consulates, with 133 new diplomatic facilities completed since 1999. Additionally, a consolidated security training center is under construction in Virginia to provide all Foreign Service Officers hands-on training every 5 years. Both of these efforts have, and they will, save lives overseas. I expect to be particularly focused on staff and facility security during my tenure, if confirmed by the Senate.

As with many government and private institutions, cybersecurity is a major concern, especially with the Department's worldwide presence and extensive data systems. I will work to ensure that the Department has a modern and robust IT infrastructure that supports our diplomatic efforts and protects the critical data of the Department. During my tenure as staff director of the Budget Committee, I have faced the challenges of working to harmonize specific department and agency budgets, along with congressional and administration priorities, inside an integrated budget framework. I anticipate the need for harmony, collaboration, and cooperation in this job, too, if confirmed, including with Congress.

The formulation of negotiation for, and implementation of, Department spending rests in the Office of the Under Secretary of State for Management. If confirmed, I look forward to working with partners inside the executive branch and here in Congress to bring the State Department's budgets into law and see that those laws are faithfully executed. Given the past challenges Congress has faced authorizing the State Department, I hope also that we can work together to write and enact a durable and long-lasting authorization statute to reflect shared priorities of Congress and the executive branch.

Although the executive branch will be a new environment for me, I am confident that lessons I have learned here in the Senate will serve me well in my new role. During my decades in the Senate, I have recruited, assembled, and deployed highly qualified staff, created professional and legislative goals, identified partnerships and built coalitions, and worked strongly on behalf of other staff and other members. I am excited to now work on behalf of the

President and the Secretary in the Department, and look forward to finding new opportunities for public service there.

If confirmed, I will be committed to a continued partnership with the committee and Congress in support of a strong and capable Department that effectively advocates for the United States interests around the world.

Thank you again for the privilege of appearing before you this morning and your consideration of my nomination. Senators, I am happy to take your questions.

[Mr. Ueland's prepared statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ERIC M. UELAND

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Cardin, Senators, good morning. Thank you for the privilege of appearing before the committee.

With me this morning are my wife, Cathleen, and my children, Stephen, Brigid, and Charlotte. My public service has centered for many years on the legislative branch, and thanks to the courtesy of several Members, we've all had the chance to see Congress up close, as part of the Senate family. We extend our thanks to you and many predecessors for such a privilege.

I am humbled at the prospect of serving our nation as Undersecretary of State for Management. I'm grateful to both President Trump and Secretary Tillerson for their confidence in me and for nominating me to serve in this capacity.

During my years of service on Senate staff, the world has changed quite a bit. From the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Soviet Union, to the rise of terrorism, and even the creation of new nations, I have witnessed a wide variety of international opportunities and challenges for the United States.

But through them all, what endures has been the Department's responsibilities on behalf of the United States.

Our nation is now engaged in a robust conversation about her appropriate role on the world stage, and how to confront the challenges we face. The Department serves to express the voice and vision of the President through the Secretary. If confirmed, I look forward to taking responsibility for the management family at the Department. The 16 bureaus and offices for which the undersecretary is responsible provide the platform for our nation's diplomacy, including security, embassy construction, logistics, medical services, human resources, budget and finance, training, and other critical functions.

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For example, the security of staff and facilities overseas remains an issue. The Department, with Congressional support, continues a strong construction program for new, secure embassies and consulates, with 133 new diplomatic facilities completed since 1999. Additionally, a consolidated security training center is under construction in Virginia, to provide all Foreign Service Officers hands-on training every five years. Both of these efforts have, and will, save lives overseas. I expect to be particularly focused on staff and facilities security during my tenure, if confirmed by the Senate.

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The formulation of, negotiation for, and implementation of Department spending rests in the Office of the Undersecretary of State for Management. If confirmed, I look forward to working with partners inside the executive branch, and here in Congress, to bring the State Department's budgets into law, and see that those laws are faithfully executed.

Given the past challenges Congress has faced authorizing the State Department, I hope that we can work together to write and enact a durable and long-lasting authorization statute to reflect our shared priorities.

This begins with ensuring clarity of mission. The Department of State has had multiple mission statements over the years as well. We need to ensure that everyone knows where we are going, what we are doing, who is responsible, how the work is to be carried out, and when the job is done, that we all ended up where we set out to go.

Next, our personnel. The people of the Department are its strongest asset. They are the face of our country to the world. Here at home, many employees work to support those abroad. And together, they bring their talents to bear on a multiplicity of problems and challenges, to advance the United States' agenda in the international arena, build partnerships with other departments, agencies, and nations, and work in the most dangerous parts of the world. A strong, talented, representative workforce is essential for the Department's success.

Then, processes. For decades under both Republicans and Democrats, leadership at the Department has worked to help ensure the Department could adapt to an ever-evolving world. If confirmed, my job will be to help Secretary Tillerson and Deputy Secretary Sullivan move ahead with the improvement and re-design underway at the Department, while supporting efforts to advance the foreign policy of the President.

And finally, execution. The role and responsibility of the Undersecretary for Management is to support the Secretary and ensure effective operations of the Department. With a workforce of over 14,000 Foreign Service employees and 11,000 civil service employees, and an appropriated budget of nearly \$56 billion for Fiscal Year 2017, my work to help enhance recruitment, identify and focus talent, ensure smooth and successful operations, prepare budgets, and coordinate with the White House, the OMB, and other departments and agencies with whom we collaborate—all to contribute to a successful and fully engaged Department.

Although the executive branch will be a new environment for me, I'm confident that the lessons I've learned in the Senate will serve me well.

During my decades in the Senate, I've recruited, assembled, and deployed highly qualified staff, created professional and legislative goals, identified partnerships and built coalitions, and worked strongly on behalf of others. I am excited to work on behalf of the President and the Secretary in the Department, and look forward to finding new opportunities to serve.

If confirmed, I will be committed to a continued partnership with the committee and Congress in support of a strong and capable Department that effectively advocates for the United States' interests around the world.

Thank you again for the privilege of appearing before you this morning, and your consideration of my nomination.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. I will probably ask a few, and then retain the rest of my time for later. But, thank you for that testimony.

Obviously, we have begun the process, over the last several years, of State Department authorizations. We feel that it is important for us to do that, and ultimately complete an entire State Department authorization. Just wondering what your thoughts are, after spending decades on the Hill, relative to that process.

Mr. UELAND. Senator, thank you very much for that question. And yes, over the years here, I know that this committee has worked repeatedly on efforts to bring State Department authorizations into existence. Democrat majorities, Republican majorities; Democrat administrations, Republican administrations. I think, in my previous roles here on the Hill, I have always worked hard to be very supportive of the committee and its legislative efforts to authorize the full scope and ambit of Department programs. And I expect that, if I have the opportunity to serve, following confirmation, that I will be robustly engaged with this committee as it works to bring a State Department authorization through the Senate, through Congress, and ultimately for signature to the President.

The CHAIRMAN. So, you and I have had a good deal of interaction. And, just on that note, sometimes staffers who have been up here for many, many years can take on an attitude that Senators work for them. And I have seen that happen in—even in some of our encounters. And so, I think it is important for you to talk a little bit about that. The culture at the Department is not good right now. There is not a lot of teamwork felt there right now. And having someone who takes on a temperament of being very effective but sort of running over people in the process could be detrimental to the organization. And I wonder if you might talk a little bit about that here.

Mr. UELAND. Senator, thank you very much for that question. And I very much appreciate the reality that transitioning from the legislative branch to the executive branch, as I said in my prepared testimony, will be a new venue, a new environment for me.

I do know that I have a lot to learn, and I do know that some of the most capable teachers for that education process are going to be the very talented staff at the Department. There are 16 offices and bureaus for which the Under Secretary of State for Management is responsible. And I expect that I will be going through a very accelerated education process in order to understand, crisply and clearly, their needs and opportunities for action, as well as their day-to-day responsibilities for creating and sustaining this very strong platform and prosecution of America's foreign policy around the world.

As I said, I have a lot to learn. And I am not coming in with a presumption that I not only know it all, but that I have learned it all as a result of the confirmation process and the education that I have received so far. So, I am going to enter this job, if I have the privilege of being confirmed, with big ears wide open, with an objective to learn as much as I can as quickly as I can on behalf of the personnel in our Foreign Service, our Civil Service, and certainly our locally employed employees around the world, in order to fully and successfully carry out the State Department's mission and objective of prosecuting America's foreign policy around the world.

The CHAIRMAN. Yeah. One of the things, though, that we all count on—we actually engage a great deal with the person in this position. It is very important that we have a good relationship with this person, because there are congressional notifications that take place. Many cases, we want to know background and materials; we want to do that on a timely basis. And I guess I would like to have you not just speak to the staff that will be underneath you, but just your interactions with people here on the Hill, relative to those kinds of issues that are important to us. And, you know, once people are confirmed, sometimes they take on a little bit different attitude as to how they deal with folks. I wonder if you might address that.

Mr. UELAND. Senator, thank you very for—much for that, as well. And I agree, I have had colleagues and friends, over the years, who have been confirmed and sometimes forget from where they came. Because of those experiences over the years, I think that, as I mentioned in my prepared opening statement, the emphasis on partnership with Congress is going to be omnipresent

with me. To your point, this role has a significant continued interaction with both this committee, its counterpart in the House, and certainly the Appropriations Committees. And I expect that counsel of the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs to be spending a fair amount of time comprehensively engaged with the Hill to explain operations and objectives and responsibilities, and ways that we are recommending proceeding forward on anything from reorganization to our budget and spending priorities—to your point, required notifications and appropriate interactions, as well as seeking input; not just letting you know what is going on, but seeking counsel, advice, potential opportunities for direction, and information to feed back into, not just the execution of this role, but, as appropriate, report it back to the Deputy Secretary and the Secretary, as well.

So, I do not think that I am going to lose sight, having been a congressional staffer for many years, of the need and the value for a robust conversation and partnership with this committee, if I have the privilege of being confirmed.

The CHAIRMAN. Yeah. Well, thank you. I have some additional questions, unless they are asked by others.

With that, Senator Cardin.

Senator CARDIN. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Ueland, I really appreciate your testimony, particularly your encouragement on the Congress passing a State Department authorization in a routine manner, which I think would strengthen the unity on foreign policy in this country. So, I think that is a very important point. Under Chairman Corker's leadership, we have been making significant progress on that in the last 3 years. We passed out of this committee a State authorization, this year, that we hope will move forward. And I just want to concentrate on one part of that, which deals with reorganization of the State Department. A new administration is looking at potentially significant changes within the State Department. And, as I said in my opening comment, it is critically important that that be done in conjunction with the Congress. Both our committee and the Appropriations Committee have already spoken to our expectations, that there is going to be a close relationship in this process. Secretary Tillerson has testified before this committee indicating his commitment to work with this committee in a close manner.

And one of the more visible signs of reorganization is how Special Envoys are handled. And I want to compliment the administration in listening to us. There has been some correspondence back and forth. We have it also in our State Department authorization bill. And we are certainly consulting as to how the Special Envoys will be handled. Do we have your commitment that that close relationship—does not mean we will always be in agreement, but that close relationship will exist between you, if confirmed, and this committee and the Congress on input as to how reorganization takes place so that the Congress is part of the process?

Mr. UELAND. Absolutely, Senator. I think, to your point, both the Secretary and the Deputy Secretary, in conversations here at this committee, have expressed their interest and willingness to interact with the committee as they go through the process, with the employees, of thinking through ways to more effectively prosecute

America's diplomacy in the 21st century. And I certainly expect that, to your point, if I have the privilege of being confirmed—to the extent, in addition to the responsibilities that the portfolio of bureaus and offices have that already require constant communication with Congress, to be part of, not just the reorganization effort, by virtue of everything that the Under Secretary of Management is responsible for, but, again, to be working very cooperatively, conversationally, providing information, seeking input and feedback, providing explanations and rationales for the thought process that we are engaged, and potential recommendations about ways to continue to strengthen the ability of the Department to execute foreign policy around the world.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you. There will be times, as the Ranking Democratic member on this committee, that I will be requesting information from you in order to carry out our responsibilities here on the committee. Will you respond promptly and fully to those requests?

Mr. UELAND. Senator, I expect that I will be responding promptly and fully to all requests, ranking as well as majority, during the pendency of my tenure, unless I am told by higher authority not to, or modify the response. But, my instinct—again, having been a Senate staffer for many years—is to provide as much information as possible, as quickly as possible, to the committee, upon request, but, as well, continue a very extensive conversation with this committee, the House committee, and our Appropriations Committee as part of the portfolio of what I am responsible for, but also the effort underway by the Secretary and the Deputy Secretary on questions of reorganization.

Senator CARDIN. The Subcommittee on Foreign Ops has made its recommendations, in the Senate Appropriations Committee, on the State Department budget. The President submitted his budget. The comments, among Democrats and Republicans, as to the President's budget, as it related to the State Department, was pretty consistent, a pretty different view. Do you have an opinion as to the resources that you need and whether the Congress is doing the right thing in providing more resources than the administration has asked for?

Mr. UELAND. Senator, thank you for that question. The legislation was reported on Thursday, and, courtesy of preparing for this hearing, I have not had a chance to sit down and review the reported proposals from the subcommittee from last week. Until—unless I have the privilege of being confirmed, sir, I do not have fully formed opinions. I have read the budget justification for the submission for FY18—2018—that was provided earlier this year. Obviously, how a statute is enacted is a cooperative process between the executive branch and the legislative branch.

Senator CARDIN. Let me ask you the question in a slightly different way.

If Congress passes the resources, and it is signed into law, will you carry out the congressional mandate and intent through the funds that we appropriate for the purpose in which Congress has appropriated those funds?

Mr. UELAND. Senator, if Congress has passed, and the President has signed, legislation calling for expenditure of resources in par-

tical areas, absolutely. When I said that—earlier, that I really believe in the need that laws be faithfully executed, that covers this question, I believe, and is one of the important responsibilities of the Under Secretary, if I am confirmed.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you. I appreciate that.

Mr. UELAND. Your welcome, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Portman.

Senator PORTMAN. Thank you, Chairman.

And, Mr. Ueland, thank you for being here, because that means you are stepping up to take on a new task that is really important, management of the State Department. I think Chairman Corker said it right when he said we have got some morale issues there right now, from what I understand. And it is also important that you have been a former chief of staff to a Majority Leader and to a Whip. And I got to work with you when you were director of the Budget Committee. As the staff director, you did a good job, and were effective in not just your command of the budget numbers, but also managing a team that focused on the Chairman's priorities at the time. So, I have seen you in operation. You know us. This committee is incredibly important in the process of the management side, as we have seen with the authorization bill we got through the committee, with the Chairman's help. So, that relationship you have with this place, understanding how we operate, I think is very important, on the management issues and beyond.

I have got two questions for you. One is with regard to security. I noticed, in your testimony, you talked about your interest in protecting, I think you said, staff and facilities. And, you know, sad that we live in a world of increasing danger to our Foreign Service staff and those in-country nationals and Americans. In recent testimony, Secretary Tillerson has noted the potential budget impact on the embassy security issues beyond 2018. So, my question to you is very simple. How do you intend to work with the Secretary and others to ensure that the Bureau of Diplomatic Security remains properly resourced and ensuring the protection of U.S. personnel, as you talked about, and facilities, in the context of budget cuts to the State Department's budget that have been proposed?

Mr. UELAND. Senator, thank you very much for that question. What I expect, if I have the privilege of being confirmed and working with the Assistant Secretary for Diplomatic Security, is to, every day, be reviewing our security posture and the support that we provide for security across all fronts at all our posts around the world, including seeking, in conversations with Congress, inside the executive branch, with the OMB, and others, that there be an appropriate amount of resources dedicated to security, and then expend it properly for security on behalf of our personnel. Security and safety will be one of my constant responsibilities that I will expend significant time focused on and advocating for appropriate resources in order to ensure that our Foreign Service Officers and our personnel deployed around the world are in facilities that are safe, are able to safely execute their duties, and have the security for themselves and, as appropriate, for their families and loved ones, is something that is going to be a critical calling that I will work to follow through on, if I have an opportunity to be confirmed.

Senator PORTMAN. I think that is important. And I was glad to hear you talk about it in your testimony. And, you know, we—again, the morale question came up earlier. I think that is one of the things that people are concerned about, is even their physical security. And knowing that you are behind them, I think, will be very important.

You and I talked a lot about the Global Engagement Center when we met, in the context of this nomination, and I told you my concern about State Department not seeking the funding to be able to effectively push back against authoritarian regimes around the world who are using disinformation and propaganda more, meddling here in our own country, but also in fledgling democracies around the world. And you gave me your commitment, in those meetings, that you wanted to focus on that issue, as well. And I noted that Secretary Tillerson did ask for the funding from the Department of Defense recently that we had authorized here in this body, and I was really pleased to see that. And I appreciate Deputy Secretary Sullivan reaching out to me in the last few days, in fact, about this issue, and ensuring that, you know, they have a commitment to getting the GEC stood up properly, both with regard to counternarrative on terrorism, ISIS, but also with regard to pushing back on disinformation. Can you make a commitment today to us that you will indeed continue that focus of making sure that the Global Engagement Center works effectively to push back and provide adequate resources for that?

Mr. UELAND. Senator, absolutely. To your point, we did have a good conversation on this. I believe the mission of the Global Engagement Center is critically important to advocating the United States point of view against both nonstate and state actor propaganda and agitation against our way of life and the values that we represent. So, no question that, if I have the privilege to be confirmed, be working to seek to, in any way that my portfolio interacts or supports the Global Engagement Center, in ensuring that we are robustly acting through the Global Engagement Center, as well as across a wide variety of platforms throughout the Government, on behalf of the expressions of our values, and pointing out some of the challenges that these other values being advocated for truly present to the world.

Senator PORTMAN. Well, thank you. My time is expired. I just—I know it is very important to this committee. Senator Murphy and I did have this legislation that is now in law, and we want to be sure it is properly implemented. Every day, there is a headline about some other aspect of disinformation. So, we appreciate your focus on that.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. UELAND. Thank you, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Shaheen.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, Mr. Ueland, for being willing to be considered for this post, and for taking the time to meet with me and other members of this committee.

I want to follow up on your last line of discussion with Senator Cardin, because I want to make sure I understood very clearly what you committed to.

I am a member of the SFOPS Subcommittee of Appropriations, and so I voted for the 51.2 billion in funding for the State Department, which, as you know, is significantly more than the proposal submitted by the President and the administration. And I understood you to say that, if you are confirmed, that you will work to protect this budget and make sure that the expenditures are made as Congress directed. Did I understand that correctly?

Mr. UELAND. Senator, in relation to the question—again, thank you very much for your time and our conversation—yes, if statute is brought into law, enacted and signed by the President, my responsibility—our Budget Office, Comptroller's Office responsibility—is to ensure that those monies do flow, as called for by statute. So, to the extent that the President, the administration, and the legislative branch have agreed upon appropriate funding, both at an overall level as well as what goes on in accounts and sub-accounts, and the money is to flow, the money shall flow.

Senator SHAHEEN. I think it is important to raise this, because there have been some suggestions and concerns raised about the administration using impoundment to actually not spend monies that have been appropriated. I know that, in our office, we have raised, with several departments within State government—or within Federal Government, concerns about money that had been appropriated and had not been spent and—in order to try and urge that spending. But, again, you are putting to rest concerns that, when you are at the State Department, that you will not use impoundment as a way to prevent the spending that has been directed by Congress from getting done. Do I understand you correctly?

Mr. UELAND. Senator thank you for that question, as well.

During the preparation process for this entire confirmation, an explanation of the responsibilities of the Deputy—I am sorry—Under Secretary of State for Management and all the bureaus and offices for which I would be responsible, no one has ever raised with me, inside the administration, anything in relation to impoundment. There is a statutory construct about impoundment, as we all know, in the Budget Act, which talks about two different ways monies can be looked at by an executive branch as it goes about evaluating whether or not, and how best, to move resources forward—funded resources forward. As well, every year, as you know, as a member of the Appropriations Committee, the Appropriations Committee and the executive branch figure out ways, at times, move resources around, pull monies back, reprioritize as it goes through the spending conversation, and again, jointly agree as to how monies should be spent. So, I am not aware of any calling, responsibility, or demand that I am going to be impounding money.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you.

Mr. UELAND. Last point, Senator, if I may. That sort of question, implementation of, might fall in my lane. Again, I have not been told any of that. But, the interpretation of the Constitution and the impoundment power and all that, that is not in the Under Secretary of State for Management's responsibilities.

Senator SHAHEEN. It is my understanding that the Department of State is the only agency now within the Federal Government that has a self-imposed hiring freeze after the administration's freeze was rescinded. Is that your understanding? And do you think that is a sound personnel and management decision, given the number of crises we have around the world and the continued concern about morale within the Department?

Mr. UELAND. Senator, thank you for that question.

I am not aware of the unfolding of the freeze policy in relation to other departments and agencies. In relation to the Department of State, yes, the freeze does continue. The Secretary has a variety of powers to address the issue while this reorganization conversation continues internally. And the budget conversation, appropriations conversation for resources, will continue with the Congress. My understanding is, he has exercised that power in relation to a variety of circumstances that have been presented to him.

And, in terms of staffing, appointments, nominations, and all that, I believe that the Secretary and the Department continues to work through recommendations for potential nominees, ultimately to the Senate and to this committee. Just sent a number of nominees to Congress last week, to the Senate last week. The Deputy Secretary of State addressed this issue at his townhall last month in the Department, saying that approximately 60 percent of confirmable positions either have a nominee, would have a nominee, or have individuals under consideration for them. So, the Department, as I understand it, its leadership, based on public reports, is focusing on working through the system and providing nominees to the Senate for advice and consent and review.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Barrasso.

Senator BARRASSO. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Congratulations, and I have great confidence in your ability to do this job, and I am delighted that the President has chosen to nominate you. Terrific.

Mr. UELAND. Thank you, Senator.

Senator BARRASSO. You know, in Wyoming, we have a veteran memorial. It is located on F.E. Warren Air Force Base. It honors 48 U.S. soldiers that were massacred in the Philippines during the Philippine-American War. This memorial displays the bells that the Filipino insurgents used to signal the attack on our U.S. troops. Recently, the U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines publicly pledged to move the bells from this memorial to the Philippines. The—during the confirmation process for Secretary Tillerson—I had asked him about this, and he stated, “The Bells of Balangiga are an important war memorial that holds real significance for many Americans, especially our veterans.” Secretary Tillerson assured me that he would support an inclusive process with the U.S. Department of Defense to ensure that Congress is fully informed and the views of local communities and veterans are fully respected when evaluating the management of war memorials.

So, last week, I sent a letter to the President, along with Senator Enzi and Representative Cheney, and to Secretary Tillerson, as

well. And, Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that this letter to the President be included in the record.

[The information referred to above is located at the end of this transcript on pages 615-16.]

Senator BARRASSO. So, we sent a letter to the President and to Secretary Tillerson raising concerns about the U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines pledging to dismantle the Wyoming War Memorial. In Wyoming, we have strong tradition of never forgetting the sacrifices of our brave men and women. So, the letter asks the President to direct the Department of Defense and the Department of State to cease any efforts to deconstruct existing war and veterans memorials.

So, my question to you is, if confirmed, will you raise this issue with this member of our Diplomatic Corps and share with him the importance of protecting our Nation's veterans memorials?

Mr. UELAND. Senator, thank you very much for the question.

And this story is incredibly inspiring, and a very significant aspect to your point of our World War II history and the work of our soldiers during that conflict. I do pledge that, if I have the opportunity to serve as Under Secretary of Management, as confirmed—if confirmed, that I will do everything I am capable of to bring this information forward—I associate myself with the comments of the Secretary during his confirmation hearing on this matter—and provide all the appropriate information that the Under Secretary of State of Management can provide in relation to this, because it is an important issue—I think, not just for you, but, again, for veterans across our country.

Senator BARRASSO. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Kaine.

Senator Kaine. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And, Mr. Ueland, congratulations on the nomination.

Mr. UELAND. Thank you, sir.

Senator Kaine. I want to ask you a couple of questions in the embassy security space. You talked about that as a key priority, should you be confirmed. You mentioned the construction of the facility in Virginia that is underway, and look forward to working on that with you. There was an Accountability Review Board that was done at the State Department in the aftermath of the loss of life at Benghazi, that horrible attack. There were 29 recommendations that were made that the State Department should follow, going forward, to reduce the chance of it happening again. There are three recommendations that are not yet closed out. Twenty-six have been closed out and implemented. The three that have not been are all dealing with embassy security issues: actual improvements to physical facilities, full training of the additional marine security guards called for in the ARB report. This will be a responsibility, as you indicate, that you will tackle, and I have two concerns. One, I am concerned about the budgetary issues that have been raised before, should there be a significant reduction in budgetary resources to State, as proposed in the President's budget, what that would do to the ability to deal with the embassy security questions. And sec-

ond, there is an Assistant Secretary for Embassies—Assistant Secretary for Security.

Mr. UELAND. Yes, sir.

Senator KAINE. As far as I know, there has not been a nomination forwarded to the Senate on that position. I wonder if you could address both the budgetary issues and your commitment to making sure we are spending appropriately on these security issues, and, second, do you have any idea or information about when the State Department is intending—I am sorry—when the administration is intending to forward us a nomination on the embassy security position?

Mr. UELAND. Senator, thank you for the question, and I appreciate your raising it, very much.

To your point, as I testified and in previous answers have indicated that I will be focusing a significant amount of time on security matters. And, as for resources, as discussed earlier, I expect that I will be spending significant amount of time understanding the need and advocating in behalf of appropriate resource levels, significant resource levels, on behalf of diplomatic security efforts for our 275 posts around the world.

To your point, we have about 33 of those posts that are high-risk, high-threat. We have an internal validation process for our presence and reviewing where we are and our security needs as we go through a regular look at where we are deployed. And decisions about security are very important and flow through a variety of decisionmaking methodologies that are all part of the responsibility of the Under Secretary for Management. So, in addition to resources, ensuring that processes are going to be followed properly and aggressively are also going to be part of my work.

In terms of the Acting Assistant Secretary, my understanding is, he has been at the Department of State in the Foreign Service since 1987, that he has served as the assistant to the Assistant Secretary of State prior, as well as running the HRHT operation in the past. So, I believe, based on what I have read, that I am very confident in the Assistant Secretary—Acting Assistant Secretary right now. But, I do know that—if I have the privilege to be confirmed, that I will be diving in to examine the leadership, but I have no information on where the administration stands, in terms of a potential nominee. I expect that, if confirmed, I will learn quite a bit very quickly.

