

**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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NOMINATIONS

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2017 (p.m.)

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:20 p.m. in Room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Ron Johnson, presiding.

Present: Senators Johnson [presiding], Risch, Flake, Gardner, Murphy, Shaheen, Kaine, and Markey.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. RON JOHNSON, U.S. SENATOR FROM WISCONSIN

Senator JOHNSON. This hearing will come to order.

I want to welcome our nominees. And before moving to opening statements, I would like to welcome our two esteemed colleagues, Senator Stabenow, and I will include Senator Graham in the esteemed column as well.

Senator Stabenow will introduce our nominee to be Ambassador to The Netherlands, Peter Hoekstra, and Senator, if you would like to give your opening introduction.

STATEMENT OF HON. DEBBIE STABENOW, U.S. SENATOR FROM MICHIGAN

Senator STABENOW. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. And it is really a great honor and pleasure to be here today to introduce a former colleague. We have worked together on many issues. We have also been on the other side of the table versus each other, and yet, through all of that, I know that Congressman Pete Hoekstra proudly represented Michigan's second congressional district for 18 years.

And I think it is fair to say that there are few people more suited to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to The Netherlands than Pete Hoekstra. You could even say it is a job he was born to do. Pete was born in The Netherlands. When he was 3, his family moved to—and you guessed it—Holland, Michigan where he still lives with his wife Diane.

And like all good Dutchmen, Pete loves biking. While campaigning for Governor of Michigan, he rode 1,000 miles around our very beautiful State.

His Dutch background is not the only qualification Pete would bring to the job of Ambassador. Before he was elected to Congress, Pete earned an MBA from the University of Michigan and rose through the ranks at Michigan's own Herman Miller, eventually

servicing as Vice President of Marketing. And while in Congress, Pete was chairman of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, which gave him foreign policy experience that will serve him well as Ambassador.

And as former Michigan Senator Arthur Vandenberg famously said—and his picture we are proud to have in the reception room in the United States Senate—he said politics stops at the water's edge. And they also stop at the shores of our Great Lakes.

It is true that Pete Hoekstra and I do not always agree, but we feel the same way about our wonderful State of Michigan, about invasive species that we have tackled together, and about our country. Pete cares deeply about Michigan. He cares deeply about The Netherlands, and he cares deeply about America.

I have no doubt he will use his experience and connections to strengthen the already strong ties between our two great countries. And it will be good for our State to have him serving in this prominent international role.

I look forward to supporting his nomination, and I hope that he will get the chance to do some biking around The Hague. I am honored to introduce Congressman Pete Hoekstra. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Senator Stabenow.

Now we are pleased to have Senator Graham, Lindsay Graham, who will introduce the President's nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to Switzerland and Liechtenstein, Mr. Edward McMullen.

**STATEMENT OF HON. LINDSAY GRAHAM,
U.S. SENATOR FROM SOUTH CAROLINA**

Senator GRAHAM. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member. And I want to echo everything that Senator Stabenow said about Pete. I have known him a long time and it is really a compliment to you that the President would choose you for such an important post.

Ed McMullen I have known ever since I have been in politics. If you can survive South Carolina politics, you can handle Switzerland. [Laughter.]

Senator GRAHAM. To the people of Switzerland, I can tell you that the President has picked one of his closest advisors, the chairman of his South Carolina campaign, somebody who jumped on the Trump train early and has done it with class and style. So when Mr. McMullen speaks, the President will listen, and I think that is a compliment to the people of Switzerland.

To Ed himself, he was an advisor to Senator McCain when he first ran for President. He has been enormously helpful to me, and he helped President Trump. I doubt if many people can say those three things. And he has done it with class, loyalty. And one of the greatest attributes of any Ambassador I think is loyalty and understanding and the ability to get people to work together. He will be a great representative for our Nation to one of our most important allies.

He has been in business for over 30 years, McMullen Public Affairs. He worked for The Heritage Foundation in Washington, the South Carolina Policy Council. He is an alumnus of the American-Swiss Foundation young leaders conference and has traveled exten-

sively in Switzerland and Italy. And he will be a good representative for the two countries that you have just mentioned, Switzerland and Liechtenstein.

He was in charge of Governor McMaster's transition team. He was the Vice Chairman of the Presidential Inaugural Committee. He has received numerous awards in South Carolina. He has been a great conservative. But I want to tell my friends on the Democratic side that everyone respects Ed McMullen. He is someone who enjoys a lot of sport in our State. His lovely wife, Margaret Ann, is here today. Thomas and Katherine are very proud, his two children. He is a graduate of Hampden-Sydney College in Virginia, Senator Kaine. He now serves as Vice Chairman and Chairman-elect of the National Alumni Association.

And just in conclusion, I want to thank President Trump for allowing Ed to serve in a capacity that he is incredibly qualified for. And for the people of South Carolina, this is a real treat for us, a small State, having someone recognized by the President for such an important position. So I cannot recommend to you more strongly Mr. McMullen. He is ready for this job.

And thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Senator JOHNSON. The committee wants to thank the Senators for those kind introductions. I know you have busy schedules. So you are welcome to stay, but you just cannot stay there because we need those seats. [Laughter.]

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you very much.

So the committee gathers today to consider the nominations of ambassadorships to Spain, Germany, France, The Netherlands, and Switzerland and Liechtenstein. The United States has close relations with these countries based on enduring political, economic, defense, and cultural ties.

Spain, Germany, France, and The Netherlands represent four of the European Union's top six economies. Together they account for approximately half of the EU's economic strength. Switzerland has Europe's ninth largest economy as a member of the European Free Trade Association. All five are among the top 30 trading partners of the United States, and collectively they have direct investments in the U.S. economy worth \$1.1 trillion. So you can