Senator KAINE. I would want to have a followup conversation about that. I appreciate what you have said about an—about the Acting. And I am glad you mentioned that, because sometimes, you know, we act as if a—if there is a—there has not been a nomination, it looks like nobody's doing the job. And we have plenty of Actings, and many of our Actings do very well. However, there is also a degree of uncertainty about an Acting. It sends a message, if you do not fill a position. You know, we had Acting Administrators of the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Service for 6 and a half years. It is only the largest line item in the Federal budget. That sends a signal that Medicaid and Medicare was not that important. And, similarly, if there is not a nominee forwarded to the committee on this important security position, it kinds of sends—it sends a signal, in addition—the person doing the job as an Act-

ing might be fine, but it sends a signal that it is not a priority, and it should be. I would love to follow up on that.

Mr. UELAND. Yes, sir.

Senator KAINE. When I tour, as a member of this committee, and I go to embassies abroad, I always sit down and have coffee with first- and second-tour FSOs. And I do not let the Ambassador come. And I ask them this question, "You have been, you know, picked for this wonderful opportunity that is very, very hard to get. What is going to make you decide whether to make it a career or depart early?" And I am always struck by how often the decision points are kind of management issues, like, "I had to be intensely vetted for the security to get this job, but then to requisition a pencil, they treat me like I am a potential felon," you know, "in order to get an office supply." And so, I may want to come and just offer some insights on some of these management issues that affect the morale of people who are doing great jobs or—around the world. And I would look forward to that discussion.

Mr. UELAND. Senator, I would welcome that very much. And the internal process is—for those of you who have reviewed the June report, points to constant examples, anecdotally, along those lines. I would love to follow up and be part of a continuing partnership on this matter, going forward.

Senator KAINE. All right. Thanks so much.

Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. UELAND. Thanks, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Murphy.

Senator MURPHY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Congratulations on your nomination. The Chairman referenced the morale issue at the Department today. And I think it is difficult to overestimate a morale crisis at the Department of State today. I think we are at the lowest point in the modern history of the State Department. We have had scores of senior diplomats leave over the last 6 months. People that come back from visiting our embassies in the field tell me that there are even more mid-level and junior staffers who are planning on leaving. And it is not hard to understand why. They perceive this administration and this Secretary of State to be openly advocating for a fairly dramatic winnowing of authorities at the Department of State, a lack of interest in democracy promotion and human rights advancement. But, it is also because of some very specific personnel policies that have been applied to the Department of State with an enthusiasm that does not exist in other departments. The hiring freeze, for instance, which had, at first, applied to almost all government agencies, now still specifically targets the State Department. The freeze on promotions and the freeze on lateral moves within the Department is sending a pretty clear signal to people who are there that they maybe should look other places rather than make that long-term career decision that Senator Kaine referenced.

And so, you are going to be inheriting a responsibility for staff management at a time when lots of your most important and most valuable staff are getting a signal that they should maybe find a career somewhere else.

In your preparation for this job and for this hearing, can you tell us what you have learned about the plans to continue the hiring

freeze, the freeze on promotions, and the freeze on lateral moves? Can you give us any idea for when those practices will end? Because if they do not end soon, I fear that you are going to have a real vacuum of experienced personnel on your hands, sooner rather than later.

Mr. UELAND. Senator, thank you very much for that question.

In my preparation for the confirmation process, my nomination, and in preparation for this hearing, I have been given no explanation, nor has there any conversation, about a plan in relation to personnel. So, if I have the privilege to be confirmed, learning what, if any, plan might be in relation to personnel will be part of the core calling. Clearly, in the Under Secretary of State for Management's portfolio, human resources is a significant aspect of the responsibility that I have and the work that we engage in.

As I understand things, though, more generally, Senator, from the Secretary and the Deputy Secretary as they have worked through this reorganization process, one of things they have emphasized repeatedly is that there are no predetermined outcomes. And I think they have been true to that as they go about evaluating what employees point out to them as potential opportunities for more successfully prosecuting our foreign policy here that—around the world on behalf of the United States. As I understand it, they have been very clear, repeatedly. They have an open mind about how better to do the job of representing our values and our democracy around the world. And so, I take that declaration at its word. And if I am confirmed, I expect not only to learn more about, and participate in, the reorganization plan, but then to very robustly engage with Congress to explain the thinking of the Department's leadership, its goals, its objectives, and be in cooperation with this committee, as well as its peer committee in the House, in relation to the authorization bill, appropriations bill, as it works through the process.

So, I expect that there is going to be a very engaged back-and-forth.

Senator MURPHY. I think you need to explain it to us, but, I think, more importantly, you are going to need to explain it to the people that work for you, who right now are mystified as to why the State Department seems targeted by these policies in a way that almost no other agency is targeted by them.

Let me ask one more question.

Mr. UELAND. Yes, sir.

Senator MURPHY. You are the third senior-level nominee to tell this committee that the State Department is going to consult with Congress on the reorganization. We have gotten plenty of promises on consultation, and no consultation. We just passed a State Department appropriations bill in which we just simply guessed at what the State Department would look like. The Deputy Secretary has still not submitted written answers to questions, to this committee, relevant to his confirmation hearing.

So, put a little bit more flesh on the bones. When you say that you are going to consult with Congress, you are saying they same thing that everybody else has, and yet no one has consulted with us. So, what do you mean by that? What is the form of the consultation going to take? When can we expect it? Will we see a plan

before it is announced? Will we not see a plan before it is announced? Give us a little bit of detail.

Mr. UELAND. Thank you very much for the question, Senator.

And at least as I interpret my obligation for consultation, in relation to your question, is that I would be expending a fair amount of shoe leather and time coming to the Hill to explain, as I mentioned earlier, the rationale, the ideas, the potentialities, the objectives, the goals of whatever reorganization recommendations that the Secretary and the Deputy Secretary, as a result of all this feedback, ultimately provide. So, in any way that I am able to, at the counsel and direction of the Secretary, and in the counsel of the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, coming to the Hill to explain where matters stand, where the leadership is intending to go, and what role, if any, I play in that, that is the flesh on the bones of my commitment.

Senator MURPHY. Will we see it before it is implemented?

Mr. UELAND. Senator, I have not been told much about any of that. If I can find an answer through this process, I am happy to provide that to you.

Senator MURPHY. Thank you, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Merkley.

Senator MERKLEY. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And appreciate your bringing up cybersecurity in your initial remarks. Certainly, we have been very concerned about the—both the commercial hacking, the governmental hacking that has occurred by foreign nations and foreign forces, including Russia and North Korea. Even the NSA has been hacked. I was surprised, therefore, that the Special Representative for Cybersecurity was on the list to be eliminated by the State Department. Why would that be eliminated? And, when you say that you are concerned about cybersecurity, how does that translate to a management initiative?

Mr. UELAND. Thank you very much for the question, Senator.

In relation to the elimination of the cybersecurity, I am not—been briefed on any of that, but I am happy, again, through this process, to try to elicit what information I can in relation to that.

For the responsibilities that the Under Secretary of State for Management has, including information technology, there are a variety of initiatives already underway in our information technology area to address questions of cybersecurity, including a risk officer being identified, a joint operating committee being established, and more resources being put towards the question of cybersecurity, both as nominal dollars as well as a percentage of our IT spend. I expect that, if I have the opportunity to be confirmed and working with the CIO to not only reinforce those efforts, but to elicit from them additional recommendations to continue to harden and defend the Department, which suffers millions of efforts every year on the cyber front to attack and penetrate our defenses, in an effort to enhance the stability and protection of the IT platform for all the employees, we have about—a little over a hundred-thousand points of contact, I guess is the best way to put it, computers hooked up to our network. And so, ensuring that all our employees are able to interact with each other on a platform that is stable and secure

is going to be something that I—as I mentioned in my prepared statement, I want to spend a fair amount of time on.

Finally, Senator, there is the potentiality of partnering with the private sector to elicit best practices and work from them that might benefit the Department of State and across the Government throughout all our platforms. Hopefully, there is the ability to also seek out and work in cooperation with the private sector, as well, to assist in this effort.

So, I look forward to, if I am confirmed, diving in on this, as well, inside the Department of State.

Senator MERKLEY. Well, I certainly encourage that, because a hundred-thousand points of contact is hundred point—a hundred-thousand points of vulnerability, and privacy, confidentiality is so important to diplomatic conversations.

My colleague mentioned the freeze on personnel, the—and you and I talked about the hiring of eligible family members, educational fellowships, also of Civil Service promotions. And as you answered him, I did not hear your opinion. What opinion are you bringing to this? Is it time to end this freeze in the State Department?

Mr. UELAND. Senator, thank you very much for that question, as well.

In terms of my opinion, I do not have a fully formed view on the issue. I am aware of a lot of feedback from employees, to your point, expressed by members through a variety of private meetings, as well as feedback that I have read and media reports in relation to this. And so, if I have the opportunity to be confirmed, I expect that I will be learning more about why matters stand as they currently do, and potential plans for addressing this in the future. Again, to my earlier conversation, in my conversation with you, the Secretary does have ability to work through specific issues on personnel, even in relation to the freeze, has done so, and I expect would continue to, but, if I am confirmed, be diving into this to examine where matters stand, to see if I have an independent opinion and what the opinion of the Department is that ultimately, in conversation with you, working through this matter with the committee and the Appropriations Committee as well.

Senator MERKLEY. These kinds of, kind of, basic pieces have a huge impact on the retention of talent, and morale, and the capability of the Department.

But, moving on to two specific questions, in the half-minute left. Do you support transferring the consular functions out of the State Department to Homeland Security? And, similarly, do you support transferring the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration to Homeland Security?

Mr. UELAND. I do not, sir. And I am not aware, during the preparation of this process, of any plans along those lines. I have read a lot of media reports, a lot of speculation, but nobody has told me that that is a plan, going forward.

Senator MERKLEY. When you say “I do not,” you would like to see those stay in the State Department.

Mr. UELAND. Yes, sir. I think they are essential aspects of our foreign policy and our diplomacy. Those are some of the most significant interactions foreign nationals have with our United States

Government. And it seems to me, at least as an undereducated amateur from the outside, that it is a natural marriage that they reside in the Department of State and that our consular officers and our Bureau of Consular Affairs conduct this work in conjunction with and cooperation with the Department of Homeland Security, Department of Justice, our intelligence community, and law enforcement officials. Because, of course, visa decisions are also national security decisions, safety on behalf of the American people, but the Department of State, to me at least, seems to be the right place for these sorts of conversations to occur every day.

Senator MERKLEY. I am delighted to hear that. I certainly support keeping them in the State Department. Thank you.

Mr. UELAND. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Coons.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Chairman Corker, Ranking Member Cardin.

Thank you, Mr. Ueland, for your service. Congratulations on your nomination. I regret my schedule did not allow us time to meet individually before this, but I hope we get a chance to work more closely together, in the event you are confirmed.

And I am also appreciative that someone with your seasoning, your service here in the Senate will be in a fairly senior role in the State Department, if confirmed, because, as you have heard from a whole series of my colleagues, there is real concern about communication with Congress about the redesign. So, if confirmed, you will have a central role in the implementation of the redesign of the State Department, and I just wanted to drill down a number of the broader questions I wanted to ask about consultation with the FSO community and morale have been asked by colleagues, and I agree. I have recently visited four embassies in West Africa, and heard many of the same themes. Earlier in the year, I was in South Asia. I heard many of the same themes.

So, let me ask you about two specific programs. In meetings with Foreign Service Officers, I have heard repeatedly about problems created by the freeze and eligible family members being hired. Often, Foreign Service Officers have spouses with advanced degrees or with a deep experience in business or management, or in operations, or in State, who could be assisting our efforts overseas, but the State Department chose to freeze the program as part of the broader freeze Senator Murphy was referencing. If confirmed, will you work with this committee to explore ways to lift the hiring freeze for eligible family members and to analyze and understand the value that eligible family members of Foreign Service Officers posted overseas have for our embassies, not just for the work/life balance and morale of Foreign Service Officers, but for the reach and effectiveness of the foreign post?

Mr. UELAND. Senator, thank you very much for that question.

And, to your point, the EFM program appears to be an extremely valuable addition to all the work that our Foreign Service Officers do around the world. To the earlier conversation with other Senators in relation to the Secretary's discretion in reacting to the freeze when it comes to the EFM program, many waivers have been granted because of the value and importance of this program. So, I do expect that, if I have the opportunity to serve, after con-

firmation, to be engaged in a very good effort to fully understand both the EFM as well as the hiring freeze, potential plans, if any, that will be briefed to me if I have the privilege of serving, and then coming and discussing with Congress the plan and approach in relation to the EFM program.

Senator COONS. Thank you. Let me ask one other that is in the same vein about President Management Fellows. Some of our most talented staff have come from the ranks of former Presidential Management Fellows. And I understand the State Department suspended hiring from the finalist pool, even to the extent of freezing the onboarding process for 35 Fellows who had already received appointments for positions within the Department. Do you think the Department should be honoring its agreements with these highly skilled and distinguished Fellows? And, if confirmed, would you work to do so? And, more importantly, frankly, will you commit to working with this committee to make sure that the State Department is as aligned as successfully as possible with recruiting and retaining high-skilled and high-performance staff?

Mr. UELAND. Well, thank you for that question, as well.

And in relation to PMFs, if confirmed, to your point, a portfolio underneath the Under Secretary of Management does have interaction with this program. And I expect that I will have the opportunity to understand fully matters as they stand, and, in relation to the earlier question as well, what, if any, plans for the future are.

To your point more broadly about recruiting talent, as you know, the Secretary spoke to this issue, in very broad terms, last month, where he observed the need for the Department to look far and wide for extremely talented and highly capable individuals to come to the Department of State and serve on behalf of our foreign policy. So, I expect that, again, my portfolio will work very hard to support that goal and that objective, and I expect, as well, that the Department, under the Secretary, will be working with Congress for ways—to find ways, I should say, to support that work that he set out for all of us to do inside the Department of State.

Senator COONS. Well, thank you, Mr. Ueland. I just—I would close by imparting to you, as my colleague Chris Murphy did, I think there are five members of this committee that are also on the Appropriations Subcommittee for State and Foreign Ops. And it is September. I understand there is a very full menu of foreign policy challenges, even crises, around the world that demand the full engagement of the senior ranks of the State Department. But, I was deeply frustrated. We concluded our appropriations process without really having a sense of the direction of this redesign. So, I hope you will convey a sense of urgency about both the consultation and the forward progress. I hope to be a good partner in pursuing a balanced and appropriate and a responsible effort at trimming some of the costs but retaining the vast majority of the personnel and the programs of the State Department. At a time when we need effective diplomacy more than ever, I was struck at how long it has taken to get this process underway. And my hunch is that your confirmation might well contribute to advancing it, and certainly to advancing communications with the Senate.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your patience.

Thank you, Mr. Ueland.

Mr. UELAND. Thank you, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

With that, we are going to move to the second panel. The record will remain open for questions until the close of business on Thursday. If you could promptly respond to those, it would be greatly appreciated. Thank you for willingness to serve in this capacity.

Senator CARDIN. Mr. Chairman, if I could, just for the record. I—diversity in the Department is extremely important, not—for many, many reasons, not the least of which is our effectiveness in this globally, so I will be asking you some questions for the record as it relates to the Pinkering and Rangel Fellows and as to your commitment on maintaining and expanding the diversity within the Department.

Mr. UELAND. Thank you, Senator. I will look forward to answering any and all written questions.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Absolutely.

So, the second panel, if you would come up, we would appreciate it.

Okay. Today on the second panel, we have The Honorable John Bass to be Ambassador Afghanistan. Mr. Bass is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, a Class of Minister-Counselor, has served in the—as an American diplomat since 1988. He is currently Ambassador to the Republic of Turkey, a position he has held since 2014. He has also served as Ambassador to the Republic of Georgia from 2009 to 2012.

We thank you for your willingness to—as we discussed yesterday, to serve in this prospective capacity. And we thank you for being here today.

Next, we have Mr. Justin Siberell. Is that pronounced correctly?

Mr. SIBERELL. Yes, it is.

The Chairman:—to be Ambassador to Bahrain. Mr. Siberell, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, has served as an American diplomat since 1993. He has served as the Acting Coordinator and the Principal Deputy Coordinator for Counterterrorism at the State Department. He has also served at six postings in the Middle East, and speaks Arabic and Spanish.

Thank you for your willingness to serve.

And lastly, we have Mr. Steven Dowd to be U.S. Director of the African Development Bank. Mr. Dowd co-founded Ag Source, LLC, a global agricultural logistics, transportation, and finance company. His prior experience also includes overseeing food aid, operations, and leading port infrastructure projects in Africa.

Thank you for doing that, and for your willingness to serve.

We will now turn to the nominees. And if you—each of you could keep your comments to 5 minutes or so, any written documents you want to have entered into the record, we will do so, without objection.

And, with that, Ambassador Bass.

STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN R. BASS, OF NEW YORK, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF AFGHANISTAN

Ambassador BASS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Cardin, members of the committee. It is an honor to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be the next U.S. Ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. It would be an honor to again represent our great Nation overseas, and I want to thank the President and Secretary Tillerson for the opportunity to do so. I look forward, if confirmed, to working closely with all of you to advance our interests in Afghanistan, and I will welcome frequent opportunities, as I have during my past two ambassadorships, to consult with you.

I am grateful to be joined today by my wife, Holly, a career diplomat who also will serve in Kabul, as well as my sister, Kristin Bass. And I would like to also recognize and thank some colleagues, some of who are here today, some of who are absent, who have become family during service together in challenging locations.

I have spent much of the past decade focused on curbing threats that terrorists pose to our country and our allies, and I have had the privilege to support my colleagues in Kabul, through diplomacy, to broaden our coalition and sustain our coalition there. And, if confirmed, I will focus on achieving the results we all seek in Afghanistan: a political settlement and sufficient government capacity to prevent its use anew as a platform from which terrorists can strike the homeland.

I know many of you, and many of our fellow Americans, are questioning why the United States must continue to devote so many resources to this problem and to this country. And I understand why they ask how it is we can afford this when we have such pressing needs at home. I believe, however, that we cannot afford not to sustain our efforts in Afghanistan. We do not have to guess at the consequences of choosing otherwise. We experienced them 16 years ago; and, over the past 3 years, after ISIS set up shop in under- or ungoverned spaces in Syria and Iraq, we have experienced the consequences there, as well. And, as the President has made clear, we cannot afford to shy away from tackling the challenges that these terrorist organizations pose to us, head-on.

I am not naive, obviously, 16 years into this, about the scale and complexity of the challenges we face. Fortunately, we have a bit more to work with than in the past. We have a government that wants our help, increasingly listens to our advice, and is making some progress building a government that can provide security to most Afghans. It sounds like a low bar, but if you think about where Afghans started 16 years ago, they have made some important strides forward in some key areas, including health and education. It is a different country today, and, importantly, President Ghani, Chief Executive Abdullah, and the Government are starting to make some important progress curbing corruption, I think, hav-

ing made more significant progress in this area in the past year than in the previous 15 years combined.

In seeking to fulfill my mandate, I will follow the new strategy approved by the President. The goal here is a sustainable political outcome that prevents terrorists from using Afghanistan as a safe haven. We have to make clear to the Taliban that it cannot outlast us on the battlefield, and that the only path forward for them is through a negotiated political settlement.

As the President emphasized, our strategy requires a whole-of-government effort. Diplomacy and focused development efforts will be instrumental to success. And a key element of our diplomacy, obviously, focuses beyond Afghanistan's borders. And I can assure you that, if confirmed, I will work closely with my colleague, Ambassador Hale, in Islamabad to improve Afghanistan and Pakistan's bilateral relationship, which fuels some of the challenges we face in Afghanistan.

Now, obviously, success cannot, will not, be driven primarily by the efforts and sacrifices of Americans. We will sustain the support of our allies and partners. In some cases, we will be asking them to do more as we go forward. I think it is important to remember and to acknowledge that our approach should not be misunderstood as a desire to occupy or remain in Afghanistan against the will of its people. We respect Afghans' fierce independence. We do not seek a permanent military base or bases there, or a presence in Afghanistan that would threaten its neighbors. And I think that is an important piece of the calculation as we continue to reinforce the diplomatic efforts with other neighbors.

It is clear to us that the Afghan Government has other large obligations to fulfill. We cannot build Afghanistan for Afghans. They have to do it themselves. But, we are certainly going to work with them and encourage reforms that enables Afghanistan to be more self-sufficient over time. Government welcomes this approach. We saw, after the strategy was announced, that Chief Executive Abdullah declared that, "Nation-building is our job." And I will be working closely, if confirmed, with him, with President Ghani, to help them undertake that important work.

Making progress has been hard. It will undoubtedly continue to be hard. But, I believe it is worth the effort and the investments, because the alternatives all lead to worst outcomes for the United States.

And I would just note, in closing, one of the first priorities of every U.S. Ambassador today is to think first of the safety and security of the people who work for them, who serve beside them. Determining how best to achieve our key objectives, while also protecting our people, will be foremost in my mind every day. And, if confirmed, I will ensure that I do everything possible to spend whatever level of funding we have for Afghanistan wisely.

In closing, I want to thank this committee for its support to the vital work of the U.S. mission in Afghanistan. And, as I noted at the outset, if confirmed, I would welcome a candid, ongoing dialogue with you about the challenges and opportunities we face.

Thank you again very much for the opportunity to appear before, and I look forward to your questions.

[Ambassador Bass's prepared statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOHN R. BASS

Mr. Chairman, Senator Cardin, members of the committee—thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be the next U.S. Ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. It would be an honor to again represent our great nation overseas, and I want to thank the President and Secretary Tillerson for the opportunity to do so. I look forward, if confirmed, to working closely with you to advance America's interests in Afghanistan. I will welcome frequent opportunities to consult with you.

I am grateful to be joined today by my wife Holly, a career diplomat who also will serve in Kabul, and my sister, Kristin Bass. I would like to recognize and thank colleagues here today who became family during our service together in Baghdad and other challenging locations. All of us who serve in harm's way can only succeed with the support of our family and friends.

During a career devoted to serving the nation, I have spent much of the past decade focused on curbing threats terrorists pose to our country and allies. I have supported through diplomacy our efforts in Afghanistan. As U.S. Ambassador to Turkey and Georgia, I mobilized and sustained additional military and financial contributions to support the International Security Assistance Force and its successor. If confirmed, I expect to apply extensive experience leveraging our bilateral and multilateral partnerships to achieve the results we all seek in Afghanistan—a political settlement and sufficient government capacity to prevent its use anew as a platform from which terrorists can strike our Homeland.

I know many of you, and many of our fellow Americans, are questioning why the United States must continue to devote so many resources to supporting the people and Government of Afghanistan. I understand why they ask: can we afford these big expenditures at a time when we have so many pressing needs here at home? I understand why many Americans carry these sentiments.

I believe the short answer, though, is that we cannot afford not to sustain our efforts in Afghanistan. As a nation, we cannot afford the increased risks and peril that would come from a wholesale departure or rapid reduction in our footprint in Afghanistan.

We don't have to guess at the consequences from that policy choice. We experienced those consequences 16 years ago. And on a smaller but no less lethal scale, we have experienced the consequences that followed when ISIS set up shop in ungoverned spaces in Syria and Iraq, plotting, directing, and inspiring terrorist attacks against the United States and many of our friends and allies. We also know ISIS has used these spaces to conduct research on how to conduct mass casualty attacks using chemical weapons and to evade detection equipment—just as an al-Qai'da affiliate did in Yemen seven years ago.

As the President made clear in his address to the nation on August 21, we cannot—and will not—shy away from tackling these challenges head-on. The security and safety of our homeland and our fellow citizens demands it.

I'm not naive about the scale and complexity of the challenges we and our allies face in supporting the Afghan people and their government. Fortunately, we have more to work with now than 10 or 5 years ago—starting with a government, led by President Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah, that wants our help; increasingly listens to our advice; and is making progress building a reasonably effective government that can provide security and basic functions for most Afghans. That sounds like a low bar and modest results for our efforts. But if you think about where Afghans started 16 years ago, they have made important strides forward. In many key areas—health, education, access to news and information, governance—Afghanistan today is a different country. We have real achievements to build on. President Ghani and his government have made more progress curbing corruption in the past year than in the previous 15 years combined.

In seeking to fulfill my mandate, I will follow the new strategy approved by the President last month. The strategy accounts for both enduring challenges and new factors in Afghanistan and across South Asia. It directs us to tackle the root causes of the enduring conflict in Afghanistan—which include the safe havens the Taliban continues to enjoy in Pakistan, and the support it at times receives from other neighboring states—rather than simply treating the symptoms.

The goal of the new strategy is a sustainable political outcome that prevents the reestablishment of terrorist safe havens in Afghanistan. We will make clear to the Taliban that it cannot win or outlast us on the battlefield; the only path to peace and political legitimacy is through a negotiated political settlement. As you have heard in briefings on the new strategy, our support for the Afghan Government's efforts to combat Taliban violence and intimidation and resolve the conflict will be dictated by conditions on the ground—not by abstract deadlines. Through our ac-

tions, we will demonstrate to the Taliban that it cannot wait us out. We are signaling support to the Afghan public and the entire region that the United States is determined to create the conditions that enable a political settlement. Those settlement talks, if and when they come, must remain an Afghan-owned, Afghan-led process.

As the President emphasized, this strategy requires a whole-of-government effort. Diplomacy and focused efforts by our development professionals are instrumental to success. A key element of our diplomacy focuses beyond Afghanistan's borders. If confirmed, my first regional engagement priority, as directed by Washington, will be to work closely with Ambassador Hale in Islamabad to encourage and support improvements in Afghanistan and Pakistan's bilateral relationship. I intend to supplement this effort with equally focused work with my fellow ambassadors to ensure key regional countries with a stake in the region's stability—including India, Russia and China—are doing everything possible to achieve that shared objective. We must address and prevent the hedging among some regional actors that has empowered the Taliban and lengthened the conflict.

Success cannot—and will not—be driven primarily by the efforts and sacrifices of American soldiers, diplomats and taxpayers. There is a broad international military coalition led by NATO and a community of donor nations that have been essential partners in our common effort to stabilize Afghanistan. We will sustain the support from these partners and in many cases will look to them to do more.

This sustained commitment should in no way be misunderstood as a desire by the United States or our allies to occupy or remain in Afghanistan against the will of its people. We respect Afghans' fierce independence, which is reminiscent of Americans'. We do not seek any permanent military bases in their country—or a presence that would threaten Afghanistan's neighbors.

Success will depend fundamentally on the continued bravery and sacrifices of the Afghan security forces, and improved effectiveness of the national government. If confirmed, I will work closely with General Nicholson and the Pentagon's leadership to help the relevant Afghan ministries provide the logistical and materiel support essential to the success of their troops in the field.

The Afghan Government has large obligations to fulfill as well. As the President made clear, our commitment to Afghanistan does not mean we are in the business of nation-building. The Afghans must build their own nation. We cannot do it for them. But we will work with them to encourage the kinds of reforms that will enable Afghanistan to be more self-sufficient and less reliant on donor assistance over time. The Afghan Government welcomes this approach. Chief Executive Abdullah has recently declared: "Nation building is our job."

On August 23, two days after the President's address to the nation, President Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah joined our Charge and General Nicholson to launch a new set of initiatives—the Kabul Compact. This compact sets benchmarks for reforms, including anti-corruption reforms, across the Government. The Afghan Government has asked us to hold them accountable to these commitments; if confirmed, I will lead our efforts to do so. Our support for their reforms will help bolster the legitimacy of the Afghan Government. It will make their security forces more effective.

Another critical area for reform involves steps to improve the electoral process, avoid the conflict and discord we saw in the 2014 presidential election, and increase the legitimacy of the Government in the eyes of its citizens. Next year's parliamentary elections will be an important test of the Afghan Government's reform efforts and a bellweather for the presidential election in 2019. In addition to these reforms, we will continue to support efforts to ensure the ability of women to participate in the electoral process, both as voters and as candidates.

We also will continue to support the Afghan Government's efforts to continue to grow the licit economy and increase public revenues. As with reform and governance, this is properly the responsibility of the Afghan Government, not the American taxpayer. As it focuses on creating the legal framework and conditions to attract additional foreign investors and partners to develop the country's enormous resource potential, I will ensure we support American companies who see those opportunities—as we do in embassies around the world.

Making progress has been hard. It will continue to be hard. That does not mean it is not worth the effort—because all of the alternatives lead to worse outcomes for the United States.

The perilous times in which we live demand that every U.S. Ambassador think first of the safety and security of their people. That has been true for me over three difficult, dangerous years in Turkey, and it will be especially true in Afghanistan. Determining how best to achieve our key objectives while also protecting our people will be foremost in my mind, every day, if I am confirmed.

Like my fellow diplomats, I am also a taxpayer, and wasted resources frustrate me. If confirmed, I will do everything possible to ensure that the funds we spend in Afghanistan are used effectively and transparently.

In closing, I want to thank this committee for the support it has provided, and continues to provide, for the vital work of the U.S. Mission in Afghanistan. If confirmed, I would welcome a candid, ongoing dialogue with you about the challenges and opportunities we face. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.
Mr. Siberell.

STATEMENT OF JUSTIN HICKS SIBERELL, OF MARYLAND, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE KINGDOM OF BAHRAIN

Mr. SIBERELL. Chairman Corker, Ranking Member Cardin, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to the Kingdom of Bahrain.

I am extremely grateful to the President and to Secretary Tillerson for the confidence they have shown in me to this nomination. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with the Congress and with this committee to advance our Nation's vital interests with Bahrain.

I am privileged to be joined today by my family: my wife, Arnavaz, our son, Samuel, and daughter, Emmeline. Our youngest son, Benjamin, is in school today. Ours is a true Foreign Service family, with each of our children born during one of our assignments in the field: Sam in Tunisia, Emmie in Jordan, and Ben in the United Arab Emirates.

Mr. Chairman, the United States and Bahrain share a long-standing partnership based on common interests in regional security and the friendship of our two peoples. Since the 1940s, Bahrain has hosted the United States Navy, and is currently home to thousands of Americans attached to the U.S. Naval Central Command and the U.S. Fifth Fleet. The operational and logistical support that the Kingdom provides our military is essential to the success of our campaign against ISIS, and enables our Navy to lead a 31-country international coalition that counters piracy, drug trafficking, and terrorism across 2 and a half million square miles of ocean and seas.

The United States works closely with the Bahrain Defense Force to ensure Bahrain has the tools and capabilities to defend against external aggression in strength and cooperation with U.S. and other allied regional militaries.

Mr. Chairman, as you are aware, the administration recently notified the Congress of the approval of a number of possible defense sales that will address critical needs in the Bahrain Defense Force's air, land, and naval capabilities, including the sale of new F-16 aircraft and upgrades to previously purchased F-16s. These new military sales will provide Bahrain with reliable capability and increased interoperability with U.S. forces.

I look forward to the close cooperation with colleagues at the Department of Defense to continue to support Bahrain's armed forces to address shared threats. In this regard, we are committed to working together with Bahrain to ensure it is able to counter persistent threats from Iran, including Iran's training and supply of lethal aid to individuals and groups targeting the Government and security forces of Bahrain.

Success in confronting shared threats in the Gulf region rests, in large part, on the commitment of our close partners to work together towards inclusive and mutually supportive security arrangements. It is for this reason that the United States continues to encourage a rapid resolution to the ongoing dispute among the GCC states. If confirmed, I will work to support the efforts of Secretary Tillerson to assist the parties in resolving their differences.

Enhancing our security cooperation with Bahrain does not diminish the enduring emphasis we place on human rights issues. Indeed, our counterterrorism and military cooperation with Bahrain is paired with a clear understanding that Bahrain's own long-term stability and security depend on it achieving political reconciliation and upholding its commitments to universal human rights.

We continue to be concerned with government actions against nonviolent political and human rights actors, and will continue to urge the Government of Bahrain to take steps to ensure inclusive elections in 2018 and to advance reform efforts for the benefit of Bahrain's long-term security and our mutual interests in regional stability. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that we continue to have an open and honest dialogue with Bahrain on the full range of issues affecting our bilateral relationship, including human rights.

Increasing American exports and jobs for the American people is a top priority for me. The United States and Bahrain enjoy a strong economic partnership highlighted by the U.S.-Bahrain Free Trade Agreement. Since that agreement entered into force in 2006, bilateral U.S.-Bahrain trade has more than doubled, to \$1.7 billion annually. More than 180 U.S. companies do business in Bahrain, a number I am committed to grow, if given the opportunity.

Bahrain deserves some praise for its efforts to end human trafficking within its own borders by developing a national referral mechanism, promoting a national anti-trafficking strategy, investigating potential trafficking cases, and taking steps to amend elements of the sponsorship system that increases workers' vulnerability to forced labor and debt bondage. There is more that can be done, as is indicated in the State Department's Annual Trafficking-in-Persons Report, including proactive identification of potential forced-labor victims and increased prosecutions of forced-labor crimes. This issue is very important to me and to this administration, as I know it is to this committee.

Advancing our interests in Bahrain will be facilitated by the close bonds of friendship that have been developing over—have been developed over many decades with the Bahraini people, beginning more than 100 years ago through the founding of the American Mission Hospital, which continues to serve patients in Bahrain today.

Hundreds of Bahraini students come to the United States each year to attend U.S. colleges and universities, providing Bahrainis with a deeper understanding of American society and the American people. And more than 2,500 Bahrainis have participated in official cultural and academic exchanges over the several decades, including the Fulbright Program.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, ensuring the safety of the people who serve at Embassy Manama and the American citizen community resident in Bahrain will be my foremost priority, if confirmed as Ambassador to Bahrain. During my career in the Foreign Service, I have served across the Middle East, including in high-threat posts under persistent threat of terrorist attack. I understand the importance of prudent and proactive security measures to protect our personnel, as well as the need for close and open communication with the American citizen community to ensure their safety and security.

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today. It is a singular honor to have been nominated to serve as Ambassador to Bahrain.

I welcome any questions you may have for me. Thank you.

[Mr. Siberell's prepared statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JUSTIN SIBERELL

Chairman Corker, Ranking Member Cardin, members of the committee, Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to the Kingdom of Bahrain. I am extremely grateful to the President and to Secretary Tillerson for the confidence they have shown in me through this nomination. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with the Congress and with this committee to advance our nation's vital interests with Bahrain.

I am privileged to be joined today by my family—my wife Arnavaz, our son Samuel and daughter Emeline. Our youngest son, Benjamin, is in school today. Ours is a true Foreign Service family, with each of our children born during one of our assignments in the field—Sam in Tunisia, Emmie in Jordan, and Ben in the United Arab Emirates.

Mr. Chairman, the United States and Bahrain share a long-standing partnership based on common interests in regional security and the friendship of our two peoples. Since the 1940's, Bahrain has hosted the United States Navy and is currently home to thousands of Americans attached to U.S. Navy Central Command and the U.S. Fifth Fleet. The operational and logistical support that the Kingdom provides our military is essential to the success of our campaign against ISIS and enables our Navy to lead a 31-country international coalition that counters piracy, drug trafficking, and terrorism across 2.5 million square miles of ocean and seas.

The United States works closely with the Bahrain Defence Force to ensure Bahrain has the tools and capabilities to defend against external aggression and strengthen cooperation with U.S. and other allied regional militaries. Mr. Chairman, as you are aware, the administration recently notified the Congress of the approval of a number of possible defense sales that will address critical needs in the Bahrain Defence Force's air, land and naval capabilities, including the sale of new F-16 aircraft and upgrades to previously purchased F-16s. These new military sales will provide Bahrain with a reliable capability and increased interoperability with U.S. forces.

I look forward to close cooperation with colleagues at the Department of Defense to continue to support Bahrain's armed forces to address shared threats. In this regard, we are committed to working together with Bahrain to ensure it is able to counter persistent threats from Iran, including Iran's training and supply of lethal aid to individuals and groups targeting the Government and security forces of Bahrain.

Success in confronting shared threats in the Gulf region rests in large part on the commitment of our close partners to work together towards inclusive and mutually-supportive security arrangements. It is for this reason that the United States con-

tinues to encourage a rapid resolution to the ongoing dispute among the GCC states. If confirmed, I will work to support the efforts of Secretary Tillerson to assist the parties in resolving their differences.

Enhancing our security cooperation with Bahrain does not diminish the enduring emphasis we place on human rights issues. Indeed, our counterterrorism and military cooperation with Bahrain is paired with a clear understanding that Bahrain's own long-term stability and security depend on it achieving political reconciliation and upholding its commitments to universal human rights. We continue to be concerned with government actions against nonviolent political and human rights actors, and will continue to urge the Government of Bahrain to take steps to ensure inclusive elections in 2018 and to advance reform efforts for the benefit of Bahrain's long-term security and our mutual interests in regional stability. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that we continue to have an open and honest dialogue with Bahrain on the full range of issues affecting our bilateral relationship, including human rights.

Increasing American exports and jobs for the American people is a top priority for me. The United States and Bahrain enjoy a strong economic partnership, highlighted by the U.S.—Bahrain Free Trade Agreement. Since that agreement entered into force in 2006, bilateral U.S.—Bahrain trade has more than doubled to \$1.7 billion annually. More than 180 U.S. companies do business in Bahrain, a number I am committed to grow if given the opportunity.

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Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today. It is a singular honor to have been nominated to serve as Ambassador to Bahrain.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Thank you for your testimony.
Mr. Dowd.

**STATEMENT OF J. STEVEN DOWD, OF FLORIDA, NOMINEE TO
BE UNITED STATES DIRECTOR OF THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT
BANK FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS**

Mr. DOWD. Chairman Corker, Ranking Member Cardin, and distinguished members of the Foreign Relations Committee, it is a great honor to appear before you today as the nominee to serve as Executive Director of the African Development Bank.

For decades, I have worked in project finance, agribusiness, and logistics in developing countries. And, if confirmed, I will marshal all my professional experiences toward bettering the African Development Bank and furthering U.S. interests.

I would like to introduce my wife, Lillian, my life's inspiration, and our three children, Steven, Thomas, and Andrea. Lillian is an attorney who previously served as a Deputy Attorney General in Delaware. Lillian is profoundly committed to combating human trafficking and child stunting and malnutrition, a commitment I share. If confirmed, I will search for ways to make the Bank a forceful check on these twin scourges.

My first encounter with development economics was as a teen-aged merchant crewman delivering Food for Peace PL-480 grain cargoes to hungry nations. I watched as the desperately poor struggled to survive and made the most of the grain we delivered to them. Later, postgraduate studies at the Georgetown School of Foreign Service allowed me to deepen my knowledge of development economics in the context of global issues. Since then, I have worked in logistics and finance on private development projects around the world. Therefore, I believe I am well equipped to address the challenges facing the African Development Bank.

If confirmed, I would lead the effort to leverage the U.S. contribution to the Bank in order to ensure that its finance efforts are used to the best benefit for Africa, that they are consistent with U.S. policy interests there, and that American taxpayers get a good return for their money. I will strive to open Africa to American investment and know-how and facilitate U.S. companies doing business in Africa. I will also advocate for additional efforts to curb corruption and abuses of power that inhibit Africans to live longer, healthier, better lives.

Finally, if confirmed as Executive Director of the African Development Bank, I will work closely with the members of this committee and its staff, and with other Members of Congress, to perform my responsibilities as effectively as possible.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you for this opportunity to be—to appear before you and the other members of the committee. And I look forward to your questions.

[Mr. Dowd's prepared statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF J. STEVEN DOWD

Chairman Corker, Ranking Member Cardin, and distinguished members of the Foreign Relations Committee, it is a great honor to appear before you today as the nominee to serve as Executive Director of the African Development Bank. For decades, I have worked in project finance, agri-business and logistics in developing countries, and if confirmed, I will marshal all my professional experiences toward bettering the African Development Bank and furthering U.S. interests.

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Mr. Chairman, I thank you for this opportunity to appear before you and the other members of the committee, and I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. I am deferring to Senator Cardin.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And again, I thank all three of our nominees, and thank you for your public service, and thank your families.

Mr. Siberell, I would like to start with Bahrain. Secretary Tillerson said, "In Bahrain, the Government continued to question, detain, arrest Shi'ite clerics, community members, and opposition politicians, members of the Shi'ite community there, continue to report ongoing discrimination in government employment, education, and the justice system. Bahrain must stop discriminating against the Shi'ite communities." Secretary Tillerson. Are you prepared, if confirmed as Ambassador, that our mission in Bahrain will be open to the Shi'ite community be able to have an advocate on behalf of their concerns against the Bahrain Government?

Mr. SIBERELL. Senator, thank you very much for the question and for your interest in this particular issue. Those remarks are from the Secretary's release of the International Religious Freedom Report recently. And absolutely, to answer your question, my mission would remain open to all voices within the Bahraini political and civil society, as we have been. And I look forward to continuing that and being open to all voices.

Senator CARDIN. And I want it to be open to all voices, but the Shi'ite population has a particular urgent need.

Mr. SIBERELL. Understood. Yes, Senator.

Senator CARDIN. And you will keep this committee and me informed as to what you are doing in regards to that.

Mr. SIBERELL. I look forward to that opportunity, Senator, absolutely, yes.

Senator CARDIN. Mr. Dowd, can you just share with us your commitment in regards to the operations at the Bank or the member countries in fighting corruption, which is a major problem in that region?

Mr. DOWD. Thank you for the question, Senator.

Absolutely. You are correct that corruption is a scourge of the continent. It is pervasive. And I—although I am not onsite yet, and I do not really know what the Bank is currently doing in this regard, I will certainly advocate forcefully for the maximum control of corruption and malfeasance.

Senator CARDIN. I am going to be asking all three of you, in your—if confirmed—in your missions, to keep my staff informed as to your progress being made on behalf of good governance, human rights, anti-corruption, where you can all three play a major role.

Ambassador Bass, you and I had a chance to talk about the fact that you are not going to have a lasting peace in Afghanistan unless the Government is respected the rights of all the people of Afghanistan.

But, I want to ask you a particular question. I agree with your statement that we do not seek any permanent military bases in their country, referring to Afghanistan. Now, we have been there since 2001. Sixteen years might not be permanent, but it is starting to look like a permanent presence of American troops in Afghanistan. What is it going to take for us to be able to get our troops home? Do you really envision that your—during your term of Ambassador, assuming that you are confirmed, that we will be able to bring our troops home?

Ambassador BASS. Senator, thank you for articulating one of the key questions that we are all asking, and have been for a number of years.

It has been out of my lane to offer an assessment on the military side, in terms of where a tipping point will come. I do not think it is realistic to expect that—whether it is 2 years from now or 3 years from now, that we will have a much smaller military footprint.

Senator CARDIN. I agree with that assessment. It is a very honest response. How do you have credibility with this statement that we are not seeking a permanent military base in Afghanistan, when, upon your arrival, there will be more American troops arriving with you?

Ambassador BASS. I think the key aspect of that is what we are doing, and will be doing, which is primarily to support the Afghan Security Forces to get better over time at taking care of their own security needs. And if we are successful in doing that over time, there is less of a requirement for U.S. forces to be there. Easier said than done. As I said, this is going to be hard, and it is complicated. But, I think that is our road to a smaller footprint over time, hopefully through a negotiated political settlement. And it is through that settlement that I think we ensure that we do not have to have a permanent military presence there.

Senator CARDIN. And I think credibility is very important. And, as you said, “a smaller footprint over time” still gives me less comfort that we do not have a permanent presence in Afghanistan, of American troops. Something that I strongly believe is critically important for Afghans’ future, is that there is an end—a light at the end of the tunnel that we will be bringing our troops home from Afghanistan. And, quite frankly, I do not see that in the game plan that has been presented. It looks like a permanent U.S. presence.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Barrasso.

Senator BARRASSO. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador Bass, I appreciated you making the mention of corruption, because Afghanistan continues to experience corruption, really at all levels. Systemic corruption in Afghanistan, it is a major threat to U.S. objectives, I believe, in that country, to the point that the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan has uncovered terrible examples, as you know, of waste, of corruption, of fraud, in the way that reconstruction funds have been spent in Afghanistan. We talked about it here previously in this committee.

Last year, the Special Inspector General found, quote, “The United States contributed to the growth of corruption—the United States contributed to the growth of corruption by injecting tens of

billions of dollars into the Afghan economy, using flawed oversight in contracting practices, and partnering with malign power brokers.”

So, you know, what is your assessment of the amount of foreign assistance that Afghanistan can actually absorb? And these are bipartisan concerns. In the hearing with the Inspector General’s finding—I mean, this is not a partisan issue at all; this is an American issue of great concern. So, could you visit a little bit about that?

Ambassador BASS. Thank you, Senator. Again, another key piece of the challenge set, and what we need to be focused on.

I did note, as you mentioned, an emphasis during my tenure, if I am confirmed, in ensuring that we focus a great deal of our efforts on helping the Afghan Government address this problem set, and on ensuring that we are spending wisely, whether we have a lot of resources to work with or not very many. For me, the key variable is making sure we get an impact and a result for spending the taxpayers’ dollars.

I think the key is, we now have a government that is taking this problem seriously in Afghanistan, just released a new set of measures under a term called the Kabul Compact, which includes a lot of key reform efforts they are committed to undertaking. And, importantly, they have asked us to hold them accountable for results. And, if I am confirmed, I can assure you that will be a top priority for me.

Senator BARRASSO. I appreciate it, because accountability is a big issue for all of us, and then the oversight to make sure—as you said, to hold them accountable. Can you talk a little bit about what you could do to improve our abilities—the ability of our government to—just to oversee and to monitor this assistance?

Ambassador BASS. Well, I think we are going to continue to need to be creative and thoughtful and imaginative about how we do that, given some of the security challenges. Obviously, I do not want to put people in harm’s way unduly, but, at the same time, I also want to make sure we are getting results for our funding.

My understanding is, we have got some pretty thorough third-party monitoring efforts in place utilizing a lot of Afghans, sometimes at risk to themselves. But, I certainly will want to take a fresh look at it to see if there are ways we can improve that.

Senator BARRASSO. Well, you hit the key word that I have been—my next—my little notes to myself is—what about the security? How has the security situation and violence impacted the effectiveness of our civilian mission?

Ambassador BASS. It has definitely made doing our work more challenging. It is harder for people to be out and about in society, but I think my colleagues have done a good job of finding ways to continue to interact with Afghans, whether it is them coming to see us more regularly, working through intermediaries, in some cases. But, as the security environment continues to change, we obviously have to adapt and change with it, whether it is getting worse or whether it is getting better. And I think that is a key piece of what Chiefs of Mission are responsible for, is to make sure we can do that.

Senator BARRASSO. Because, I mean, you have broad experience, a wonderful career. You have been a lot of places, so that—I mean,

that is my question, is, How does the Government then properly evaluate and monitor programs in countries across the world, where there are serious restrictions on freedom of movement and a deteriorating security environment?

Ambassador BASS. As I noted, I think we have to be creative, we have to be thoughtful, and we have to adapt to conditions as they exist. And we have to learn as we go. And my sense is that we are doing that. And we need to continue to do that. But, I think, most importantly, we need to make sure that we continue to have some degree of visibility on individual programs, individual projects so that we are constantly evaluating whether we are getting the results we should.

Senator BARRASSO. Well, thank you. Thank you very much for your willing to serve.

And congratulations to all of you, and to your families, as well. My time is expired.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator BARRASSO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Shaheen.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you all very much for your willingness to serve the country. And congratulations on your nominations.

Ambassador Bass, as we again increase troops in Afghanistan and look at the military conflict there, one of the significant pieces of success is the importance of our local partners on the ground. And one of the promises that we have made is that, for those Afghans who help us in our mission there, that if they are threatened, that we will try and allow them to come to the United States, out of harm's way. And I wonder, if you would—if you can commit, this morning, to publicly continue to support the Afghan Special Immigrant Visa Program, and whether you agree that it is important that we keep this program in place.

Ambassador BASS. Thank you, Senator.

I think we have a solemn obligation to support local colleagues who often work for us, serve the interests of the United States, at great risk to themselves and their families. My colleague, Mr. Siberell, and I have both worked with Iraqis who would tell us stories of a 2-hour commute in each direction, with five and six changes of transportation, to make sure that it was not visible. And I am sure you have heard many of those kinds of stories. And within the construct of resources and at ref to larger administration policies, certainly I will be continuing to advocate that we do the right thing by those people in Afghanistan who have been serving us.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you very much.

On Monday, the Pakistani Foreign Minister went to Iran. And the news out of his meetings with Mr. Rouhani were that they discussed the importance of a political solution in Afghanistan. Can you talk about the role of the region in Afghanistan and in our potential to reach a political settlement there, and how important the role of Pakistan and other countries are in doing that?

Ambassador BASS. Thank you.

It—we will not succeed if we do not have the support and cooperation of Pakistan's neighbors and the wider circumference of significant countries in the wider region who also have an enormous stake in the stability and relative security of Afghanistan. I think one of the things working in our favor as we pick our way through this complicated landscape is that, generally speaking, everyone wants to see the same result in Afghanistan. It is not in anyone's interest for Afghanistan to remain a sinkhole of violence and a safe haven for extreme terrorism.

So, the challenge we have got is to ensure that we have got a common approach among all of these countries about how we achieve that result we all want to see, and ensuring that the neighbors and the—this wider set of countries continue to support the Afghan Government in its efforts, not simply to deal with the violence and the terrorism inside the country, but to also build that government capacity so that, if we do get to a political settlement, there is a capable government that can negotiate with the Taliban and then perform the basic functions of government on the other side of that.

Obviously, Pakistan has a key role to play. They have been, as we know, a source of some of the significant challenges in Afghanistan in enabling the Taliban to rest and refit, plan coordinated attacks. So, I think we have got a lot of work to do. And, as I noted, I am going to be working very closely, if I am confirmed, with Ambassador Hale and many colleagues here in the Department to try to change the Pakistani Government's approach towards this problem set and how they best see a resolution.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you.

Mr. Siberell, you mentioned, in your opening statement, the fact that we have just approved a sale of F-16s to Bahrain. And you also pointed out the concerns about human rights there, and how we address those. During the previous administration, the sale of F-16s had been held up. And, as I understand, there was a linkage to human rights violations as part of that sale. Do you think we should continue to try and be—look at tying what is happening on the human rights front to other military assistance to Bahrain, or other aid that we give them?

Mr. SIBERELL. Senator, thank you very much for the question.

I think it is absolutely vital that we pursue the broad range of our interests with the Government of Bahrain, both strengthening their own capability to defend the country from very real threats from Iran and others in the region, and from terrorist threats, but, at the same time, never step away from our obligations to continue to hold a very open and serious dialogue with the Government of Bahrain about conditions inside the country, to include the promotion and protection of human rights.

There are some cases in which we have not been willing to sell the Bahraini Government certain items, particularly with regard to crown control and internal security. And those remain in place. But, the linking directly of the military sales, which get to the, you know, key element of our partnership to help Bahrain defend itself, and also operate alongside U.S. forces, this is a very important component of our military cooperation, to the human rights issue, those just need to be brought together in our conversation, in a

broadbased conversation with the Bahraini Government, in my view.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. If I could, on that note—a very good question—I think that Senator Cardin had a conversation with them. It is my belief that we should not tie human rights directly to arms sales, but we certainly should work at it side by side. These sales, by the way, are ones that were approved prior to the hold that was placed on sales to all GCC members as relate to the—as it relates to the conflict that exists right now between these countries and Qatar. So, this was a previously approved sale. And I know there has been some misreporting on that. The sales that were discussed after the fact are still on hold, and hopefully will help bring resolution to the conflict there.

Senator Kaine.

Senator Kaine. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And congratulations to each of you.

Mr. Dowd, you are—you have a good fortune of being on a panel with two people whose billets are pretty controversial. That means they get most of the questions.

But, let me ask Mr. Siberell, just on the Bahraini question. I was in Bahrain only once. And it has now been a number of years ago. But, obviously, with the Fifth Fleet there, the situation in Bahrain is very important to us. They are facing a very real challenge of Iranian-supported efforts to destabilize the Government, but they also have a citizenry that is 70-percent Shi'a, and a wide perception, in and outside the country, that the Shi'a population there is not being treated well. So, you are going to have a lot of instability if you do not treat 70 percent of your population well. And if you just try to blame it on somebody else, that is not going to go very far.

My perception, over the last few years, is, whether it is, you know, threatened arms sales or not, that the human rights situation in Bahrain, and the sincere effort to deal with and then make progress on concerns of 70 percent of the population, there has not really been much progress. I would love to be wrong about that assumption. Am I wrong about that?

Mr. SIBERELL. Well, Senator, thank you very much for your question. I think you have identified one of the critical challenges we have.

On the one hand, Bahrain faces very real, credible threats from Iran. Those have been voiced by senior officials in the Quds Force that have threatened Bahrain. We know of Iranian training and equipping of individuals and groups who threaten the Bahraini Security Forces. There have been—

Senator Kaine [continuing]. Efforts to ship arms into Bahrain.

Mr. SIBERELL. Absolutely.

Senator Kaine. Yeah.

Mr. SIBERELL. That is right. And, in fact, earlier this year, the State Department designated two individuals who are part of the al-Ashtar brigades, one of whom is resident in Iran, who had been involved in attacks against the Bahraini state and the Government. So, there is a serious threat, there is a real threat there.

At the same time, as you pointed out, channels, and effective channels, for political discourse for involvement in the affairs of the country are critical to ensuring the essential stability upon which our partnership must rest, and ultimately for the stability and strength of the Bahraini state and its relationship with its people.

When I was previously—in my previous position in the Counterterrorism Bureau, we frequently emphasized, with partners in governments, that there need be no contradiction between promotion and protection of human rights, fundamental civil and human rights, and an effective security practices, which protect the population. And that is a point I will continue to emphasize, if given the opportunity, if confirmed as Ambassador to Bahrain, that we need to bring these two together. To conflate security and terrorism with—or to conflate, rather, legitimate political speech with terrorism is to potentially cut off channels for the kind of discourse that is required for, ultimately, a healthy and stable society.

Senator Kaine. I think it is very important. And again, it is important, in and of itself, but, with the Fifth Fleet presence being so important, and its continued viability, long-term, in Bahrain being connected certainly to the stability in that country, it really achieves a huge importance. So, thank you for that.

Ambassador Bass, you are going to do a—as good a job as any human can do in this position. I have such confidence in you from my work with you when you were Ambassador to Turkey. One of the things we are really going to need from you, should you be confirmed, is candor. An area that I always find perplexing here is, when it comes to Afghanistan, whether I am talking to State, DOD, or our intel agencies, I get very different—very, very different pictures of what might happen. And so, we are going to really need candor from you. And once—one of our lead military officers in Afghanistan said something really candid to me, and I say, “I appreciate your candor,” and he goes, “I am going to be candid. What are they going to do? Send me to Afghanistan?” [Laughter.]

Senator Kaine. So, we are going to need your candor, because I think there is a lot of confusion about the future mission, but also what is the likelihood of success.

And we really need to hear from the administration on this. The President made a speech that, I think, at the top level, was fine, but there were not a lot of details. And then we got a good briefing last week, in a classified setting, members of the Senate did, but, like the briefing we got about the ISIS plan, it was in a classified setting. We have not had public briefings. And this is something that the public really needs to hear. That is more likely to be a briefing in the Armed Services Committee than here. But, we cannot operate just on the basis of classified briefings about what the plan is. We have to bring the public into this.

Let me just ask you one question, quickly. What is your perception, as somebody's who is really skilled in this area—what is your perception about the arc of progress in Pakistan in fighting extremist terrorist elements that are on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border? Are we going in the right direction, are we in stasis, or are we going in the wrong direction?

Ambassador Bass. Thank you very much, Senator.

I think we are going in the right direction. But, as with all of these challenges, it is not necessarily always going to be a linear process. The adversaries adapt. We have to then make adjustments. They adapt again. I have seen this happen persistently through the last 3 years of—from Turkey, working with our colleagues in uniform on that—on the problem set in northern Iraq and northern Syria.

Senator Kaine. So, you believe—and I will be very quick—you believe we are going in the right direction. It is not linear, so we might wish the pace would be faster. But, the way you just said it is, adversaries adapt. So, to the degree to which we are not going fast enough, you view it as more the adaptation of adversaries rather than any equivocal commitment on behalf of the Pakistani Government and military?

Ambassador Bass. I would not make that stark an assessment.

Senator Kaine. Okay.

Ambassador Bass. I think we need both. We need to continue to adapt our tactics. Obviously, outside my lane. But, in my lane, we have got to continue to mobilize diplomatic persuasion and some pressure on the Government of Pakistan to make sure we get the right performance on the safe-haven challenges.

Senator Kaine. Right.

Thank you for letting me go over, Mr. Chair.

The Chairman. Oh, no problem.

I am going to go ahead and call on Senator Merkley, and then Senator Coons. I have to step out to the ante room for a moment. I know that you all will work cooperatively with each other.

So, Senator Merkley?

Thank you.

Senator Merkley. Thank you, each of you, for your willingness to serve the United States.

Ambassador Bass, which is more complicated, Turkey or Afghanistan?

Ambassador Bass. Senator, I think it depends on the day.

Senator Merkley. Well, two extraordinarily difficult situations.

The President has said that we will not dictate to the Afghan people how to live or how to govern their own complex society, and that we are not going to be engaged in nation-building. Does this mean our investment in health centers is ending?

Ambassador Bass. Thank you very much for identifying that aspect of our ongoing efforts.

As I noted in the outset, we are going to continue to need, on the civilian side, to ensure that we have a government that is capable of governing on the other side of a political settlement, if we are successful in creating the conditions that bring the Taliban to the table. From my perspective, a government that is capable is a government that is responsive to the needs that are identified by its citizens.

Senator Merkley. Well, I am just trying to get clarity on this point. Are we planning to continue investing in health centers, or not?

Ambassador Bass. My understanding is, in the short term, we certainly are.

Senator MERKLEY. Okay. Let us turn, then, to our investment in road infrastructure. Is that—is the intention to continue that investment, as well?

Ambassador BASS. I believe, for out years, that is under consideration by AID as they reevaluate priorities and the security.

Senator MERKLEY. What projects are we actually canceling, in terms of the President's dictates to no longer engage in nation-building?

Ambassador BASS. My understanding, based on my initial consultations with AID, is that they are now reviewing their current portfolio and planning to put some recommendations forward, but I do not have an specifics.

Senator MERKLEY. So, there is no answer. At this point, it is just a policy idea out there in the air, but no concrete plan.

Ambassador BASS. It is.

Senator MERKLEY. Okay. We have responded to a few things within Afghanistan that are very offensive to Americans: widespread child rape by warlords, and also the widespread societal discrimination against women and girls. When the President says we are not going to dictate how to govern, does this mean we are not going to weigh in on those issues anymore?

Ambassador BASS. I believe we will continue to express our strong concerns about practices and activities in Afghanistan that are outside of commitments Afghans have made to themselves under their constitution and with their international commitments.

Senator MERKLEY. Okay. Well, so far, this sounds very much like our current policy. And we throw in pressure on corruption, which we have been doing forever, there are a few show trials to make us happy, but international organizations say it is as bad as it has ever been, or perhaps worse, with the strength of some of the warlords. We have pressured Pakistan before; in fact, to the point that they shut down the Khyber Pass, and we had to airlift and turn to Central Asia to import things into our supply chain into Afghanistan. We say our new strategy is to support the Afghan forces. That has been our old strategy, to enable them to do that work. We say, "Well, we are working to set the stage for political settlement." That is, in fact, our old policy.

So, on these five fundamental principles, this sounds very much like a continuation of the existing policy. What am I missing?

Ambassador BASS. Well, I think you are going to see a renewed focus on the broader regional challenge. My understanding, from my colleagues at the Pentagon, is that they believe that, notwithstanding the challenges of the past few years, fighting seasons, the Afghan defense forces are becoming more capable, and they are taking on more to the fight, themselves. So, I think it is a different fight, if you will, from 5 years ago. And I think, importantly, on the civilian side, we have a government now that wants our help, is willing to listen to us, is asking us to hold them to commitments they are making to themselves. And my understanding is, that is a bit different from some of the past dynamics.

Senator MERKLEY. I would just note that, in terms of pressuring Pakistan on the safe haven, we applied enormous pressure before. And not only did they shut down our movement of goods into Afghanistan, but they have noted that they have had 50,000 civilian

deaths, or 5,000 Security Force deaths, taking on extremists within Pakistan. That is a higher price than virtually anyone else has paid. And our failure to recognize that is profoundly offensive to them. And they are also very concerned about the drone strikes that have killed many civilians within Pakistan, as well, at least in the opinion of the Pakistani Government.

The argument has always been, "Well, we are not going to let Afghanistan be a haven for terrorists." Al-Qaeda, essentially, long gone, down to less than 100, years and years ago. The Taliban, obviously, control a significant share of the country. They can hold meetings all over the country. But, those meetings occur with far less logistical support than terrorists—related terrorists can have in Somalia, in Yemen, where there is more communications, more access to ports.

The long and short of it is, Afghanistan today, a planning can be held in any one of thousands of buildings. They control more territory. Does not affect whether or not they can hold meetings. Is there not something kind of missing in our basic theory that we are denying—that somehow our current presence is denying planning meetings from occurring inside Afghanistan?

Ambassador BASS. Senator, always hard to prove a hypothetical. What I would offer is different context, but what I have watched over the last 3 years is what happens when you have ungoverned space that is violent, unstable, and creates new opportunities for even more extreme terrorist groups to take root. And I think one of the most disturbing trend lines of the last couple of years is the creation of an ISIS affiliate in Afghanistan that potentially could inject a sectarian dimension into the conflict, which largely has not been there in the past. And if we think we have a big problem set now, it could get even worse.

So, you know, my answer would be, we have to continue this effort, because I think all the alternatives are even worse for us.

Senator MERKLEY. But, you would acknowledge there is a lot of ungoverned space that fits that definition right now within Afghanistan.

Ambassador BASS. Yes.

Senator MERKLEY. Yeah. Okay, thank you.

Senator COONS. Thank you. With the concurrence of my wonderful colleague, Senator Young, I am going to proceed, if that is okay.

Senator YOUNG. Duly concurred.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Senator.

Many of us have competing hearings. And so, forgive me for having departed and returned. So many others do, as well, and it leads to some of this uneven timing.

Thank you, all three of you—Mr. Dowd, Mr. Siberell, and Ambassador Bass—for your willingness to serve our country in these important different posts and regions.

And, Mr. Dowd, when I realized that your wife had served as a Deputy Attorney General in Delaware, I realized I had to come back. I—there was no way I could miss an opportunity to highlight both your passionate engagement in issues in Africa and your wife's dedicated service to law enforcement, and to the important work against trafficking.

Let me begin, if I might, with Ambassador Bass. It is great to see you again. I respect your service in Turkey and, as several of my colleagues have referenced, taking on now the challenge in Afghanistan is one that dwarfs, I think, even the challenge in Turkey.

Not to put too fine a point on it, but one of the things that I found striking about the President's address, about our path forward in Afghanistan, and was in some ways repeated in your opening statement. I think I quote you, "We have to make clear to the Taliban they cannot outlast us on the battlefield." That is clearly our new conditions-based, as it were, framework. How long do you think the Taliban can last on the battlefield? Twenty-five years? Fifty years? A hundred years?

Ambassador BASS. Senator, thank you for that question.

Senator COONS. It is a question I think all of us should be wrestling.

Ambassador BASS. Absolutely.

Senator COONS. It is not meant as a gotcha question.

Ambassador BASS. No, no.

Senator COONS. It is a question I wrestle with.

Ambassador BASS. No. And it is one of the reasons why I welcome this—these exchanges, because these are the right questions for all of us to be wrestling with. Bit difficult for me to answer it at this stage of my preparations, given how much of it is informed by, you know, detailed assessments of our analysts and our military colleagues.

Senator COONS. Well, then, in the interest of time, let me simply say that, as we work together to clarify and refine our Nation's strategy with regards to Afghanistan, one of my core concerns is that, when we are considering people who live in caves and who are deeply dedicated to their work against us, I think we would be wise to assume a longer, rather than a shorter, timeline of their determined unwillingness to negotiate and their commitment to the fight. And I just wish the President's call to arms for a longer-term engagement had been clear about that. And I think all of us wrestle with that. Sixteen years is an awfully long time to be at war in Afghanistan. But, if we are moving to a conditions-based strategy, we might very well be facing a generational commitment.

Now, decades after the Korean conflict ended, we still have significant military assets on the Korean Peninsula. It is not that the United States is unfamiliar with long-term commitments. We still have military units on the ground in Germany, many decades after the end of the second World War. It is not impossible that we would choose to make a generational commitment to the stability and security of Afghanistan. I just think we need to be more clear-eyed about the consequences of that.

Let me briefly ask you how you think we might deal with expanding Russian and Iranian influence in Afghanistan, as well, before I turn to your two colleagues.

Ambassador BASS. Sir, the—I think we have to do two things. We have to make sure that we are in constant dialogue with them, notwithstanding some of the other challenges in our relationship with Russia, and potentially through Russia with the Iranian Government or others who are talking directly with them, to make

sure we have got as close to common assessment of what is happening on the ground as we can. And we also got to continue to work to ensure that they are putting the weight of their effort behind supporting the Afghan Government in this effort, because, to the extent they start to hedge or intensify hedging by supporting the Taliban, that does not lead to a good outcome.

Senator COONS. I am, frankly, gravely concerned, given the role that Vladimir Putin's Russia has played in the North Korean challenge, in Ukraine, in our recent election, that he will choose this moment to actively engage in opposition to our interests and our security in Afghanistan, particularly given he is a leader motivated by grievance over the fall of the Soviet Union, and it was, in many ways, our role in Afghanistan that accelerated the Soviet departure from Afghanistan. So, I would urge you to be attentive to that and communicate with us about it. Thank you for your willingness to take this on.

Mr. Siberell, if I might briefly—while I am grateful for Bahrain's support, partnership with us in military matters and in counterterrorism, as a co-chair of the Senate Human Rights Caucus, I am concerned about the poor human rights conditions, which you referenced in your opening statement, in Bahrain. They have imprisoned the country's leading human rights defender, for tweets; they have banned the country's largest opposition party; they have killed clerics who have called for political reform. How will you encourage Bahrain's rulers and leaders to respect human rights?

Mr. SIBERELL. Senator, thank you very much for the question.

This will be very high priority for me in my discussions with the Bahraini Government. We do raise our concerns with regard to the specific issues in cases you addressed, and maintain a—an ongoing dialogue with the Government of Bahrain about the importance of protecting fundamental human rights. It is not—obviously, these are critical principles for the United States that we raise in many of our relationships, but, with regard to Bahrain in particular, given the strength of the security partnership, given the importance of a strong and stable partnership that must rest also upon stability fundamentally within Bahrain, this takes on a very important role in our dialogue, and I am committed to advancing that dialogue as I engage with senior leadership in the—in Bahrain, in the Government.

Senator COONS. Thank you.

Mr. Dowd, I was moved to read your characterization of your first engagement in Africa as a merchant crewman on a PL-480 cargo ship. It is rare we hear that. Chairman Corker and I have worked to understand and to have a positive impact on U.S. food relief programs, both to sustain Food for Peace, in my appropriations role, but provide more efficient alternatives. This is a electric benefits card that is currently being used. I was in a refugee camp in Nigeria just a week ago. And there are other models, other than direct commodity relief. Commodity relief is appropriate in some settings, other more streamlined electronic relief is appropriate in other settings. Any exposure to that, any thoughts about that, on how the African Development Bank might accelerate the use of more transparent, accountable mechanisms for the delivery of assistance and aid?

Mr. DOWD. Thank you, Senator. That is really a terrific question.

I do not—not being there, I honestly cannot speak to it, but I would make a comment, if I may. I have read—I was very moved by the—your trip and the Chairman’s trip last spring, when you went to the camps. And I am sure that was a profound experience for you. And I share it. And any way that I can encourage or lead the African Development Bank to assist in these matters, I am there. And I would certainly welcome your input in those, and that of your staffs.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Mr. Dowd. I had a great meeting with Bank president Adesina, and we had a long conversation about his high-five agenda, sort of the five priority items. And I would welcome a chance to follow up with you about that and other matters of concern.

I know I am now really impinging on my colleague’s good graces.

Thank you, to you, to your wife, Lillian, for your passion for fighting human trafficking and malnutrition. And if we can work together to find ways to do that that are more cost effective and efficient, that would make me a—very grateful, indeed.

So, thank you, all three of you gentlemen, to you and your families, for your careers of service and for the service you are about to undertake.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Young.

Senator YOUNG. Well, I thank all our panelists, all our nominees, for your distinguished careers and for your willingness to continue serving.

Ambassador Bass, I enjoyed our visit yesterday. I look forward to supporting your confirmation.

I just want to reiterate my view that the U.S. military presence in Afghanistan should be based on our national security interests, on the advice of our commanders, and on the facts on the grounds. We observed, of course, the 9/11 anniversary yesterday, and remembered our fellow citizens who were killed. And every year, we are reminded, we can never again allow the terrorists to use Afghanistan as a training ground and a launching pad for terrorist attacks against our homeland or that of our allies. For that reason, I applaud the Trump administration’s rejection of withdrawal timelines that are disconnected from realities on the ground. At the same time, we have to be honest that the progress is not what it should be in Afghanistan, and the American people are right to demand better, to ask tough questions and insist on more detail and more accountability, moving forward.

So, I will continue to scrutinize the strategy in Afghanistan—I look forward to staying in touch with you as I make efforts to do that, Ambassador Bass—to ensure that this administration has established clear and attainable metrics, milestones, objectives, and so forth, and also to ensure that our diplomats, our development experts, and our troops on the ground have the resources that they need to accomplish the mission. So, I look forward to working with you in that regard.

I am going to turn now to the African Development Bank, Mr. Dowd. According to the U.N., between 2017 and 2050, the popu-

lations of 26 African countries are projected to expand to at least double their current size. To state it differently: During that same period, 1.3 billion of the globe's additional 2.2 billion working-age people will be in Africa. If there is not a corresponding increase in jobs and economic opportunities to accompany this increase in population, then we are in trouble. We are going to have a hard time making sustainable progress with respect to development goals, and we are going to see grinding poverty that causes human suffering, promotes instability, and serves as a push factor for more migration crises.

Mr. Dowd, how do you believe the African Development Bank can better work with the private sector to create the sustainable jobs that we need, and to lessen the predictable jobs crisis that would otherwise accompany the dramatic population growth in Africa?

Mr. DOWD. Thank you, Senator. Certainly, this is a profound question.

The focus of the Bank, of course, is on infrastructure. The notion is, of course, that, led by proper and effective infrastructure, private investment would follow, and, from that, hopefully employment, to begin to deal with this surging population that you alluded to. Not being in the Bank currently, I really cannot speak to the effective—effectiveness of these programs, but I can tell you that I will be committed to a cost-benefit analysis, a rigorous cost-benefit analysis, to, hopefully, gain control of these infrastructure projects so that they really work and they are not the proverbial road to nowhere.

Senator YOUNG. Is there a model you will be looking to, as you engage in cost-benefit analysis, to determine which programs are working, which ones are not? Perhaps you could mimic another module for another development bank, for example.

Mr. DOWD. I do not have a lot of experience or knowledge of other development banks—

Senator YOUNG. Right.

Mr. DOWD [continuing]. But I know, from private development projects, what I looked for. And there are triggers and effective yardsticks that can be brought to bear that I think might apply here. And I honestly cannot speak a heck of a lot farther about that at this point, not being on the ground.

Senator YOUNG. Your private-sector experience may even be more valuable, frankly, than having worked in, or spent time immersed in, development banks.

Mr. DOWD. I hope so, sir.

Senator YOUNG. I attended a briefing last week on multilateral development banks. And a number of experts were present. And more than one of the individuals made the point that we have to make it easier for U.S. companies to compete for contracts with development banks, including the African Development Bank. According to our Congressional Research Service, despite our country's contributions to the Bank, U.S. firms accounted for only 0.4 percent of ADB procurement in 2016. In contrast, Chinese firms accounted for over 22 percent of procurement in that same year.

Mr. Dowd, do you believe there should be efforts to increase participation by U.S. firms in the African Development Bank? And, if

so, how do you believe we can make it easier for U.S. companies to compete?

Mr. DOWD. I—thank you very much, Senator—I would think this would be a good application for value-for-money bidding. That is to say, it is not always the lowest bid that is the best bid, but the way things often operate, it is that way. And so, the Chinese, that is their forte. Very low quality, cheap bidding. And so, perhaps, I hope, we can impose value bidding to help U.S. companies. In addition to helping U.S. companies.

Senator YOUNG. That is looking at the entire life cycle of the project, right?

Mr. DOWD. Indeed, Senator. And another element that you allude to there is, perhaps even contingency payments for some of these longer-term loans to make sure they are not just wandering off into who knows where, so that there would be regular monitoring and accounting and auditing of ongoing project funding.

As far as encouraging U.S. companies to invest and operate in Africa, you are exactly right, the percentage is appalling. And I will do what I can to be a cheerleader for Africa, I suppose, and to meet with, hopefully, and facilitate American businesses trying to do business in Africa.

Senator YOUNG. Thank you much, Chairman.

Mr. DOWD. Thank you, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

And thank all three of you for your willingness to serve, your families' willingness to be a part of that.

The record will remain open until the close of business on Thursday, as you heard from the close of the first panel. To the extent you can answer those questions quickly, we would appreciate it. I know you all are anxious to get to the post you have been assigned.

Again, I think, for all of us, it is heartwarming to have people like you who are willing to serve in these capacities. And we thank you for that. We thank you for your testimony today, and the preparation that went into it. And I look forward to you being confirmed.

Thank you very much. The meeting is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:50 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

Additional Material Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO ERIC M. UELAND BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

Question 1. Article 25 of the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations states that the "receiving State shall accord full facilities for the performance of the functions of the mission." However, some host nations have imposed size restrictions on U.S. diplomatic pouches, which has limited the ability of U.S. missions to receive diplomatic pouches.

- Does the imposition of size restrictions on U.S. diplomatic pouches entering a host nation constitute, in your view, contravention of Article 25 of the Vienna Convention?

Answer. I agree that size restriction on U.S. diplomatic pouches can have an impact on our overseas diplomatic facilities. If confirmed, I look forward to exploring this issue with the Department's legal experts and seeking ways to eliminate any burdens imposed on the Department's ability to do its business overseas.

Question 2. Are there circumstances under which diplomatic pouches bound for a U.S. embassy should be subject to a host nation's inspection?

Answer. As a general rule, I understand that diplomatic pouches are protected from search and inspection. If confirmed, I look forward to exploring this issue with the Department's legal experts and protecting the interests of the United States.

Question 3. According to the U.S. State Department's own materials on diplomatic pouches, "international law does not set any limits on the permissible size, weight, or quantity of properly designated diplomatic pouches."

- What, in your view, is the appropriate U.S. response to a host nation imposing limits on the permissible size, weight, or quantity of properly designated diplomatic pouches?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to consulting with the Department's experts to explore strategy and solutions as matters arise.

Question 4. Under such circumstances, what course of action would you personally be willing to support in response to limitations?

Answer. While I would need to review each case individually, if confirmed, I would be willing to explore the full range of options that have a reasonable possibility of motivating the counterpart government to lift its restrictions. I look forward to consulting with the Department's experts to explore strategy and solutions as matters arise.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO ERIC M. UELAND BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question 1. Regardless of the mechanism that the executive branch chooses, if the President wants to rescind or cancel funds that Congress has previously appropriated and the President has signed into law, Congress still must agree to cancel out or rescind those funds through enacting a subsequent law. As a longtime budget staffer and now having reviewed various impoundment procedures, is it your understanding that if Congress does not agree or act in some way to rescind or cancel funds, the executive branch agency must spend the appropriated funds within that fiscal year?

Answer. The process as set out in the Impoundment Control Act is clear. The President must transmit a message to Congress proposing a rescission when he wishes to withhold appropriated funds from obligation permanently, or proposing a deferral for certain authorized purposes when the withholding of funds is temporary. Funds proposed for rescission may be withheld from obligation for 45 days of continuous congressional session. If the rescission is not enacted into law during this period, the President must release the funds on the 46th day.

Question 2. Will you give us your commitment that, if confirmed, will you recommend to your superiors in the administration that the Department not seek rescission or cancellation of appropriated funds below the levels outlined in the applicable appropriations laws?

Answer. I understand that use of the Impoundment Control Act process has been relatively rare, with President Clinton being the last President to propose a rescission with regard to a State Department appropriation. I would advise my principals to follow applicable appropriations laws and, if there is a strong reason to propose a rescission, to follow the statutory procedures under the Impoundment Control Act.

Question 3. Should the President choose to seek to rescind or cancel funds that Congress has previously appropriated and which have been enacted into law, do you commit to communicate any such request to this committee and provide a briefing regarding the rationale for such a request?

Answer. Yes, I commit to brief the committee on the rationale for any requests by the President to Congress for a rescission of State Department funds. As was discussed at my hearing, an important aspect of my work will be communication with the committee.

Question 4. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. In 1998, I worked on bringing to passage through the Senate the International Religious Freedom Act, which created the Office of International Religious Freedom at the Department of State. As the Department website outlines, among its other duties the Office carries out significant responsibilities including issuing

an annual report on international religious freedom issues, advocacy on behalf of religious freedom in countries, and review of countries for potential religious freedom violations that could cause their listing as Countries of Particular Concern. The Act also created an ambassador-at-Large for Religious Freedom, and the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom.

administrations. The level of focus on international religious freedom issues by the United States Government and the Department of State, and the work of the Foreign Service and the Commission on these issues, have been a worthy addition to the range of roles and responsibilities of the U.S. Government in advocating appropriately on behalf of our values around the world.

Question 5. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question 6. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question 7. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. I agree with the Secretary's recent speech, in which he stated that a strong, talented, representative workforce is essential for the Department's success. If confirmed, I will encourage mentoring, career development counseling, and active engagement with the Department's various, diverse employee constituencies. I will aim to ensure all our supervisors reflect the strengths of our nation and promote an inclusive merit-based culture that encourages collaboration, flexibility, and fairness.

Question 8. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Department are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. I agree with the Secretary's recent speech, in which he stated that a strong, talented, representative workforce is essential for the Department's success. If confirmed, I will encourage mentoring, career development counseling, and active engagement with the Department's various, diverse employee constituencies. I will aim to ensure all our supervisors reflect the strengths of our nation and promote an inclusive merit-based culture that encourages collaboration, flexibility, and fairness.

Question 9. How do you plan on committing to the retention of diverse foreign and civil service employees while at the same time making drastic cuts and changes to personnel policy which are causing the attrition of diverse applicants?

Answer. If confirmed, I will seek to ensure that any reduction in budget and personnel does not negatively affect the Department's diversity, inclusion, and retention efforts. I agree with the Secretary's recent speech, in which he stated that a strong, talented, representative workforce is essential for the Department's success. I will continue to apply resources to appropriate training, details and fellowship programs to help mid-level employees attain the career skills necessary for promotion into the senior ranks.

Question 10. How do you intend to support civil service career and executive professional development programs that focus on diversity retention?

Answer. If confirmed, I will seek to apply resources to appropriate training, details, and fellowship opportunities for the Civil Service workforce to provide invaluable professional development. The Secretary has publicly stated that the Department is a stronger organization when it embraces and incorporates diverse points of view into its work product. If confirmed, I will help the Department expand its mentoring and career development counseling services to assist employees develop the skills necessary for advancement while strengthening the leadership and adaptive capacity of our workforce.

Question 11. If confirmed, will you commit to making sure the Department responds promptly to my letters and other requests for information?

Answer. Yes. As I said in my hearing, having been a congressional staffer for many years I appreciate the need and the value for a robust conversation and partnership with this committee if I have the privilege of being confirmed.

Question 12. Will you come before this committee for full, public hearings on the restructuring of State and USAID if major changes are proposed, prior to making such changes?

Answer. Yes. As I said in my hearing, having been a congressional staffer for many years I appreciate the need and the value for a robust conversation and partnership with this committee if I have the privilege of being confirmed.

Question 13. What is your view on the proposed cut to the State Department budget?

Answer. I am confident the FY 2018 budget request will allow the Department to support the President's priorities to defend national security, assert U.S. leadership, foster opportunities for U.S. economic interests, and ensure accountability to the U.S. taxpayer. The Secretary has publicly acknowledged that the Department had to make tough decisions.

I agree with the Secretary, who has stated publicly that it is first and foremost our people who will determine our ability to succeed in meeting our important foreign policy objectives—not the level of resources. I support the focus of the Secretary and Deputy Secretary on ensuring that our people have the organizational support and tools they need to achieve our top goals.

Question 14. What is your view on the proposed cuts to the foreign assistance budget?

Answer. I am confident that the FY 2018 budget request will allow the Department to support the President's priorities to defend national security, assert U.S. leadership, foster opportunities for U.S. economic interests, and ensure accountability to the U.S. taxpayer.

I agree with the Secretary, who has stated publicly that it is our people first and foremost—not the level of resources—that will determine our ability to succeed in meeting our important foreign policy objectives. I support the Secretary and Deputy Secretary's focus on ensuring that State Department personnel have the organizational support and tools they need to achieve the administration's top goals.

Question 15. More than 80 senior positions at the State Department currently have no named nominee. Many of those do not even have an Acting in place, and are vacant. I have shared my concerns in a letter to Secretary Tillerson about the ability of the State Department to effectively carry out its duties with so many unfilled positions. The Department has assured me that it is "working closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for [its] vacant senior leadership positions," yet acknowledged that there is "no firm timeline for those remaining vacancies." As of today, there are no Assistant Secretary nominees for the Middle East, Asia, or Africa—at a time of daunting challenges and humanitarian crises in those regions. Nor is there an ambassador nominee to South Korea, at a time of increasingly tense relations with North Korea. If confirmed, do you commit to prioritizing filling senior vacancies, particularly for regions facing pressing challenges? How will you work with the Department and White House to ensure these positions are filled as promptly as possible?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to prioritizing the filling of vacant senior positions at the Department. This will include working with the Bureau of Diplomatic Security to ensure selected candidates move through the extensive vetting and clearance process in a timely manner.

Question 16. One proposal under consideration as part of the administration's efficiency review process is to move the State Department's Consular Affairs and Population, Refugees, and Migration Bureaus to the Department of Homeland Security. I am pleased that Secretary Tillerson opposes this shift and believes this work is "essential to the Department's mission." Can you expand on why is it so critical for these functions to remain under State Department leadership?

Answer. I agree with the Secretary's view that the Consular Affairs bureau belongs at the Department of State. The functions of the CA bureau are vital to the Department's mission to secure our borders and protect the American people. U.S. border security depends on a system of "layered defense" for maximum effectiveness, and the current system of vetting and adjudicating visas has built-in checks that strengthen our national security. The Population, Refugees, and Migration Bureau guides the entire resettlement process and determines which refugee populations can become eligible for consideration for resettlement in the United States. This determination is inherently a foreign policy function. Loss of this function by the De-

partment would undercut the U.S. Government's ability to address international humanitarian crises and respond to the needs of key allies.

Question 17. Please describe the redesign/reorganization process and the next steps.

Answer. The redesign process has been employee led, to include 35,000 State and USAID employees in the United States and around the world who shared views in listening sessions; 200 State and USAID employees who participated in the working groups; and numerous ideas and suggestions submitted through online portals. As I understand it, the Secretary recently submitted to the Office of Management and Budget an Agency Reform Plan with specific recommendations for improving State and USAID. The Department will now pivot toward preparing for implementation of reforms as soon as they are approved by OMB, as well as reforms not requiring OMB approval. If confirmed, I look forward to being briefed on these reforms and engaging the Congress to discuss them.

Question 18. If confirmed, will you commit to regular consultations with this committee throughout the redesign process to ensure sustainable reforms to the State Department and our foreign assistance agencies?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to regular consultations with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on the redesign.

Question 19. How would you seek additional input from the broader stakeholder community?

Answer. The redesign process began with listening to State Department and USAID employees. Additionally, it is my understanding that the State Department and USAID sought input from external stakeholders as part of the process. If confirmed, I would continue to seek input from stakeholders through continued engagement.

Question 20. If confirmed, will you work to ensure that the Department's ability to carry out its mission is not hindered by the redesign process?

Answer. The role and responsibility of the Under Secretary for Management is to support the Secretary and ensure effective operations of the Department. The Department has a workforce of over 14,000 Foreign Service employees and 11,000 civil service employees, and an appropriated budget of nearly \$56 billion for Fiscal Year 2017. If confirmed, I would work to help enhance recruitment, identify and focus talent, ensure smooth and successful operations, prepare budgets, and coordinate with the White House, OMB, and other departments and agencies with whom the Department collaborates to ensure a successful and fully engaged State Department both during the redesign process and as long as I would hold the position.

Question 21. In your view, what redesign actions can the Secretary take administratively, without legislation?

Answer. In light of not having been confirmed, I have not been a part of the redesign process, nor have I received any briefings on Secretarial authority. If confirmed, I am committed to working cooperatively with Congress and provide information and rationale and seek input and feedback on the redesign.

Question 22. How do you plan to work with this committee and with Congress more broadly to approach reorganization matters? For changes that require legislative approval or action, with you submit draft legislation to this committee? Will the Department consult with Congress on changes that can be made administratively, without Congressional action? In my view, such consultation would foster broader support and sustainability for the redesign.

Answer. If confirmed, I am committed to working cooperatively with Congress and provide information and rationale and seek input and feedback on the redesign. To the extent that legislation might be necessary, if confirmed I would support efforts here as well.

Question 23. During his confirmation process, Deputy Secretary Sullivan noted that the reorganization effort should enhance coordination between regional and functional bureaus at the State Department to address transnational threats and new means of communication and technology. Could you share an example of a proposal under consideration to improve coordination between bureaus?

Answer. In light of not having been confirmed, I have not been a part of the redesign process. If confirmed, I will certainly consult and discuss these efforts with Deputy Secretary Sullivan. Also, if confirmed, I look forward to working in partnership with Congress on the redesign effort.

Question 24. Just last week, the GAO released a report reviewing the Department's Diplomatic Security operations since January 2017, and assessing its

progress on outstanding recommendations. The report identified a number of remaining issues, including physical security weaknesses, ensuring U.S. personnel receive threat information in a timely and effective manner, and filling positions with experienced personnel. How do you plan to ensure that Diplomatic Security meets these ongoing challenges and addresses these outstanding recommendations, particularly at a time when the administration is seeking to shrink the Department's budget and resources?

Answer. If confirmed, I plan to work closely with the Assistant Secretary for Diplomatic Security to ensure the Bureau of Diplomatic Security is being managed effectively and the challenges you outline in your question are being addressed. I expect to devote a significant amount of time on the safety and security of the Department of State's personnel, and will advocate for appropriate resources in order to ensure that our Foreign Service officers and personnel deployed around the world are in facilities that are safe, are able to safely execute their duties, and have the appropriate amount of security for themselves, their families and loved ones.

Question 25. Do you commit to coming back before this committee if confirmed to address the outstanding issues facing the Diplomatic Security bureau?

Answer. Yes. There is nothing more important than the safety and security of our staff here at the Department. The Bureau of Diplomatic Security is essential to keeping this mission, and to the overall mission of diplomacy. If confirmed, I look forward to continuing to engage Congress on the issues facing the Bureau.

Question 26. If the Senate Appropriations Committee's proposal on the Foreign Operations bill gets approved, will you work to protect this budget of \$51.2 billion in funding for the State Department and USAID as opposed to arbitrarily slashing it?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with Department of State and USAID leadership, bureaus, and offices to follow applicable laws and notification requirements with regard to the budget.

Question 27. How would you ensure a reduction in funding for the State Department does not threaten our ability to address key national security challenges, such as the situation in Afghanistan?

Answer. Enhancing and protecting the national security of the American people is the President's top priority. I am confident that the FY 2018 budget request will allow the Department to support the President's priorities to defend national security, assert U.S. leadership, foster opportunities for U.S. economic interests, and ensure accountability to the U.S. taxpayer. The Secretary has publicly acknowledged that the Department had to make tough decisions.

If confirmed, I will work with the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs to ensure resources are available to promote the stability of Afghanistan and the entire region, which is critical to safeguarding U.S. national security.

Question 28. If the State-Foreign Operations bill is confirmed, will you commit that any action you take related to the management or expenditure of appropriated funds is consistent with all legal requirements and the intent of Congress?

Answer. Yes, as I said in my hearing, if confirmed, one of the important responsibilities I will have as the Undersecretary will be to ensure that the laws are faithfully executed by the Department.

Question 29. I understand that as part of the Buy Hire America Executive order, changes which could substantially change the J-Visa programs are under consideration. What is your view on the value of the J-Visa programs? If confirmed, will you commit to continuing to support both federally-funded and private sector exchange programs as key elements of America's diplomatic engagement with the world? Can you assure me that, if confirmed and recommendations are made to eliminate or decrease the size of this program, the Department: a) notifies the appropriate Congressional committees and b) follows appropriate procedures and engages in a formal notice and comment in order to ensure stakeholder input and a fulsome record prior to making changes?

Answer. Educational and cultural exchange programs are undeniably an important part of the State Department's diplomatic mission. The Department knows that they increase American global competitiveness, forge relationships and understanding, and contribute to increased national security. I can assure you that if I am confirmed we will continue to support our educational and cultural exchange programs in ways that best serve the needs of the American people. Also, if con-

firmed, as the Department considers ways to strengthen these programs, we will consult with Congress and stakeholders.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO ERIC M. UELAND BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

Question 1. If you are confirmed as the Under Secretary of State for Management, you will be one of the officials responsible for the performance and health of the State Department's work force. There have been numerous press reports over the past six months on low morale in the Department. Do you believe that morale is low? If so, why? What do you intend to do to address the situation? Do employees feel like they understand the mission of the Department? Do they feel like the important work they do for our country matters?

Answer. The Department of State is fortunate to have a talented and highly motivated workforce. I agree with the Secretary, who has publicly stated that the State Department's employees are its most valuable resource. As I understand the goal of the redesign process, it is for an employee-led process that will lay a new foundation for our diplomacy and development professionals to define America's leadership in the world for generations to come.

You raise important questions. If confirmed, I will seek answers to these during my listening sessions and meetings with stakeholders across the Department. Further, if confirmed, I will work to ensure that this process leads to an organization in which our people have the support and tools they need to achieve our foreign policy goals.

Question 2. My understanding is that the State Department is the only Executive Branch agency that continues to have a hiring freeze and that it includes a freeze on promotions as well as lateral transfers. What is the rationale behind the continued hiring freeze? What is the Department doing to ensure that its best employees stay with the Department during a time of no upward or lateral movement? When do you expect the promotion and lateral freezes to end?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward working with the Secretary to further understand his vision on the hiring freeze policy and its correlation with the redesign project. My initial understanding is that this is a tool to ensure the Department is hiring new employees with the skill sets necessary to accomplish the State Department mission in a challenging world environment. I believe employee-led reviews, starting with listening, is a great way to maintain a talented workforce.

Question 3. It is my understanding that A-100 classes have re-started, meaning that the hiring freeze now only applies to the Civil Service. Are you concerned that the Department is now treating its two largest groups of employees differently? Do you expect this to create tension within the Department between the Foreign Service and the Civil Service?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Secretary to understand his vision for the hiring freeze policy, and what the path forward is. I agree with the Secretary, who has publicly stated that an organization's employees are its most valuable resource, and I will seek to relay my appreciation for the hard work of all the Department's employees—both Civil Service and Foreign Service.

Question 4. The Presidential Management Fellows program is one of the best ways to get America's best-and-brightest graduate students into the Civil Service. Does the Department intend to continue participating in this program? Why or why not?

Answer. As the Secretary said in his August 18th, 2017, remarks to student program participants, the Department's current fellowships are valuable pipelines of talent for the Department and necessary to achieving its diversity objectives. My understanding is that the Secretary has approved limited PMF hiring. If confirmed, I will do my best to ensure that PMFs continue to be recognized as an integral part of the Department's workforce.

Question 5. My office has been a beneficiary of the State Department's participation in legislative fellows programs. I believe that these programs provide the Department with an invaluable insight into the legislative process, while also providing offices like mine with additional subject matter expertise. I was troubled to see reports that the Department is suspending its participation in the program. Can you confirm that the Department does not plan to participate in the program in 2018? Why or why not?

Answer. The Secretary said in August that the Department will keep the fellowship and internship programs that advance the Department's goals and objectives. And, during my Senate visits, I was proud to meet several Pearson Fellows. If confirmed, I look forward to ensuring the Department continues this practice.

Question 6. Florida is a significant beneficiary of the J-1 visa program. A Washington Post article on September 10, 2017, indicates that the program is under review and could potentially be limited. Is the J-1 visa program being reviewed? If so, who in the U.S. Government is reviewing the program? Why is the program being reviewed? When should the review process be completed? When do you expect J-1 visa applicants and employers to be notified of updated guidance on the program?

Answer. Educational and cultural exchange programs are undeniably an important part of the State Department's diplomatic mission. The Department knows that they increase American global competitiveness, forge relationships and understanding, and contribute to increased national security. While the Department is currently undertaking a review of the program pursuant to the President's Executive Order on Buy American and Hire American, I can assure you that if I am confirmed we will continue to support our educational and cultural exchange programs in ways that best serve the needs of the American people. Also, if confirmed, as the Department considers ways to strengthen these programs, we will consult with Congress and stakeholders.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO ERIC M. UELAND BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question 1. I was extremely pleased that Secretary Tillerson acknowledged in a speech in August 2017 that the State Department has a "diversity gap." As I have previously flagged, Hispanic and Asian representation within the Department of State's workforce are at 6 percent each; and although African Americans represent 15 percent of the total State Department workforce, they only represent 5 percent of the Foreign Service. Moreover, only 12 percent of our senior Foreign Service officers are non-white.

- What will you do to ensure the recruitment, retention, and promotion to senior leadership of minorities within the Department of State?

Answer. In his recent speech, Secretary Tillerson said that a strong, talented, representative workforce which is representative of the American people is essential for the Department's success and the key to increasing minorities in leadership positions is to identify qualified individuals early in the process, and ensure that they are seeking and are afforded the opportunities to prepare for those senior roles. If confirmed, I will encourage mentoring, career development counseling, and active engagement with the Department's various, diverse employee constituencies. I will aim to ensure all our supervisors reflect the strengths of our nation and promote an inclusive merit-based culture that encourages collaboration, flexibility, and fairness.

Question 2. The Charles B. Rangel International Affairs Program and Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship Program are integral to recruiting young, diverse talent to join our diplomatic corps, so I was concerned to find out that the June incoming class of Fellows were being deferred entry to the Foreign Service, because of the hiring freeze. Although, I understand that Secretary Tillerson has since issued a waiver for future incoming classes, I would like to know if you will continue to support these programs and ensure the continued successful recruitment and training of these future diplomats?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue to support these and other programs that ensure the Department follows the Secretary's charge in his recent speech to ensure that the Department appropriately reflects the diversity of America.

Question 3. As was raised at your hearing, there have been numerous reports regarding the dire state of morale in the Department of State. Department staff have complained about a lack of cohesive policy, lack of leadership, and lack of communication between the Secretary's advisors and career diplomats.

- How will you work on increasing morale within the Department of State and ensure our diplomatic corps is motivated and empowered?

Answer. The Department of State is fortunate to have a talented and highly motivated workforce. I agree with the Secretary, who has publicly stated that the State Department's employees are its most valuable resource. As I understand the goal

of the redesign process, it is for an employee-led process that will lay a new foundation for our diplomacy and development professionals to define America's leadership in the world for generations to come. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that this process leads to an organization in which our people are empowered with the support and tools they need to achieve our foreign policy goals.

Question 4. As I previously raised in a hearing with Deputy Secretary Sullivan, there are several recent policy changes that seem to be affecting morale negatively including a freeze on lateral movements in the Department (significantly limiting the career growth opportunities of civil servants), as well as a freeze on hiring eligible family members (EFMs) at overseas posts and hiring retired Foreign Service Offices to backfill critical positions.

- What is your position on these policies and would you support a review or change of these recent policies?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Secretary to understand his vision for the hiring freeze policy. I will support the Secretary in aligning the Department's staffing programs to strategically recruit, retain, and develop the workforce of the future. I will continue to work with the Secretary and the employees of the Department to ensure that their ideas are incorporated and encourage a culture where employees are empowered.

Question 5. The Department of State has a handful of training/detail assignments that are important professional development opportunities for Foreign and Civil Servants. These programs include obtaining graduate degrees, as well as working within other federal agencies, the military, and Congress, which makes Foreign and Civil Service Officers more effective and strengthens the agencies/organizations in which they serve. As such, I was disappointed to find out that the Secretary was considering significantly reducing and/or ending these opportunities.

- As Under Secretary of State for Management will you ensure that these important professional development opportunities are continued? How do you plan to ensure the continued development of the diplomatic corps?

Answer. If confirmed, I will ensure that professional development continues to be a priority. Developing a workforce that is responsive to the threats of today and tomorrow requires continued investment in their training and professional development and is one of my top priorities.

Question 6. I appreciated your commitment during your nomination hearing to "consult with Congress" on the reorganization/redesign process, because I have serious concerns regarding the process of implementation. In particular, beyond the "listening tour" and working groups used to inform the initial modifications, how do you plan to socialize the organizational changes within the Department of State?

Answer. Secretary Tillerson and Deputy Secretary Sullivan have been very clear that the redesign effort is employee led. In addition to the listening tour, more than 200 State Department and USAID employees took part in the working groups. In addition, I understand that the Secretary and Deputy regularly communicate various milestones in the process to the Department's employees, meet with Embassy staffs, and engage in town halls. If confirmed, I would respect and reinforce the employee-led nature of the redesign process and similarly engage with the Department's employees.

Question 7. As was raised during your hearing, there are many high-level positions within the Department of State that have yet to be filled and are critical to the successful operations of our diplomatic mission, including the Director General of Human Resources. How will you encourage the administration to nominate and fill these positions in a timely fashion?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to prioritizing the filling of vacant senior positions at the Department. This will include working with Diplomatic Security to ensure any selected candidates move through the extensive vetting and clearance process in a timely manner.

Question 8. We are concerned about reports that there are efforts to consolidate decision-making power within the Department, specifically in the Office of Policy Planning that is staffed with non-Senate confirmed officials. This would undermine the role of the Deputy Secretary and Under Secretary for Political Affairs that are Senate-confirmed positions and hold critical roles within the Department. Will you ensure that individuals responsible for final decisions on specific policies, budget, funding disbursement, and anything else related to implementing major foreign policy objectives of the United States will be made by principals who have been confirmed by the Senate?

Answer. While many individuals in the Department provide valuable advice, the Secretary of State is responsible for decisions made on implementing major foreign policy objectives.

The Department has a deep bench of experienced professionals serving in key positions across the Department who are highly capable and help the Secretary lead the Department and advance U.S. interests worldwide.

Question 9. I was pleased you highlighted the importance of cybersecurity as one of your priorities as Under Secretary, because I was seriously concerned by reports that the Department was considering closing the Office of the Coordinator for Cyber Issues. The recent Department of State/Foreign Operations Appropriations Bill for FY 2018, specifically allocated funding for this office, because of its indisputable importance given the growing use of cyberwarfare, including the Russian attack against the United States in the last Presidential election. Can you confirm that you will ensure the Office of the Coordinator for Cyber Issues is preserved under the reorganization? Also, what other strategies will you propose to strengthen our ability to combat cyberwarfare?

Answer. It is my understanding that there are a variety of initiatives already underway to address issues of cybersecurity. While I have not been briefed on the specifics of the disposition of the office of the Coordinator for Cyber Issues, if confirmed, I commit to reinforcing those efforts and elicit additional recommendations to strengthen the Department's cybersecurity and defend against cyber attacks.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO ERIC M. UELAND BY SENATOR RON JOHNSON

Question 1. Often, there is a wide gulf between U.S. foreign policy actions and how they are perceived around the world. The resulting anti-Americanism has a toxic effect on the United States' ability to secure our vital interests globally—a problem that has been compounded by the neglect of our public diplomacy programs since the end of the Cold War. Thankfully, one aspect of U.S. public diplomacy that has been maintained is our international exchange programs. I know the administration is considering curtailing some of these programs as part of its State Department review. As Undersecretary of State for Management, you will be involved in the fate of these exchanges. What is your view of their value to U.S. foreign policy? Specifically, do you believe that International Military Education & Training (IMET) funding is vital to achieving U.S. foreign policy goals? Do you support continuing the Summer Work Travel (SWT) exchange program?

Answer. If confirmed, I pledge to consult with Department experts to learn more about these programs and their value to U.S. foreign policy. I agree with you on the value of exchanges generally in fostering engagement and dialogue. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the overall budget request concentrates resources where they offer the most value and impact to U.S. national security and foreign policy priorities.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO ERIC M. UELAND BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

Question 1. Mr. Ueland, when I asked you about the potential for the administration to use "impoundment" to enforce budget cuts, which goes against the Impoundment Control Act of 1974, you replied that "the Budget Act talks about two different ways monies can be looked at by the executive." I'm assuming you were alluding to rescissions and deferrals. Given your experience on the Senate Budget Committee, could you explain, with detail, the circumstances under which an administration would be in violation of the Impoundment Control Act? What procedures would an administration need to follow in order not to be in violation of the Act?

Answer. My answer may have been a bit rusty—I cannot recall the last time I discussed impoundment before your question in the hearing. I have reviewed the issue and found that in general, the Impoundment Control Act of 1974 (ICA) provides for specific procedures with respect to potential impoundments, including the submission by the President of a special message to Congress each time a permanent rescission of budgetary resources is proposed and each time funds are deferred as provided for under the ICA. The circumstances under which such a message would be submitted to Congress would have to be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

Question 2. At the end of our discussion, you mentioned that the "implementation [of impoundment] might fall in your lane." Could you explain what you meant? How, and under what circumstances, would you administer the impoundment of funds at the Department of State?

Answer. As I discussed at the hearing, throughout my preparation for confirmation no one has approached me about anything in relation to impoundment. Questions at the committee were the first time the topic has been raised to me. To the extent if carrying out such a hypothetical instruction touches any of the bureaus or offices in the portfolio of the Undersecretary for Management, it "might fall in [my] lane," and that's what I meant.

During my hearing, I stated that no one has approached me about anything in relation to impoundment, so I have no information as to how, or under what circumstances, I would administer such hypothetical impoundment of funds at the Department of State, if such execution would touch on the operation of any of the bureaus or offices in the portfolio of the Undersecretary for Management.

Question 3. Would you describe, in detail, the difference between routine administrative actions and delays and impoundments? Please use examples.

Answer. While I cannot comment on hypothetical scenarios, I do believe that issues related to administrative actions and delays and impoundments depend on the specific facts and circumstances. If confirmed, I would seek to ensure that the Department obligates funding appropriated by Congress consistent with applicable law, including the Impoundment Control Act of 1974.

Question 4. Could you please detail your interpretation of the 1975 Supreme Court case, *Train v. City of New York*, which is referenced in the report to the FY18 State, Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee bill? What impact did this case have on the President's "power of impoundment?"

Answer. I am not in a position to provide an interpretation of this specific Supreme Court decision. If confirmed, I would seek to ensure that the Department obligates funding appropriated by Congress consistent with applicable law, including the Impoundment Control Act of 1974.

Question 5. Mr. Ueland, referring back to your testimony, is there a legal difference between instructing someone to impound funds and implementing an order to impound funds?

Answer. The Impoundment Control Act of 1974 sets forth the required procedures for the proposed rescission or deferral of funds. Beyond that, no one has raised impoundment with me, beyond the questions raised at the hearing.

Question 6. If confirmed, will you commit that any action you take related to the management or expenditure of appropriated funds is consistent with all legal requirements and the intent of Congress?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit that any action I take related to the management or expenditure of appropriated funds will be consistent with applicable law, including the Impoundment Control Act of 1974.

Question 7. In response to Ranking Member Cardin's question about whether you would respond promptly and fully to committee requests, you began by saying you "expect to respond promptly and fully to all requests," and went on to say, "unless [you're] told by higher authorities not to." Mr. Ueland, you are nominated to fill one of only six Under Secretary positions at the State Department. The Under Secretary for Management, in particular, is a prestigious position with vast authorities. Your predecessor regularly came to Capitol Hill to brief Senators and staff. Could you please clarify which "higher authorities" you expect may prevent you from answering requests from Capitol Hill? When you answered this question, what issues came to mind as topics that may require a higher authority to tell you not to respond to a committee request?

Answer. I have an interest in a strong partnership with the Senate and Congress, including participating in regular discussions with Senators and staff on matters that fall within the portfolio of the Undersecretary for Management.

In the event of my confirmation, while carrying out my responsibilities and working cooperatively with the Senate and Congress, I will also be looking to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary. They are the "higher authorities" I referenced. What came to mind as I answered that question was not any issue, but the knowledge that working in partnership with Congress is a key objective, and both the Secretary and Deputy Secretary have the capacity to set direction and provide guidance and feedback to me as I carry out all elements of my work, including with Congress. I believe that both the Secretary and Deputy Secretary have told the Senate Foreign

Relations Committee of their interest in working with Congress, as have I. I look forward to carrying out our shared commitment.

Question 8. In your testimony, you note that “the security of staff and facilities overseas remains an issue.” If confirmed, will you ensure that the department continues to spend at least \$2.2 billion annually for new embassy construction and maintenance, as recommended by the Benghazi Accountability Review Board? Please explain whether you believe the \$2.2 billion figure properly reflects the Department’s needs with regard to these expenses in the coming years.

Answer. The security of staff and facilities overseas is of paramount importance, as recognized in the President’s FY 2018 budget request of \$2.2 billion for new embassy construction and maintenance. If confirmed, I will support the administration’s commitment to sustaining a robust budget for embassy security and maintenance consistent with the recommendations of the Benghazi Accountability Review Board.

Question 9. This week, the State Department submitted its “redesign” recommendations to OMB, outlining proposed reforms to the State Department and USAID in response to the President’s March executive order directing a reorganization of the executive branch. Does the State Department plan to submit this report to Congress? If so, when?

Answer. In light of not having been confirmed, I have not been a part of the redesign process. If confirmed, I am committed to working cooperatively with Congress and provide information and rationale and seek input and feedback on the redesign. Further, I will encourage the Department to provide regular updates to Congress on the issue.

Question 10. Mr. Ueland, the post of Director General of the Foreign Service has been vacant since the last DG, Arnold Chicon, left on June 2, 2017. It is currently being filled in an acting capacity by the Human Resources Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, William E. Todd, who is a former ambassador to Cambodia and a member of the Senior Executive Service, but not the Senior Foreign Service. According to law, he is ineligible to be nominated by the President to be a permanent replacement. Also according to this law, a Senior Foreign Service officer must be in place to advise the Secretary on personnel matters. The need for such professional advice is great as the Department carries out planning for a major reorganization. While the Department is weighing the Trump administration’s reorganization plans, if confirmed, who do you and Secretary Tillerson intend to go to for advice on Foreign Service personnel matters in the absence of a Senate-confirmed Director-General? When do you believe a replacement for Chicon will be nominated?

Answer. I share your interest in filling the position of Director General of the Foreign Service as soon as possible. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Department continues to work closely with the White House on this and other senior leadership positions. The Department has a deep bench of experienced career professionals that are highly capable and able to lead the Department and advance U.S. interests worldwide such as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Todd, a career Senior Executive Service Civil Servant and two-time ambassador. He is assisted by two career Senior Foreign Service Officer Deputy Assistant Secretaries and a career Senior Executive and can tap into the experience and expertise of a number of senior Foreign Service Officer colleagues, including Under Secretaries and Assistant Secretaries.

Question 11. Mr. Ueland, if confirmed, your office also will oversee foreign missions in the United States. Are there conditions under which the Russians could regain access to the facilities that they recently lost access to in the United States? Can I have your commitment that you will notify Congress and in particular, the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on USAID and State Department Management, of any change in this regard?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to consulting with the Department’s experts to consider options on strategy and solutions. I hope to move forward to achieve the stated goal of both of our countries: improved relations and increased cooperation on areas of mutual concern. If confirmed, I commit to informing Congress of any developments.

Question 12. If confirmed, will you commit to working closely with the FBI to help notify them (in a timely fashion) of Russian officials seeking clearance to travel within the United States?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue the Department’s commitment to inter-agency cooperation. I look forward to working very closely with the FBI on the travel of Russian officials within the United States.

Question 13. If confirmed, will you work with the future Assistant Secretary of Europe and Eurasia, as well as the future U.S. Ambassador to the Russian Federation, to ensure that any limitations or restrictions U.S. diplomats experience in Russia will be met with parity for Russian diplomats in the U.S.?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with my colleagues, including the Department's Office of Foreign Missions which I will oversee, to consider reciprocity prior to extending privileges and benefits to the foreign missions in the United States, including that of Russia. I look forward to fully supporting, encouraging, and enhancing the use of reciprocity to improve the secure and efficient operation of our missions abroad.

Question 14. My office has received calls from career officials at the Department of State complaining that the Office of Civil Rights is often inappropriately used as a tool to discipline civil service employees who aren't engaged in discriminatory behavior. Harassment or discrimination based on age, sex, gender, race, religion, or ethnicity is a serious matter and should be dealt with immediately. Any deviation from this Office's core responsibilities to encourage a safe and diverse workforce is concerning. If confirmed, will you work with the Secretary of State to look into these complaints and ensure that the Office of Civil Rights is elevating cases involving employees who have been discriminated against for their age, sex, gender, race, religion, or ethnicity, rather than being used as an arbitrary disciplining tool?

Answer. The Department of State's Office of Civil Rights (S/OCR) serves an integral role in propagating equity, fairness, and inclusion at the Department. S/OCR is charged with processing complaints of discrimination from U.S. citizen employees, former employees, and applicants for employment based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, gender identity, and sexual orientation), national origin, age (40 or older), retaliation, disability, or genetic information. S/OCR also oversees the Department's compliance with anti-harassment laws and policies. In order to preserve the integrity of the workplace and ensure that the Department meets its obligations under the law, the attorneys in S/OCR conduct harassment training, manage harassment reporting, and conduct harassment investigations to ensure that all allegations of sexual and discriminatory harassment are properly addressed. S/OCR is a neutral office and does not make any discipline decisions with respect to complaints of discrimination or harassment complaints. Per Department policies (3 FAM 1525—Anti-Sexual Harassment Policy, 3 FAM 1526—Discriminatory Harassment Policy, 3 FAM 4300—Disciplinary Action (Including Separation for Cause)), discipline decisions are made by the Bureau of Human Resources. S/OCR has no role in any discipline decisions for any employees. If confirmed, I will ensure that S/OCR continues to carry out its important mission in accordance with Department policies.

Question 15. What are your views of the dissent channel at the Department of State, and if confirmed, how will you ensure the integrity of this channel?

Answer. I am fully committed to the Dissent Channel as enshrined in the Department's Foreign Affairs Manual (FAM). For over forty years, the Dissent Channel has served as a vehicle for U.S. citizen State Department employees to express dissenting or alternative views on substantive issues of policy to the Department's most senior leadership without fear of penalty. It exists because the State Department has a strong interest in facilitating open, creative, and uncensored dialogue on substantive foreign policy issues within the professional foreign affairs community and a responsibility to foster an atmosphere supportive of such dialogue. Pursuant to the FAM, Dissent Channel messages, including the identity of the authors, are a most sensitive element in the internal deliberative process and are to be protected accordingly.

Question 16. As you consider ways to achieve efficiency as part of the Department's redesign, wouldn't it be more efficient to have a single budget shop that includes the Office of U.S. Foreign Assistance Resources (F) and the Bureau for Budget and Planning? What are the options under consideration for streamlining these two entities? Would they report to you?

Answer. The redesign process has been employee led, including 35,000 State and USAID employees in the United States and around the world who shared views in listening sessions; 200 State and USAID employees who participated in the working groups; and numerous ideas and suggestions submitted through online portals. As I understand it, the Secretary recently submitted to the Office of Management and Budget an Agency Reform Plan with specific recommendations for improving State and USAID. The Department will now pivot toward preparing for implementation of reforms as soon as they are approved by OMB, as well as reforms not requiring OMB approval. If confirmed, I look forward to being briefed on these reforms and engaging the Congress to discuss them.

Question 17. The State Department has taken a number of steps in recent years to make U.S. foreign assistance more transparent and thus, more effective. One of these is the creation of a public website managed by the State Department—ForeignAssistance.gov—where the taxpayer can review how and where the U.S. is spending foreign aid dollars. Every federal agency that provides foreign assistance funding is required to share its information on this website. What is the agency participation rate for the site? What agencies lag behind in sharing their data, and what is the reason for the delay in sharing this information with U.S. taxpayers? What is the status of the State Department's own data on this site?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with the Office of Foreign Assistance to help the Department meet the requirement of the Foreign Aid Transparency and Accountability Act of 2016 that all implementing agencies report their foreign assistance to ForeignAssistance.gov by the end of FY 2018. I believe that the Department of State takes seriously its responsibility for making data on foreign assistance financial activities public, and I will work to continue to make progress on implementing its Foreign Assistance Data Review initiative.

Question 18. I was pleased that the State Department issued an Evaluation Policy in January 2015 encouraging all bureaus and independent offices to undertake at least one evaluation per year “to achieve the most effective U.S. foreign policy outcomes and greater accountability to our primary stakeholders, the American people.” However, the quality of State's evaluations varies and it's unclear how learning from these evaluations is used to guide the agency program and budget decisions. What are your plans to ensure that the evaluation policy is carried out, especially related to security assistance programs?

Answer. If confirmed, I will seek to ensure that the Department follows an effective and useful evaluation policy. Accountability to the American taxpayer is a core priority for this administration, and evaluations are critical to holding ourselves accountable.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO ERIC M. UELAND BY SENATOR JOHNNY ISAKSON

Question 1. The outcome of the ongoing discussion about the redesign of the State Department and USAID is very important to me. Will you commit to engaging with my staff and me as that process moves forward?

Answer. Yes. As I said in my hearing, having been a congressional staffer for many years I appreciate the need and the value for a robust conversation and partnership with this committee and its members if I have the privilege of being confirmed.

Question 2. In the event that the redesign requires Congressional authorization, will you commit to working with me to flesh out whatever reforms are proposed?

Answer. Yes, and I look forward to engaging with you on this effort.

Question 3. In April 2016, the U.S. State Department asked Emory University Hospital to accept and treat a patient, an American non-profit employee working abroad, with Lassa fever. Emory responded and successfully treated the patient. However, Emory has \$356,000 in outstanding bills that the Government seems to be unwilling to reimburse. In May 2017, Emory sent a letter to Sec. Tillerson and has yet to receive a response. Can I have your commitment to work with me to resolve this issue and to ensure that in the event that any hospital is asked to treat a patient suffering from a highly infectious disease by the U.S. Department of State that they are then reimbursed for their treatment costs?

Answer. If confirmed, you have my commitment to work with you on this issue. I understand that the U.S. Government has important partners in the private sector, such as Emory University Hospital, for treatment and care of patients with highly-infectious diseases. I will seek to maintain that partnership while ensuring that the Department assists to the extent of its statutory authority.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO ERIC M. UELAND BY SENATOR JEFF MERKLEY

Question 1. There are wide-spread reports that are uncertainly about the reorganization, and budget and staffing cuts are creating low morale at the Department

of State. If confirmed, how do you plan to address talent retention so that an attrition-based reduction does not result in State losing its best and brightest employees?

Answer. The Department of State is fortunate to have a talented and highly motivated workforce. I agree with the Secretary, who has publicly stated that the State Department's employees are its most valuable resource. As I understand the goal of the redesign process, it is for an employee-led process that will lay a new foundation for our diplomacy and development professionals to define America's leadership in the world for generations to come. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that this process leads to an organization in which our people have the support and tools they need to achieve our foreign policy goals.

Question 2. If confirmed, what specific steps will you take to work with Congress on any reorganization plans for the State Department and USAID?

Answer. Yes. As I said in my hearing, having been a congressional staffer for many years I appreciate the need and the value for a robust conversation and partnership with this committee if I have the privilege of being confirmed.

Question 3. If confirmed, in your role overseeing Human Resources, how do you plan to attract new talent, address talent retention and increase diversity recruitment?

Answer. I agree with the Secretary's recent speech, in which he stated that a strong, talented, workforce representative of the American people is essential for the Department's success. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Department continues its active recruitment program to bring talented and diverse candidates to the Department. I look forward to continuing the Department's commitment to the Pickering and Rangel Fellowship programs. Ultimately, the Department's ability to recruit and retain a talented and diverse workforce will rest on ensuring the redesign process results in an organization in which our people have the support and tools they need to achieve our foreign policy goals.

Question 4. If confirmed, do you commit to working with Congress to communicate the State Department's efforts to promote equal opportunity and inclusion for all American employees in direct hire and personal service contractor status to include equal opportunity for all races, ethnicities, ages, genders, and service-disabled veterans, with a focus on traditionally underrepresented minority groups?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to continuing the Department's efforts to promote equal opportunity and inclusion for all American employees and contractors, and to work with Congress to communicate these efforts. I believe that the Department takes seriously its obligation to be a "model employer" of individuals with disabilities, as required by U.S. law.

Question 5. If confirmed, will you continue to support professional development programs, including details, educational programs, and fellowships?

Answer. If confirmed, I will seek to apply resources to appropriate training, details, and fellowship opportunities for the Department's workforce that provide invaluable professional development. These programs are an integral part of ensuring that employees have the skills necessary for current and future work assignments.

Question 6. If confirmed, do you pledge to provide detailed information to Congress on diversity employment statistics that include data on ethnicity, race and gender by grade and occupational code for civil service personnel and Foreign Service promotion statistics by ethnicity, race and gender?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to provide information to Congress on diversity employment statistics to the extent permitted by law. I understand that the Department's website provides some diversity statistics as well as information on Foreign Service promotions.

Question 7. If confirmed, will you provide information on how many positions are unfilled and how long they have been unfilled by Bureau and Office and the reasons why they haven't been filled?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to prioritizing the filling of vacant senior positions at the Department and ensuring the Department continues to work closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for those vacant leadership positions. I commit to informing Congress on the Department's efforts to fill vacant positions.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
 SUBMITTED TO ERIC M. UELAND BY SENATOR CORY BOOKER

Question 1. It was reported in a recent Wall Street Journal article that several State Department managed J-1 visa exchange programs—including Summer Work Travel, Au Pair, Intern, Trainee, and Camp Counselor—are under review by the Department and White House as part of the President's Buy Hire American, Hire American Executive Order. In New Jersey, we had 10,642 recipients of the J-1 visa exchange program, half of those went to work in Jersey's tourism industry that would have experienced shortages or negative impacts on their businesses without this resource. At the same time, these individuals go back to their home countries with a favorable view of the U.S. extending at a low cost, U.S. diplomacy and cultural ties.

As Under Secretary of State for Management, you will oversee the agencies process and procedures. I understand that as part of the Buy American and Hire America Executive Order, changes which could substantially change the J-Visa programs are under consideration.

- I would like your assurance that if recommendations are made to eliminate or decrease the size of this program, that the Department notifies the appropriate Congressional committees and follows appropriate procedures and engages in a formal notice and comment in order to ensure stakeholder input and develop a fulsome record prior to making changes. Can you give me your assurances that this will be done?

Answer. Educational and cultural exchange programs are undeniably an important part of the State Department's diplomatic mission. The Department knows that they increase American global competitiveness, forge relationships and understanding, and contribute to increased national security. I can assure you that if I am confirmed we will continue to support our educational and cultural exchange programs in ways that best serve the needs of the American people. Also, as I said in my hearing, having been a congressional staffer for many years I appreciate the need and the value for a robust conversation and partnership with this committee if I have the privilege of being confirmed.

Question 2. Since traveling to embassies and meeting with our diplomats, I hear repeatedly that one of the greatest diplomatic tools they have people-to-people exchange that support global engagement that is critical to our country's prosperity and security. Exchange programs are not only an important State Department tool to promote American foreign policy, the programs also position our citizens to capitalize on an increasing globalized world.

- Do you have any personal experience with international exchange?

Answer. I value the important role that dialogue and exchange can play. While I have not personally been involved in an international exchange program, if confirmed I look forward to being briefed on current exchange programs and how we are using them to advance U.S. foreign policy goals.

Question 3. Can you commit that the State Department will advocate to keep as many tools at your disposal to reach different audiences, rather than cutting off some of your options?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the overall budget request concentrates resources where they offer the most value and impact to U.S. national security and foreign policy priorities. Maintaining flexibility and options will be an essential consideration in the budget and management process.

Question 4. As you may know earlier this year Pickering and Rangel Fellows who completed their coursework and internships were told by the State Department that they would not be inducted into the Foreign Service as scheduled. These are the two premier programs that bring our nation's diversity in all its forms—ethnic, linguistic, socio-cultural, experiential, and many more—to bear in support of our foreign policy.

After Congressional pushback, the Department relented and said that the classes would be issued a waiver and allowed to join the next Foreign Service class. In a recent speech, Secretary Tillerson said, "Our current fellowships and internships are valuable pipelines of talent for our organization and necessary to achieving our diversity objectives," and that the Department "will be keeping all of our fellowship and internship programs in place."

- I am pleased to hear this though I find it hard to square what the Department's previous actions. Will the Department continue to induct future Rangel and Pickering Fellows in the Foreign Service as scheduled? If not, why not?

- Do you plan to make any changes to these Congressionally-authorized programs and do you pledge to consult with Congress before doing so?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the Department of State's commitment to the Pickering and Rangel programs as its premier diversity recruitment programs. The Department must continue to value these talented individuals and the skills they bring into the Department, and I anticipate no changes to the programs. As the Secretary recently stated, the Department has a long-standing and enduring commitment to shape and build a more diverse and inclusive organization.

Question 5. For the State Department and USAID to carry out their missions, diversity is an urgent matter of national security implications. Our nation is blessed with an unparalleled strength in having people of all backgrounds and experiences. Thus having a Foreign Service that represents the full richness of the American people as we conduct our diplomacy and development efforts allows us to connect with a diverse world in unique and meaningful ways.

However, the State Department has much work to do. Latino/Hispanic and Asian representation within the State Department's workforce are at 6 percent each and while African Americans represent 15 percent of the workforce, they only represent 6 percent of the Foreign Service.

- What do you think the State Department can do to improve these numbers and how can we better retain and elevate diverse leaders into more senior positions in the Department?

Answer. I agree with the Secretary's recent speech, in which he stated that a strong, talented, representative workforce is essential for the Department's success. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Department continues its active recruitment program to bring talented and diverse candidates to the Department, including the use of Diplomats-in-Residence hosted at universities across the country. I will also ensure that the Department continues its commitment to the Pickering and Rangel Fellowship programs. For retention purposes, I will encourage mentoring, career development counseling, and active engagement with the Department's various, diverse employee constituencies. If confirmed, I aim to ensure all our supervisors reflect the strengths of our nation and promote an inclusive merit-based culture that encourages collaboration, flexibility, and fairness.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO JOHN R. BASS BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

Question 1. Defeating the Afghan Taliban will continue to be difficult so long as it has a sanctuary on the other side of the border in Pakistan. Do you support drone strikes against the Afghan Taliban, regardless of what side of the border it occupies?

Answer. The United States employs a full range of options—including military and diplomatic ones—to resolve this conflict. Military action is not the centerpiece of our strategy. Our efforts in Afghanistan are part of a larger regional strategy. That said, we will exert pressure against the Taliban, wherever they might be, using all elements of national power. If confirmed, I will support full implementation of the President's strategy, including its military components, to ensure the Taliban no longer believes it can wait us out.

Question 2. How do you assess the National Unity Government? Is it stable? Do you see the structure—with both a President and CEO—as something that the U.S. should continue to encourage?

Answer. President Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah share a common vision for a secure, stable, and prosperous Afghanistan and are working to bring the reforms needed to advance this vision.

In recent months, both of Afghanistan's leaders have shown in their words and actions that their working relationship is more effective and increasingly producing results. Both expressed their determination to support one another's efforts to implement reforms and live up to their commitments.

It is a government that largely defends itself and has a reformist president willing to work closely with international partners.

It is up to the Afghan people to decide the future structure of their government, including whether or not to retain the President and CEO positions.

Question 3. Do you believe that the Afghan Government should seek a negotiated settlement with the Taliban? If yes, what "redlines" should the U.S. Government insist upon?

Answer. A negotiated peace settlement between the Afghan Government and the Taliban is critical to ending the conflict and ensuring the long-term preservation of our national security interests. We have signaled to the Afghan Government and others our priority to launch a peace process, and we regularly engage Afghanistan's neighbors to press the Taliban to come to the negotiating table.

The U.S. Government has clearly outlined the broad conditions of an acceptable agreement to end the conflict, which would require the Taliban to cease violence, break all ties to international terrorists, and accept the Afghan Constitution, including its protections for women and minorities. These end-conditions are necessary to protect the gains achieved over the last 16 years.

I believe there is an opportunity to make a fresh push to start a peace process in light of the fact we are no longer announcing any artificial deadline for the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan. The primary obstacle to a peace process is the Taliban's confidence it can outlast us on the battlefield, and indeed, much of this confidence in years past came from the group's awareness of our withdrawal deadlines. We can therefore use the President's new South Asia strategy to make a stronger argument to the Taliban that we will never allow them to win militarily, and that a negotiated political settlement is the only viable path for them.

I personally plan to be a firm advocate for setting the conditions to achieve a political settlement with my interlocutors across the Afghan political spectrum.

Question 4. The State Department's 2017 Trafficking in Persons Report upgraded Afghanistan from the Tier 2 Watch List to Tier 2. Do you commit to discuss consistently with senior Afghan Government leaders the U.S. Government's concerns about trafficking in persons?

Answer. We remain committed to working closely and consistently with the Government of Afghanistan to combat trafficking in persons in all its forms. The Afghan Government made marked progress over the past year, by enacting a new law on human trafficking that distinguishes between smuggling and trafficking, and that criminalizes various acts associated with bacha baazi, a practice in which men exploit boys for social and sexual entertainment. Since passage of the law, the Afghan Government has arrested and punished some officials found complicit in bacha baazi.

However, there are still several areas of concern, including official complicity, accountability for abuses, and a shortage of protective services for victims of trafficking. If confirmed, I will lead the embassy's engagement with Afghan Government leaders on this issue, and we will continue to work with human rights organizations and civil society and to support the Afghan Government in its efforts.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO JOHN R. BASS BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question 1. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. Promoting democratic governance and adherence to core human rights have been priorities and core responsibilities for me throughout my career. Much of my work has focused on supporting a core national security goal of the United States, under administrations of both parties, for three generations: promoting a Europe that is whole, free and at peace. In that regard, several of my assignments at State Department headquarters in the 1990s focused on supporting efforts of countries that aspired to join the NATO alliance to build and strengthen the rule of law, democratic institutions, and competitive electoral environments.

While serving in Embassy Rome, I worked closely with Italian trade unions and civil society organizations to encourage them to provide additional support to nascent counterparts in Cuba as part of a broader effort to strengthen Cuban civil society. As an advisor to Vice President Cheney in 2004–05, I concentrated on reinforcing diplomatic efforts to create a competitive campaign environment and impartial election administration for the November 2004 presidential election in Ukraine. After evidence of widespread fraud was revealed, I helped mobilize like-minded NATO and other partners to push the Ukrainian Government to address the fraud, which resulted in a revote, which produced a more free and fair election and a different outcome.

While leading the Provincial Reconstruction program for Baghdad province 2008–09, I oversaw efforts to underwrite development of modern legal curricula for the Baghdad University law School, and professional development and training pro-

grams for the defense bar, strengthening legal protections and the rule of law for Iraqi citizens.

As Ambassador to Georgia, I strongly supported and ensured funding for training programs to strengthen political party development, election administration, independent media and civil society organizations. I also worked closely with a wide range of government officials and political party leaders to ensure opposition parties and candidates were able to campaign without interference or pressure. These efforts contributed to 2012 parliamentary elections that led to the first peaceful official transfer of power between political parties in contemporary Georgia's history.

In my current role as Ambassador to Turkey, I have encouraged adherence to constitutional norms and Turkey's international commitments under the U.N. Charter and Helsinki Final Act to address restrictions and erosion of freedoms of speech and assembly. I have criticized the Government's increased criminalization of speech and pressure on independent media and continued to strongly support religious minorities and protect their ability to worship freely.

Question 2. What are the most pressing human rights concerns in the Afghanistan today? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to advance human rights and democracy in Afghanistan? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. Our greatest human rights concern in Afghanistan today continues to be the actions and consequences of the ongoing insurgency: its effects on access to education, health, and justice, and the challenge of building and sustaining adherence to human rights norms by government security forces as they combat the insurgency.

The Taliban and ISIS actively target schools, media outlets, government and aid workers, human rights activists, and ethnic and religious minorities. We also continue to receive credible reports of human rights abuses committed by government actors, including security forces.

If confirmed, I will urge the Afghan Government to increase its efforts to address these abuses. We will assist the Afghan Government in upholding human rights and eventually ending abuses by partnering with our Afghan colleagues in the security and justice sectors to ensure they have the requisite capacity and expertise needed to prevent abuses, and to ensure accountability should they occur. As one component of this effort, we will continue to provide human rights training for government security forces and we will engage quickly with the Afghan Government when abuses do occur to ensure that there is full and transparent justice. We will also continue to work with Afghan civil society and with our allies and other partners to advocate for improvements in human rights. My hope is that our combined efforts over time will provide Afghans the opportunity to further strengthen democratic governance and human rights protections because they believe them to be in their national interest.

Question 3. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response? What challenges will you face in Afghanistan in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. There are significant obstacles to progress, including widespread violence, ethnic tension, weak application of the rule of law, government capacity challenges, a climate of official impunity, and the absence of government writ in many areas of the country. The challenges facing us are significant, but we work closely with the Afghan Government, and Afghanistan has made some important progress over the past 16 years. Perhaps most important at this juncture, the Afghan Government tells us these issues are important to their performance and legitimacy, and they are actively seeking our help to improve. If confirmed, I will lead our engagement and work to support the Afghan Government in its continued efforts.

Question 4. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in Afghanistan?

Answer. If confirmed, I will lead and direct the embassy's engagement with human rights, civil society, and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with human rights organizations in Afghanistan, as I have in my prior appointments to Turkey and Georgia.

Question 5. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Afghanistan to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted in Afghanistan?

Answer. If I am confirmed, we will continue to engage with the Afghan Government on such cases, and will continue to voice our strong support for the Afghan constitution, adherence to the rule of law, and due process.

Question 6. If confirmed, what steps will you take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure that provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights?

Answer. If I am confirmed, we will continue to thoroughly vet all individuals and units nominated for U.S.-funded security assistance, in accordance with the Leahy law. If we find credible information of a gross violation of human rights, we will take the necessary steps in accordance with the law, to ensure that responsible parties do not receive U.S. funded assistance, and will work with the Afghan Government to bring them to justice. We will also work with the Afghan Government to identify cases where individuals have been brought to justice in order to remediate units restricted from receiving assistance.

Question 7. Will you engage with the Afghans on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. If confirmed, I will lead the embassy's continued engagement on a wide range of issues centered on human rights, civil rights, and governance. As a result of engagement by USG personnel serving in Embassy Kabul, the Afghan Government has made human rights training a key component of training for security force personnel. It also is making legal reforms to address issues facing vulnerable populations, such as the enactment of the Law to Combat Crimes of Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants in January 2017, which, for the first time, criminalizes various acts associated with bacha bazi, including sexual exploitation of a minor and forced dancing. Our continued engagement will support further progress by the Afghan Government.

Question 8. What will you do to build people-to-people ties between Americans and Afghans and to support Afghan civil society, human rights activists, and independent media? What do you need from Washington-based U.S. officials on this?

Answer. U.S. Embassy Kabul implements a robust array of public diplomacy initiatives that strengthen academic and professional relationships between Afghans and Americans. If confirmed, I will lead our Embassy's engagement with civil society, human rights activists, and independent media. One of my early priorities will be to assess and improve our engagement strategy to ensure it is supporting fully our efforts to achieve the objectives outlined in the President's new South Asia Strategy. We will look to many elements of the U.S. Government, including Congress, for continued support to ensure our exchange and other programs of this nature are effective and achieving the intended results.

Question 9. What is your understanding for the conditions under which the U.S. could begin to diminish its military presence in the country?

Answer. As President Trump explained in his August 21 address to the American people, a core pillar of the new South Asia Strategy is a shift from a time-based approach, to one based on conditions on the ground. He was clear about our objective in Afghanistan, which is to make Americans safer. A premature withdrawal risks creating a vacuum that terrorists would exploit, as they did on 9/11.

The President was also clear that military power alone will not bring peace to Afghanistan. Rather, "strategically applied force" can "create conditions for a political process to achieve a lasting peace." The mission of our troops in Afghanistan is to apply force in order to make clear to the Taliban that they cannot achieve their objectives on the battlefield and must instead enter negotiations with Afghan Government.

President Trump has delegated to the Secretary of Defense the authority to determine the level of troops necessary to achieve this mission. I would refer you to the Department of Defense for a description of the military conditions under which those troops might be drawn down.

Question 10. What ways do you see to ramp up U.S. engagement in the peace and reconciliation process? How will you personally involve yourself?

Answer. A negotiated peace accord with the Taliban is critical to ending the conflict, stabilizing Afghanistan and protecting our core national security interests. We have signaled to the Afghan Government and others our priority is to launch a peace process. We regularly engage Afghanistan's neighbors to press the Taliban to come to the negotiating table.

The broad outlines of an acceptable agreement to end the conflict would require the Taliban to cease violence, break all ties to international terrorists, and accept the Afghan Constitution, including its protections for women and minorities. These

end-conditions are necessary to ensure the gains achieved over the last 16 years are protected.

I believe there is an opportunity to make a fresh push to start a peace process in light of the fact we are no longer announcing any artificial deadline for the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan. Many observers have noted that the primary obstacle to a peace process is the Taliban's confidence it can outlast us on the battlefield, and indeed, much of this confidence in years past came from the group's awareness of our withdrawal deadlines. We can therefore use the President's new South Asia strategy to make a stronger argument to the Taliban that we will not allow them to win militarily, and that a negotiated political settlement provides them the best opportunity to achieve some of their objectives.

I plan to firmly advocate for increased reliance on politics and negotiations, rather than violence, to address a range of challenges in Afghanistan. I intend to continually seek opportunities to lay the groundwork for a peace process with interlocutors across the Afghan political spectrum.

Question 11. The U.S. has engaged in a series of efforts, dating back to the Tokyo commitments, to incentivize Afghan reforms through our assistance programming. How is the recently announced Kabul Compact any different from these past efforts? Why does the administration expect that the behavior of the Afghan Government will be any different?

Answer. Unlike the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework and other donor-driven commitments of the past, the Kabul Compact is an Afghan-led initiative. President Ghani proposed the Compact in his April 2017 meeting with General McMaster as a way to hold the Afghan Government accountable. In the words of President Ghani, the primary purpose of the Compact is to "restore trust" in the Afghan Government and demonstrate to the Afghan public, the American public, and the international community that the Afghan Government is "serious about making lasting reforms."

The Compact consists of reform benchmarks in four areas: governance, security, the economy, and peace and reconciliation. Working groups co-chaired by American and Afghan officials developed these benchmarks to measure progress over the next three years, and President Ghani has signed an official decree instructing all relevant ministries to implement and comply with the Compact's directives. He has also urged the working groups to provide monthly progress reports and, as appropriate, make those reports public. This frequent coordination with our Afghan counterparts will allow us to monitor more closely what the Afghan Government is doing and calibrate our diplomacy and foreign assistance accordingly.

Question 12. Please describe how you will diplomatically engage with Russia and the countries of Europe to urge more active participation in efforts to address poppy cultivation in Afghanistan.

Answer. We share Congress's concern regarding Afghanistan's unacceptably high level of opium cultivation and lack of eradication. Opium poppy production in Afghanistan undercuts good governance, fuels corruption, provides revenue to terror and militant groups, and undermines our national interests in Afghanistan and more broadly in South and Central Asia. The two greatest impediments to successful opium poppy eradication are insecurity and a lack of political will on the part of the Afghan Government. Eradication is politically unpopular, given the absence of a range of high-value alternative crops as well-suited to Afghanistan's poor soils and transport networks. Eradication operations have turned violent, resulting in deaths of both the Afghan security forces conducting the eradication and local farmers opposing eradication.

Most areas of high cultivation, such as Helmand province, are either under Taliban control or influence, complicating the Afghan Government's eradication efforts in areas where it does not effectively exercise control. Without improved security, eradication is likely to remain at unacceptably low levels.

The State Department takes very seriously the challenge posed by narcotics production in and trafficking from Afghanistan and is working with DEA and DOD to finalize an updated U.S. Counternarcotics Strategy for Afghanistan. Measures to generate Afghan political will to increase eradication will be a key component of this review. We will also explore possible options for engaging with Russia, Canada, and countries of Europe, all major markets for Afghan heroin, on how to address the challenges of curbing the Afghan opium trade. This engagement can be both bilateral and through multilateral fora, such as the Paris Pact Initiative. Given constraints imposed by both the security situation and reduced funding for USG counternarcotics programs in Afghanistan, the group will look to target key districts in high poppy producing areas of Afghanistan for best effect. The Department shares

deep concerns over the continued upward trend in opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan.

Question 13. I am very concerned about accountability for funds provided through the World Bank's Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF). What specific measures will you put in place to ensure that the World Bank is providing the U.S. taxpayer with the necessary information to ensure that these funds meet U.S. accountability standards?

Answer. The Department of State and USAID take very seriously the responsibility to ensure that U.S. taxpayer dollars are spent wisely in support of U.S. national security objectives. We are working with the World Bank and other ARTF donors to identify ways to expand the scope and intensity of ARTF management and oversight mechanisms. This includes stronger results frameworks and more extensive use of third-party project and resource disbursement monitoring. We are also looking at ways to strengthen communication between the World Bank and ARTF donors through regular portfolio reviews and more detailed results scorecards. Furthermore, USAID is working closely with the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) and other major ARTF donors on the fourth external evaluation review of the Fund. We will continue to conduct additional evaluations of the ARTF, as necessary, to ensure that U.S. taxpayer funds are used for the development purposes for which they are intended.

Question 14. SIGAR recently found that U.S. programming to promote Afghanistan's revenue generation through customs collection has been significantly deficient. Given that Afghanistan's best prospects for revenue generation appear to come in this sector, how do you plan to address this significant shortcoming? How will you work to encourage the Afghan authorities to tangibly improve their ability to address corruption at the border crossings and increase domestic revenue?

Answer. The Department of State, USAID, and the Afghan Government all agree that an electronic payment system would be an effective method for reducing corruption at customs checkpoints and collecting the additional revenue that the Government needs. President Ghani and CEO Abdullah are committed to increasing usage of the e-payment system, and since 2013 USAID's Afghanistan Trade and Revenue (ATAR) project has sought to improve the capacity of the Afghan Government to collect customs revenue through the system. The e-payment system is a module within the Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA), a software system developed by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and used in many countries' customs facilities. ASYCUDA has significantly reduced customs clearance times (from several days to several hours) and increased customs revenue.

Mission Afghanistan is addressing the issues with e-payment identified in the SIGAR report, including working with the Ministry of Communications on an E-Transaction Law and speeding the transfer of funds from Afghanistan's national bank, Da Afghanistan Bank (DAB), and commercial banks to government workers and other designated recipients. However, broader efforts to reduce customs corruption are likely to have the greatest impact on future revenue collection. For example, overly sensitive risk profiles are resulting in nearly all cargo being flagged at the borders—far too many to actually be inspected—providing opportunities for corruption to expedite clearance. The Afghanistan Customs Department is in the process of adjusting those profiles and procedures at the borders to improve system reliability and reduce corruption.

If confirmed, I will continue to engage President Ghani, Chief Executive Abdullah and other senior Afghan Government officials to ensure they sustain their focus on reducing corruption and improving further revenue collection by the Government.

Finally, it is worth noting that SIGAR's report examined only one of many focus areas that were part of the ATAR project. As of July 2017, ATAR had spent an estimated \$559,803 out of the \$77.8 million project ceiling for ATAR (approximately 0.7 percent) to support the implementation of e-payment technology. Other facets of ATAR have achieved significant results, including helping the Afghan Customs Department improve its risk management system to align it with international standards, supporting Afghanistan's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2016, and facilitating negotiations on trade and transit agreements with regional trading partners.

Question 15. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service? What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. My experience has given me many opportunities to build high-functioning teams with diverse members. I remain committed to equal employment opportunity principles. If confirmed, I will foster a work environment that recognizes the contributions of all employees, and will make sure they have information available about the Department's Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan, foreign affairs affinity organizations and opportunities specific to various groups.

If confirmed, I will encourage all supervisors to take available courses on EEO principles, diversity, and related issues. I will urge them to include unconscious bias and similar topics when they mentor junior colleagues. I will direct supervisors to transparently and fairly provide opportunities to all entry- and mid-level professionals. By providing time for professional development discussions to address diversity, I will highlight that this is a priority for me as the Ambassador.

Question 16. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question 17. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question 18. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in Afghanistan?

Answer. Neither I, nor any members of my immediate family have any financial interests in Afghanistan.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO JOHN R. BASS BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question 1. The Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction continues to issue reports that regularly highlight ongoing serious challenges the United States faces in our efforts to support Afghans rebuild their country. What steps will you take to ensure accountability and transparency in U.S. programs that directly support the Afghan Government?

Answer. The Department of State and USAID take seriously the responsibility to ensure accountability and transparency for U.S. taxpayer dollars. We provide the vast majority of our direct support to the Afghan Government through the World Bank's Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF). A large share of this assistance is conditions-based. Through the U.S.-Afghan New Development Partnership (NDP), the Afghan Government can receive up to \$200 million each year for meeting mutually agreed-upon reform benchmarks. The World Bank also manages the ARTF Incentive Program, which conditions donor assistance to the Afghan Government on the achievement of public financial management and fiscal policy reforms.

The World Bank uses a variety of monitoring tools, such as results frameworks and third-party monitors, to oversee the use of donor funds. U.S. Government officials meet regularly with World Bank staff in Kabul and Washington on the ARTF. We are working with the World Bank and other ARTF donors to identify ways to expand the scope and intensity of ARTF management and oversight mechanisms. Furthermore, USAID is working closely with the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) and other major ARTF donors on the fourth external evaluation review of the Fund. We will continue to conduct additional evaluations of the ARTF, as necessary, to ensure that U.S. taxpayer funds are used for the development purposes for which they are intended.

Direct government-to-government assistance constitutes only a small percentage of the assistance we provide to Afghanistan. Before implementing such programs, USAID undertakes an extensive risk assessment, known as a Public Financial Management Risk Assessment Framework (PFMRAF), to determine whether the ministry or entity has the systems and controls necessary to effectively manage U.S. government funds. After completion of the risk assessment for a ministry, USAID also performs its own internal risk review. Ultimately, a system of safeguards is in

place to ensure transparency and oversight of U.S. funds before USAID programs are implemented and funds are disbursed.

Question 2. Given the extreme limitations on movement of State Department and USAID personnel due to security concerns, what steps will you take to ensure effective oversight of USG programs throughout the country?

Answer. As the May 31 bombing just outside Kabul's international zone reminded us, Afghanistan is and will remain a dangerous place for U.S. diplomats and development specialists. At the same time, we recognize the importance of closely monitoring our programs in Afghanistan to ensure the appropriate and effective use of our assistance funding in this difficult operating environment. The Department of State and USAID have developed an innovative, multi-tiered monitoring approach for civilian assistance and public diplomacy programs in Afghanistan that utilizes multiple sources of information, including third-party monitors, reporting by implementing partners, and input from Afghan Government and civil society members, among others, to inform programmatic decision-making. This monitoring information allows the United States to expand programs that are working well and to terminate or adjust programs that are not achieving results. When appropriate, we have changed course to refocus resources on more productive programs that have a greater demonstrated impact on Afghanistan's development.

Question 3. Over the past few years, we have seen Iran more boldly assert regional presence, including in Afghanistan. How do you evaluate the evolving relationship between Iran and the Taliban? What do you see as Iran's intended outcome with increased activity and operations in Afghanistan? Is Iran's goal to continue simply destabilizing Afghanistan?

Answer. As Afghanistan's neighbor, Iran has an interest in Afghan security and stability. Iran is one of the top exporters of goods into Afghanistan, and is attempting to enhance its cultural and strategic connections with Afghan Shi'a in western and central Afghanistan. Iran has actively recruited thousands of Afghans to fight in Syria, both within the refugee population and inside the Shia population in Afghanistan, using a combination of religious, financial, or residency incentives.

We encourage Iran, and all of Afghanistan's neighbors, to fully support the Afghan Government and to put pressure on the Taliban to enter peace talks. However, the drawdown of international forces, political instability in Afghanistan, and the transition of U.S. administrations have led Iran to continue its hedging activity with the Taliban—ostensibly to combat ISIS' presence in the country. Iran has also been vocal about its opposition to the U.S. military presence in Afghanistan.

Despite reports that Tehran maintains links to the Taliban, Iran continues to profess support for an Afghan-led peace process and participates in regional fora on Afghanistan.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO JOHN R. BASS BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

Question 1. In your prepared statement, you mention the "Kabul Compact," also known as the "Afghan Compact," a set of benchmarks for reforms developed by President Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah. These benchmarks reportedly address governance, security, peace and reconciliation, and economics. In an interview in late August, General Nicholson said, "There are literally hundreds of milestones and benchmarks that the Afghans have agreed to meet." Both you and General Nicholson say that the Afghan Government has asked us to hold them accountable to these commitments. If confirmed, working with General Nicholson, do you commit to providing periodically to this committee and my office a detailed, specific, and written unclassified assessment of where the Afghan Government is falling short on these commitments and how Kabul plans to address these shortcomings?

Answer. As I have done during my service as Ambassador to Georgia and now as Ambassador to Turkey, I look forward to engaging with Congress on questions regarding our assessment of host government actions to meet bilateral commitments made with the United States.

I look forward to working with General Nicholson to encourage the Afghan Government to continue making progress on their stated obligations in the Kabul Compact, and intend to remain in close communication with Congress regarding the breadth of our relationship with Afghanistan.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
 SUBMITTED TO JOHN R. BASS BY SENATOR CORY BOOKER

Question 1. To what extent do you agree with Afghan officials' assessment that Pakistan is one, if not the, crucial impediment to stability in Afghanistan?

- Has Pakistan played a constructive role in Afghanistan in your net assessment? If not, what are Pakistan's strategic considerations for its approach, and how, if at all, can U.S. action change that?

Answer. The administration believes that stabilizing Afghanistan is in the interest of all countries in the region, including Pakistan. If confirmed as ambassador, I will work with Ambassador Hale in Islamabad to promote the efforts of the administration to encourage all of Afghanistan's neighbors to support an Afghan-led, Afghan-owned political reconciliation process, which is the most viable path to end the conflict in Afghanistan.

Relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan have been particularly strained since early this year following a spate of terrorist attacks in both countries, with each blaming the other for harboring and supporting the attackers.

To overcome these tensions, more engagement between Afghanistan and Pakistan on items of mutual interest is crucial. Recent high-level visits between both countries have been an important step. Pakistan's Foreign Secretary recently visited Kabul for a productive high-level diplomatic dialogue, with further senior level engagements planned in the months ahead. In addition, senior Pakistani and Afghan military officials recently met in Kabul and agreed to formulate an action plan to improve border security with coordinated actions. The administration welcomes these renewed efforts and supports intensification of dialogue.

The Governments of Pakistan and Afghanistan should redouble their standing commitment to deepen counterterrorism cooperation against all groups that pose a long-term security threat to both countries. Pakistan has been an important partner in combating anti-State terrorist groups, such as the Pakistani Taliban, al-Qa'ida, and ISIS in South Asia. Pakistan needs to disavow, and deny safe haven to, terrorist organizations that target its neighbors. Pakistan has much to gain from partnering with our efforts in the region, including the facilitation of a peace process that will lead to a stable, peaceful Afghanistan, the defeat of ISIS in South Asia, and the elimination of terrorist groups that threaten both Pakistan and the United States.

Question 2. Do you consider the reportedly growing role of Russia and Iran in Afghanistan a strategic threat to the U.S.? Why or why not? Why would these former Taliban opponents now support the group?

Answer. Both Iran and Russia have mixed records in Afghanistan, which is a matter of concern. Especially in recent years, as the ISIS threat has grown, both countries have pursued hedging strategies that include modest support for the Taliban. We expect that our new South Asia strategy, with its clear commitment to Afghanistan, will temper this hedging behavior.

As Afghanistan's neighbor, Iran has an interest in Afghan security and stability. Iran is one of the top exporters of goods to Afghanistan, and is attempting to enhance its cultural and strategic connections with Afghan Shi'a in western and central Afghanistan. Iran has actively recruited thousands of Afghans to fight in Syria, both within the refugee population and inside the Shi'a population in Afghanistan, using a combination of religious, financial, or residency incentives.

We encourage Iran, and all of Afghanistan's neighbors, to fully support the Afghan Government and to put pressure on the Taliban to enter peace talks. Despite reports that Tehran maintains links to the Taliban, Iran continues to profess support for an Afghan-led peace process and participates in regional fora on Afghanistan.

Similarly, Russia has expressed an interest in Afghan security and stability. While Russia maintains diplomatic ties with the Afghan Government it has also been vocal about its opposition to the U.S. military presence in Afghanistan. We have called on Russia to fully support the Afghanistan Government and efforts to ensure safety and stability within its borders. We continue to encourage Russia to expand discussions on how we might cooperate to support Afghanistan and to foster a peace process between the Afghan Government and the Taliban.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
 SUBMITTED TO JUSTIN SIBERELL BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

Question 1. The 2011 Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI), an independent outside review commission, issued 26 recommendations to hold the Government accountable for its suppression of the 2011 uprising. How many of those recommendations has the Government implemented? If confirmed, how do you plan to encourage the Government to fully implement all of the recommendations?

Answer. For a thorough analysis of Bahrain's implementation of the BICI recommendations, please refer to the Department of State's report corresponding to the Bahrain section of Senate Report 114-79, delivered to the Senate on June 21, 2016. In the time since publishing that report, we have noted new and continued restrictions on the existence and operation of political societies, restrictions on free expression, assembly, and association; and lack of due process in the legal system. We have repeatedly voiced concern about these issues and urged the Government of Bahrain, at the highest levels, to reinvigorate its reform program, make the political system more inclusive, and rebuild trust between the Government and citizens. If confirmed, I will continue to urge the Government of Bahrain to take steps to ensure inclusive elections in 2018 and to advance reform efforts for the benefit of Bahrain's long-term security and our mutual interests in regional stability.

Question 2. Over the past year, Bahrain has dramatically cracked down against human rights defenders, civil society, and peaceful leaders in the opposition. Specifically, they banned the country's largest opposition party, have not fulfilled the 26 recommendations of the Bahrain Independent Commission on Inquiry (BICI) report that the King publicly committed to implementing, and reversed the few BICI-related reforms they had implemented. If confirmed as U.S. Ambassador to Bahrain, how will you encourage the Government of Bahrain to respect the basic human rights of its citizens and implement genuine political reforms?

Answer. These are Bahraini challenges that will require Bahraini solutions, but Bahrain's partners can also be supportive of the process. If confirmed, I will encourage reform, reconciliation, and respect for rights in Bahrain, and these issues will be at the center of my engagement with the Government and people of Bahrain.

Question 3. Bahrain is ranked 164th out of 180 countries in Reporters sans Frontières (RSF) 2017 World Press Freedom Index, falling into the "black zone" in the past year. RSF notes that there are currently 14 journalists in prison in Bahrain. The Bahraini Government has intensified its censorship efforts against foreign journalists deemed critical of the Government, including denying accreditation, restricting visas, and blocking news websites. If confirmed, what role can you and the U.S. Government play in ensuring the Government respects freedom of press and freedom of expression? Do you commit to raising press freedom violations with Bahraini authorities?

Answer. We regularly raise concerns about restrictions on the press, freedom of expression, and other human rights issues with the Government of Bahrain. If confirmed, I will ensure that we continue to have an open and honest dialogue with Bahrain on the full range of issues affecting our bilateral relationship, including these. A free and independent press allowed to peacefully voice a wide spectrum of views plays a vital role in inclusive, pluralistic governments and societies.

Question 4. Nabeel Rajab is a prominent human rights activists who is currently in prison on charges related to tweets and a television interview. On July 10, 2017, the State Department put out a statement expressing their disappointment for the sentencing of Mr. Rajab and urging the Government of Bahrain to "abide by its international obligations and commitments to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of expression." What is your plan for dealing with the Bahraini authorities when it comes to freedom of expression and politicized trials like those of Nabeel Rajab? If confirmed, do you commit to raising the case of Nabeel Rajab as well as other political prisoners and urge the Government to unconditionally release him and others? If confirmed, do you commit to providing my office with regular updates on Embassy Manama's efforts to press for Nabeel Rajab's release as well as other political prisoners?

Answer. We were disappointed by the July 10 verdict sentencing Nabeel Rajab to two years in prison. I understand he could face an additional 15 years in prison for tweets he made that were critical of Bahrain's involvement in the war in Yemen. We have repeatedly expressed our concern about his cases at the highest levels and called for his release. If confirmed, I will be happy to provide your office updates on this and other types of engagement with the Government of Bahrain.

Imprisonment and detention of individuals on politically motivated charges undermines the right of political expression and compromises the atmosphere for reconciliation. We have repeatedly voiced concern about these issues, both publicly and privately, at the highest levels, urged the Government of Bahrain to abide by its international legal obligations and to focus on issues such as judicial reform, making the political system more inclusive, and rebuilding trust between the Government and citizens. These are all issues that, if confirmed, I would continue to engage on.

Question 5. The State Department's 2017 International Religious Freedom Report found that the Government of Bahrain continued to discriminate systematically against its Shia Muslim population. At the release of the report, Secretary of State Tillerson stated, "The [Bahraini] Government continued to detain and arrest Shia clerics, community members, and opposition politicians. Members of the Shia community there continue to report ongoing discrimination in government employment, education, and the justice system. Bahrain must stop discrimination against the Shia communities." If confirmed, how will you persuade the Bahraini Government to respect religious freedom and stop the systematic discrimination against its Shia population?

Answer. We will urge the Government to end discrimination against Shia in government employment and education; to pursue reconciliation between the Government and Shia communities; and to allow prisoners to practice their religions. We will also continue to condemn the unfair detention, harassment, and revocation of citizenship of nonviolent Shia religious figures and activists. Additionally, we will advocate for the Government to pursue political reforms, which would take into consideration the needs of all citizens regardless of religious affiliation.

Question 6. Bahrain is on Tier 2 of the Trafficking in Persons Report of 2017. What can the U.S. do to help the Government improve its efforts to combat and eliminate human trafficking in all its forms?

Answer. Bahrain has made progress in addressing human trafficking within its borders by developing a national referral mechanism, promoting a national anti-trafficking strategy, investigating potential trafficking cases, and taking steps to amend elements of the sponsorship system that increases workers' vulnerability to forced labor and debt bondage.

There is more that can be done, as indicated in the State Department's annual Trafficking in Persons Report. If confirmed, I will urge the Government to investigate, prosecute, and convict traffickers, particularly cases involving forced labor or allegedly complicit officials. I will also urge the Government of Bahrain to implement procedures to identify trafficking victims among vulnerable groups, such as domestic workers and women in prostitution, and make efforts to ensure identified trafficking victims are not punished for unlawful acts committed as a direct result of being subjected to trafficking, such as illegal migration or prostitution.

Question 7. Bahrain remains geographically strategic to combating threats in the Middle East. Do you believe the U.S. 5th Fleet Headquarters should remain based in Bahrain? What efforts should be made to ensure the long-term viability of the U.S. military presence there?

Answer. Yes, I believe the U.S. Fifth Fleet Headquarters should remain based in Bahrain. The operational and logistical support that the Kingdom provides our military is essential to the success of our campaign against ISIS and enables our Navy to lead a 31-country international coalition that counters piracy, drug trafficking, and terrorism across 2.5 million square miles of ocean and seas.

Bahrain faces persistent threats from Iran, including Iran's training and supply of lethal aid to individuals and groups targeting the Government and security forces of Bahrain. This also represents a challenge to the long-term viability of our military presence there. I look forward to cooperating closely with colleagues across the Departments of State and Defense to continue to support Bahrain's armed forces to address these and other shared threats.

In addition, our counterterrorism and military cooperation with Bahrain is paired with a clear understanding that Bahrain's own long-term stability and security depend on it achieving political reconciliation and upholding its commitments to universal human rights. If confirmed, I will continue to urge the Government of Bahrain to take steps to ensure inclusive elections in 2018 and to advance reform efforts for the benefit of Bahrain's long-term security and our mutual interests in regional stability.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
 SUBMITTED TO JUSTIN SIBERELL BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question 1. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. Promotion of democracy and human rights has been an important priority for me throughout my 24-year Foreign Service career.

As a first-tour Political Officer in Panama from 1993–1995 shortly after Operation Just Cause, I worked with political party representatives, including those linked to the former Noriega Government, to engage constructively in the general elections of 1994, and served as an accredited elections observer for that same election.

As Desk Officer for Iran from 1998–2000, I drafted the State Department's Human Rights Report chapter on Iran and worked closely with opposition and dissident groups to call attention to the Iranian regime's systematic repression of political opponents and perceived enemies, for instance the Baha'i community.

As Press Officer at the U.S. Embassy in Amman from 2002–2005, I worked with our diplomats, USAID professionals and civil society representatives to highlight U.S. efforts to strengthen democratic processes in Jordan, even as regional events put significant pressure on democratic reforms. I organized a series of training programs for Iraqi journalists in Amman on the role of a free press in a democratic system, and made use of speaker programs administered by the State Department's Bureau of International Information Programs to invite prominent U.S. academics and democracy experts to engage local audiences.

As Acting Coordinator for Counterterrorism at the Department of State from 2016–2017, I advocated for international approaches to countering terrorism within a strong rule of law framework that ensures the protection of human rights and civil liberties. Through U.S.-led initiatives within the Global Counterterrorism Forum, as an example, we achieved the adoption of "good practice" documents that have influenced governments not to accept a false tradeoff between effective counterterrorism practice and protection of such liberties. I ensured also that all U.S.-funded counterterrorism programming for which the CT Bureau was responsible adhered to requirements under the Leahy Law, and promoted international attention upon and justice for the victims of terrorist violence, including minority communities.

If confirmed, I will remain committed to the promotion of human rights and democracy in carrying out my responsibilities representing the United States in Bahrain.

Question 2. What are the most pressing human rights concerns in Bahrain today? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to advance human rights and democracy in Bahrain? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. The most serious human rights problems in Bahrain include restrictions on the existence and operation of political societies, restrictions on free expression, assembly, and association; and lack of due process in the legal system, including arrests without warrants or charges and lengthy pretrial detentions—used especially in cases against opposition members and political or human rights activists.

If confirmed, I will continue the Embassy's discussion with both government and opposition actors with the aim of their agreeing on a roadmap to an inclusive 2018 parliamentary election.

Question 3. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response? What challenges will you face in Bahrain in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. These are Bahraini challenges that will require Bahraini solutions, but Bahrain's partners can also be supportive of the process. I expect the broader regional political context to complicate and aggravate Bahrain's efforts to address its human rights challenges.

Question 4. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in the Bahrain?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed I am committed to meeting with a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and in Bahrain.

Question 5. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Bahrain to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted Bahrain?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, the embassy team and I will continue to engage with the Bahraini Government to address cases of key detainees in Bahrain.

Question 6. If confirmed as Ambassador, what steps will you take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure that provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights?

Answer. If confirmed, we will continue to thoroughly vet all individuals and units nominated to participate in U.S.-funded security assistance activities or to receive equipment, in accordance with the Leahy law. If we find credible information of a gross violation of human rights, we will take the necessary steps in accordance with the law and Department policy, including working to ensure the responsible parties do not participate in U.S.-funded training.

Question 7. Will you engage with the people of Bahrain on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, human rights, civil rights, and governance issues will be a consistent and core component of my engagement with the people of Bahrain.

Question 8. What will you do to build people-to-people ties between Americans and Bahrainis and to support Bahrain civil society, human rights activists, and independent media? What do you need from Washington-based U.S. officials on this?

Answer. If confirmed, I will seek to engage with a broad spectrum of Bahraini Government and society and encourage U.S. Government visitors to do the same, when appropriate. I encourage Congressional delegations to visit Bahrain and to meet with Bahraini groups in Washington.

Hundreds of Bahraini students come to the United States each year to attend U.S. colleges and universities, providing Bahrainis with a deeper understanding of American society and the American people, and more than 2,500 Bahrainis have participated in official cultural and academic exchanges over several decades, including the Fulbright Program. Many Bahrainis have also benefited from participating in International Visitor Leadership Program visits to the U.S. If confirmed, I look forward to supporting programs like these.

Question 9. During my review of the proposed sale of F-16 fighter aircraft to Bahrain, I sent a letter to Secretary Tillerson on May 11, 2017 to raise my concerns regarding Bahraini Government policies. In reply, I received two letters. One from Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Legislative Affairs Joe McManus on May 24, 2017 and a second letter from Deputy Secretary Sullivan on June 29, 2017. Please confirm that you have reviewed this correspondence. Can you provide the same assurance as Deputy Secretary Sullivan, that you will encourage reform, reconciliation, and respect for rights in Bahrain, and that these issues will be the center of your diplomatic engagement with the Kingdom of Bahrain?

Answer. I have reviewed the correspondence and affirm my commitment to advance the objectives identified therein. If confirmed, I will encourage reform, reconciliation, and respect for rights in Bahrain, and these issues will be at the center of my engagement with the Government and people of Bahrain.

Question 10. I am concerned by developments since the beginning of 2017 that indicate backsliding on implementation of recommendations from the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI), and even Bahraini Government decisions to reverse previous decisions. For example, on April 3 Bahrain's National Assembly and the King approved a Constitutional amendment authorizing military courts to try civilians in cases of terrorism. This move appears to reverse BICI Recommendation 1720, which required the Government transfer all military court cases from 2011 to civil courts for review. In your assessment, does the Bahraini Government remain committed to implementing BICI recommendations? What steps will you take as Ambassador to motivate the Bahraini Government to commit to the reform program outlined in the BICI?

Answer. We have repeatedly voiced concern about these issues and urged the Government of Bahrain, at the highest levels, to reinvigorate its reform program, make the political system more inclusive, and rebuild trust between the Government and citizens. If confirmed, I will continue to urge the Government of Bahrain to take steps to ensure inclusive elections in 2018 and to advance reform efforts for the benefit of Bahrain's long-term security and our mutual interests in regional stability.

Question 11. How will you work with the Bahraini Government to address the gaps that still concern human trafficking?

Answer. Bahrain has made progress in addressing human trafficking within its borders by developing a national referral mechanism, promoting a national anti-trafficking strategy, investigating potential trafficking cases, and taking steps to

amend elements of the sponsorship system that increases workers' vulnerability to forced labor and debt bondage.

There is more that can be done, as indicated in the State Department's annual Trafficking in Persons Report. If confirmed, I will urge the Government to investigate, prosecute, and convict traffickers, particularly cases involving forced labor or allegedly complicit officials. I will also urge the Government of Bahrain to implement procedures to identify trafficking victims among vulnerable groups, such as domestic workers and women in prostitution, and make efforts to ensure identified trafficking victims are not punished for unlawful acts committed as a direct result of being subjected to trafficking, such as illegal migration or prostitution.

Question 12. How do you plan to work with the Department of Labor, and non-government organizations, to assess Bahrain's compliance with the labor protection provisions of the U.S.-Bahrain Free Trade Agreement?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue working with the Department of Labor and U.S. Trade Representative on engaging the Government of Bahrain on its labor commitments under our Free Trade Agreement. I will welcome the contributions of civil society throughout this process.

Question 13. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. My career in the Foreign Service has taught me the value of a diverse workforce. If confirmed, I will work to advance equal employment opportunity and ensure each member of our workforce, regardless of background, has the opportunity to grow professionally and pursue positions of leadership in the State Department and throughout the U.S. Government.

Question 14. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. If confirmed, I will ensure that all supervisors take mandatory EEO training and strictly adhere to related laws and policies. I will emphasize the necessity of transparency, fairness, and inclusivity when making hiring decisions, my assessment of my subordinates' performance will include evaluation of their commitment to diversity, and I will take immediate corrective action if I learn of any incident that does not reflect the value the United States and the State Department place on diversity and respect for all.

Question 15. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question 16. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question 17. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in Bahrain?

Answer. No.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO JUSTIN SIBERELL BY SENATOR ROBERT MENEDEZ

Question 1. Over the past year, the Bahraini Government has continued and escalated its crackdown on freedom of expression, particularly against human rights defenders and peaceful opposition leaders. This administration has seemed to indicate that human rights will not remain a priority for the United States, in Bahrain in particular. Will you actively engage with civil society leaders in Bahrain? Will you continue to stress the importance of respecting fundamental human rights and democratic values in Bahrain? Will you engage with the Bahraini Government about

its ban of opposition parties and stress the importance of democratic institutions, particularly as Bahrain heads into parliamentary elections next year?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue the Embassy's engagement with government, civil society, and nonviolent opposition actors to encourage the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, while working specifically towards inclusive 2018 parliamentary elections. U.S. Government actions in support of these aims reflect our strong belief that political reform and promotion of human rights protections are in Bahrain's long-term security interest and consistent with our mutual interest in regional stability.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO JUSTIN SIBERELL BY SENATOR CORY BOOKER

Question 1. Bahrain has been one of our country's closest defense partners in the Gulf, home of the Fifth Fleet and thousands of American men and women in uniform. Yet Bahrain's response to the uprising in 2011 and subsequent crackdown has complicated relations between our two nations.

While the country began to make slow progress through implementation of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry, according to Amnesty International and others, the progress has severely reversed in the last year.

Amnesty International's recent report documents in horrific detail the steps Bahraini authorities have taken to crush any independent voices, closing down political parties, jailing well-known human rights activists, and backtracking on promised reforms.

- How do you think we should balance our strategic priorities with our commitment to human rights?

Answer. Enhancing our security cooperation with Bahrain does not diminish the consistent emphasis we place on human rights issues. Indeed, our counterterrorism and military cooperation with Bahrain is paired with a clear understanding that Bahrain's own long-term stability and security depend on the country achieving political reconciliation and upholding its commitments to universal human rights. We continue to be concerned with government actions against nonviolent political and human rights actors, and will continue to urge the Government of Bahrain to take steps to ensure inclusive elections in 2018 and to advance reform efforts for the benefit of Bahrain's long-term security and our mutual interests in regional stability. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that we continue to have an open and honest dialogue with Bahrain on the full range of issues affecting our bilateral relationship, including human rights.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO J. STEVEN DOWD BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

Question 1. In 2016, U.S. firms accounted for only .4 percent of African Development Bank procurement contracts. Would you commit to working with the U.S. business community and the African Development Bank to expand opportunities for U.S. firms?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, this will be one of my top priorities.

Question 2. In 2016, the World Bank provided roughly four times as much financing in Africa as the African Development Bank. How can the African Development Bank differentiate itself from other multilateral lenders and donors in Africa?

Answer. In recent years, the AfDB has developed a strong track record in infrastructure and fragile and conflict-affected states. Approximately half of the AfDB's financing has been to infrastructure, and the Bank has emerged as a leader in its approach to addressing the underlying drivers of instability in fragile states (e.g., weak governance, food insecurity). Given Africa's infrastructure gap and fragility challenges, the AfDB should continue to focus on and enhance its work in these areas.

Question 3. What do you see as the most important challenges facing the African Development Bank? On which areas of the Bank's agenda would you like to concentrate your efforts during your term?

Answer. I believe some of the AfDB's most important challenges surround President Adesina's ambitious institutional reforms. These include his "High 5" strategic

priorities (energy, agriculture, industrialization, regional integration, and quality of life) and his significant organizational reforms. Reforms of this scale are difficult to execute but have the potential to markedly enhance efficiency and impact. If confirmed, my top priorities will include: ensuring effective implementation of the AfDB's reform agenda; further enhancing the AfDB's efforts to reduce instability and create jobs in fragile and conflict-affected states; and increasing opportunities for U.S. businesses at the AfDB and in Africa, including by strengthening the investment climate in African countries.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO J. STEVEN DOWD BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Human Rights

Question 1. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. Having worked only in private industry, issues of human rights and democracy generally do not arise directly. However, I can say that, no matter where or with whom I conducted business, the ethical treatment of employees, contractors, and others was always the highest priority.

Question 2. If confirmed, how will you take into account labor rights, land rights, and other relevant human rights considerations when financing and supporting ADF's development projects?

Answer. If confirmed, I will also use my position on the Board of Executive Directors to try and ensure that all projects meet the AfDB's safeguards policies, which address labor rights, land rights, and other considerations. I will also work closely with the Treasury Department to follow all relevant legislative mandates.

Diversity

Question 3. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups?

Answer. If confirmed, I will promote, mentor and support my staff who come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups, consistent with fair management practices and relevant AfDB policies.

Question 4. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the ADF are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. If confirmed, I will use my oversight role on the AfDB's Board of Executive Directors to try and ensure that AfDB management fosters an environment that is diverse and inclusive. I will also advocate for these issues to be considered, as appropriate, in the development and review of policies in the AfDB's human resources committee. The United States will sit on this committee in the coming year.

Conflicts of Interest

Question 5. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to carrying out my duties consistent with applicable conflict of interest laws and policies, and to reporting any potential misconduct of which I become aware to the appropriate authorities.

Question 6. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to carrying out my duties consistent with applicable conflict of interest laws and policies, and to reporting any potential misconduct of which I become aware to the appropriate authorities.

Question 7. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in Africa?

Answer. Neither I nor any member of my family has any financial interests in Africa.

Growing New Markets

Question 8. What is your evaluation of the capital needs of the region?

Answer. Africa indeed faces significant capital needs. According to a recent World Bank report, the region's annual infrastructure needs are around \$90 billion, of which only half is currently being met. African businesses also need capital if they are to serve as engines of growth and job creation for the continent. Foreign investment and donor resources are an important source of capital, but Africans are also working to mobilize domestic resources more effectively. Improved domestic resource mobilization by governments and deeper, stronger capital markets will be important to address the continent's investment gaps.

Question 9. When we look at these rapidly growing economies, what role do you see for U.S. foreign assistance in opening new markets for American businesses?

Answer. I believe that U.S. foreign assistance can play a critical role in opening markets for American businesses. The AfDB can increase opportunities for American businesses in Africa in a number of ways, including by: strengthening government transparency and procurement procedures, pro-business policies, and rule of law; helping develop critical infrastructure; and supporting the development of a robust African private sector, thereby boosting potential demand for U.S. goods and services.

Question 10. Please evaluate the differences in the AfDB's approaches in North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa, and in oil-exporting and oil-importing countries.

Answer. In the last few years, the AfDB's approach in North Africa has focused on strengthening governance, developing infrastructure, and supporting private sector growth. The AfDB has taken a broader approach in Sub-Saharan Africa, supporting various types of projects across the AfDB's "High 5" strategic priority areas (energy, agriculture, industrialization, regional integration, and quality of life), and placing a particular emphasis on addressing the underlying drivers of fragility.

Recent economic developments since the downturn in commodity prices, including oil, have shown that more diversified African economies have withstood these shocks better and seen stronger, sustained growth. The AfDB's approach in oil-exporting and oil-importing countries in Sub-Saharan Africa differs mostly in the starting point of each country. The AfDB is working to support private sector growth and diversification in all its countries of operation. In countries that have relied solely on oil exports to generate growth and government revenue, this may require the AfDB to support more fundamental reforms to the general business climate and other policies.

Question 11. What is your evaluation of China's development finance efforts in Africa and increased engagement in the AfDB? Should this be a source of concern to U.S. policymakers?

Answer. While China has ramped up its investment in Africa, this has not been matched by a significant increase in its contribution to the AfDB. China will provide less than three percent of donor contributions to the fourteenth replenishment of the African Development Fund. This should be a source of concern. AfDB financing meets high standards in areas such as environmental and social safeguards and procurement, while Chinese financing through other means may not achieve these standards.

I am also concerned that Chinese financing may contribute to or exacerbate debt sustainability issues in certain African countries. The AfDB has a number of mechanisms to ensure its projects do not contribute to debt distress—most notably, countries that are at high-risk of debt distress are only eligible to receive grants, while countries at moderate risk are only eligible for a mix of grants and zero-interest loans. Chinese financing may not take these risks into account.

Question 12. What is your assessment of President Adesina's "high 5" agenda and his presidency to date?

Answer. I believe that President Adesina has an ambitious vision for the AfDB that has significant potential. His "High 5" priorities help narrow the AfDB's strategic focus, and his ongoing institutional reforms are designed to improve its efficiency and effectiveness. The key is effective implementation of this agenda. Among other things, this requires focusing on the AfDB's comparative advantages in areas such as infrastructure and fragile states, as well as the achievement of development results.

Question 13. How do you see the division of labor between the World Bank and the African Development Bank? What further measures, if any, could be undertaken to increase coordination and reduce redundancies?

Answer. While the World Bank has expertise across a broad range of areas, the AfDB is smaller, with specific areas of expertise and comparative advantage. The AfDB should narrowly focus on its High 5 strategic priorities (energy, agriculture, industrialization, regional integration, and quality of life). It should place particular emphasis on infrastructure and fragile and conflict-affected states, two areas where it has a strong track record. I understand that the World Bank and AfDB coordinate closely on their engagement in many African countries, though the exact level of coordination varies by country. If confirmed, I will seek to further enhance and systematize this coordination.

Post Conflict Role of the African Development Bank

Question 14. What role do you see for the African Development Bank to play in post conflict reconstruction and peace building?

Answer. I see the AfDB playing a significant role. Twenty of the AfDB's client countries are fragile and conflict-affected states, and the AfDB has been a leader in addressing the underlying drivers of instability in these countries (e.g., weak governance, food insecurity). I believe that the AfDB should continue its efforts to strengthen the public and private sectors in fragile and conflict-affected states.

Corruption

Question 15. What will you do to continue the progress towards combatting corruption both within the Bank and in member countries?

Answer. If confirmed, I will use my oversight role on the AfDB's Board of Executive Directors to ensure that AfDB projects meet high procurement and anti-corruption standards. I will also seek to further strengthen the AfDB's anti-corruption investigation unit and independent accountability mechanism, so that any potential misuse of AfDB funding is promptly investigated. The AfDB has a number of programs to strengthen governance and reduce corruption in its member countries, and I will be a strong supporter of these efforts.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO J. STEVEN DOWD BY SENATOR JOHN BARRASSO

Question 1. When reviewing projects at the African Development Bank, what criterion will you use in determining whether the United States will support energy development projects?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Treasury Department to review energy projects against the new, broader, objectives recently set forth by Treasury. This includes supporting energy projects that go to the core of supporting a country's development. This can and should include helping countries access and use fossil fuels more cleanly and efficiently. By pursuing projects that employ a mix of energy sources, the AfDB can support the development of robust, efficient, competitive, and integrated global markets for energy.

Support for a project will also depend on its consistency with legislative mandates and administration policies.

Question 2. Do you believe the African Development Bank should support all types of energy resources in order to provide Sub-Saharan Africa with the electricity it needs to grow their way out of poverty?

Answer. If confirmed, I will consider a broad range of power projects that help African countries have a diversified mix of energy sources. I believe that Treasury's new energy guidance provides the flexibility to approve projects designed to meet developing economies' energy needs, ensure energy security, and promote economic growth.

Question 3. Will you vote in support of energy development projects that include oil, coal and natural gas at the African Development Bank?

Answer. My understanding is that Treasury's newly revised energy guidance provides U.S. Executive Directors with the flexibility to approve a broad range of power projects, including those that support countries to use fossil fuels. If confirmed, I will consider a broad range of power projects to promote access to affordable and reliable energy that will contribute to raising living standards across Africa.

Question 4. Coal provides an affordable and reliable energy source which is important to countries looking for assistance in poverty alleviation and economic development. Do you agree with this statement? If not, why not?

Answer. I believe that it is important for countries to have affordable and reliable access to energy. If confirmed, I will evaluate each AfDB energy project on an individual basis, weighing various factors including the project's potential poverty alleviation and economic development benefits. Helping countries access and use fossil fuels more cleanly and efficiently is a key objective of Treasury's revised energy guidance. It is my expectation that this includes support for coal-fired power projects.

Question 5. Do you believe economic feasibility and the potential to provide maximum access to energy with maximum efficiency must be the biggest factors when evaluating projects?

Answer. If confirmed, I'm committed to using the U.S. voice and vote at AfDB to grow economies on the African continent, which ultimately will reduce poverty and raise living standards. A key consideration for each project should be the economic and development impact likely to be realized, including for energy projects. Treasury's revised energy guidance allows the U.S. additional flexibility in pursuing those projects at the AfDB that make the most sense for the country of operation.

Question 6. What proportion of procurement contracts at the African Development Bank and the African Development Fund is awarded to U.S. businesses? What proportion of these contracts is awarded to Chinese businesses? What specific steps would you advocate for at the African Development Bank and the African Development Fund to increase the percentage of contracts awarded to U.S. companies?

Answer. The AfDB estimates that in 2016, 0.4 percent of AfDB and AfDF contracts were awarded to U.S. firms, and 22.1 percent were awarded to Chinese firms. It is my understanding that there are serious difficulties in tracking procurement awards by country of origin, including accounting for intermediate jurisdictions or contracts that are implemented through sub-contractors, so the data may under-report U.S. procurement. In 2016, with strong U.S. support, the AfDB introduced a revised procurement policy that better takes into account the principles of "value-for-money" and "fit-for-purpose." This policy should increase opportunities for U.S. firms, which have a competitive advantage in higher-value, long-term procurement contracts, as opposed to those that focus on the lowest cost. If confirmed, one of my top priorities will be ensuring this revised policy is effectively implemented.

Question 7. What do you believe is an appropriate role for China to play at the African Development Bank and African Development Fund?

Answer. I believe it is appropriate for China to co-finance AfDB projects and increase its contribution to the AfDF to a level that is more consistent with its economic status. China will provide less than three percent of donor contributions to the fourteenth replenishment of the African Development Fund. Chinese financing that occurs through the AfDB or in the form of co-financing is held to high standards in areas such as environmental and social safeguards and procurement, and takes into account the recipient country's risk of debt distress. Chinese financing through other means may not achieve these standards.

Question 8. What is your view of China's Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the Chinese investment efforts in Africa? How do these efforts compliment or duplicate efforts at the African Development Bank?

Answer. Africa has a significant infrastructure gap, and the AIIB and Chinese investment in Africa can play an important role in infrastructure finance. It is important, however, that this finance meets high standards in areas such as environmental and social safeguards and procurement, and takes into account the recipient country's risk of debt distress. Given Africa's infrastructure needs I believe Chinese investment can certainly complement the AfDB's efforts, especially if done through co-financing and close partnership with the AfDB on individual projects.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO J. STEVEN DOWD BY SENATOR CORY BOOKER

Question 1. One of the Obama administration's main initiatives on the continent was Power Africa, an effort led by USAID to help significantly increase power generation across Africa. I would point out that this initiative has not only helped to bring thousands of megawatts of electricity online in countries across Africa but has also led to hundreds of millions of dollars in U.S. exports.

In a speech last year, the AfDB's Senior Vice-President stated that Africa's most important challenge was the lack of electricity, with some 645 million people with-

out access. As a result, the AfDB is investing \$12 billion in the energy sector over the next five years and hopes to leverage tens of billions more.

- Can you speak about where you think the lack of electricity ranks among the continent's biggest development challenges and how you think the AfDB and Power Africa can collaborate to address this critical problem?

Answer. I believe that electricity is one of the continent's largest development challenges and offers significant opportunities for U.S. businesses. Lack of electricity is cited frequently as a top constraint for businesses in Africa, and Congress emphasized the importance of this issue in the bipartisan Electrify Africa Act of 2015. It is appropriate for energy to be one of the AfDB's "High 5" strategic priorities. I understand that the AfDB is a Power Africa partner, and the two parties are collaborating closely on specific investments and policy reforms. If confirmed, I will work to support this joint effort to address one of the continent's greatest needs in ways that leverage the expertise and financing of U.S. businesses.

Question 2. Africa today contains 7 out of 13 of the world's fastest growing economies including the Ivory Coast, Tanzania, Senegal, Rwanda, and Kenya, which are all growing at or above 6 percent of their GDP. As you no doubt know well, China has been increasing its investments and diplomatic engagement across Africa at a ferocious speed. While it is a member and has a smaller share than us in the African Development Bank, its own financing mechanisms and initiatives have made it a top partner of many governments on the continent and recently the continent's largest trading partner. I am concerned that we are unwittingly ceding strategic partnerships and opportunities in Africa to China.

- How do you view the United States' engagement through the AfDB as part of our economic statecraft with Africa and how do you plan to work with colleagues at OPIC, the Millennium Challenge Corporation, the World Bank, and elsewhere in pursuit of a coordinated U.S. strategy?

Answer. I believe U.S. engagement at the AfDB plays an important role in our economic approach to Africa. Working through the AfDB, we create opportunities for U.S. businesses by strengthening the investment climate in African countries. We also ensure that projects meet international best practices in areas such as environmental and social safeguards and procurement, and take into account the recipient country's risk of debt distress. If confirmed, I will work closely with my interagency colleagues to coordinate closely, with each party, as appropriate, focusing on its areas of comparative advantage. This will allow us to maximize our effectiveness.

Question 3. Africa's youth population has been increasing faster than in any other part of the world. A young population can be a resource that leads to innovation and supports governance and political reforms. However, a large youth population that is not gainfully employed can also be a liability, further undermining growth prospects. Africa's youth present a formidable challenge that requires careful interventions.

- How do you think that the African Development Bank can contribute to stability and economic growth by tapping into the youth bulge in Africa?

Answer. I agree that Africa's youth bulge represents both a significant opportunity and potential risk, and I believe the AfDB can play a key role in ensuring it has a positive impact. By strengthening the investment climate in African countries and supporting private sector growth, the AfDB can help to ensure there are job opportunities. At the same time, it can help provide the youth with the skills to match these opportunities through its education and training programs. I note that creating jobs for youth is a core focus of one of the AfDB's "High 5" strategic priority areas.

LETTER TO PRESIDENT DONALD J. TRUMP FROM THE WYOMING CON-
GRESSIONAL DELEGATION OPPOSING THE RETURN OF THE BELLS
OF BALANGIGA TO THE PHILIPPINES

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 6, 2017

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We have received press reports that the US Ambassador to the Philippines has pledged to dismantle a Wyoming war memorial and move the Bells of Balangiga from F.E. Warren Air Force Base in Cheyenne, Wyoming, to the Philippines. On behalf of Wyoming's veterans, we strongly oppose any efforts to deconstruct or disturb this veteran's memorial that honors America's fallen soldiers.

On September 28, 1901, the Bells of Balangiga were used by Filipino insurgents to launch the massacre of Company C, 9th Infantry, at Balangiga, Samar, Philippines. Of the seventy-five soldiers present during the attack, forty-eight members, including all officers, were killed, died of wounds or listed as missing and presumed dead. The Bells were legally brought back by the 9th Infantry to Fort D. A. Russell to honor the troops of Company C who were lost in the massacre.

The majority of our veterans oppose removing the Bells from the memorial. In 2012, the Wyoming American Legion passed a resolution opposing any and all attempts to move the Bells of Balangiga from F.E. Warren Air Force Base. The National Executive Committee of The American Legion in August 2016 passed Resolution No. 56: Protection, Preservation and Retention of Federal and Military Monuments in the United States. This national resolution urges Congress to pass legislation that would preserve and protect all federal and military monuments within the United States. Congress has in fact passed legislation that protects memorials and the House Fiscal Year 2018 defense authorization bill includes a provision to protect veteran memorials.

While we have great respect for the strong relationship between the United States and the Government of the Philippines, we believe that moving the Bells establishes a dangerous precedent for future veteran and war memorials. During Secretary Tillerson's confirmation process, he committed to include Congress and veterans when evaluating veteran and war memorials including the Bells of Balangiga. The Ambassador's recent public comments are inconsistent with and in direct contradiction of the commitment we received from Secretary Tillerson.

In Wyoming, we have a strong tradition of never forgetting the sacrifices of our brave men and women. Based on this tradition, we oppose any efforts by the United States Government to move these bells to the Philippines.

We are using our voices for the lost soldiers that have no voice to oppose any efforts to use veteran's memorials as a bargaining chip with a foreign government. We ask you to direct the Department of Defense and Department of State to cease any efforts to deconstruct existing war and veteran's memorials.

Thank you for your attention to this issue and look forward to working with you to protect our veteran's memorials.

Sincerely,



Michael B. Enzi
U.S. Senator



John Barrasso, M.D.
U.S. Senator



Liz Cheney
U.S. Representative

CC: Secretary Rex Tillerson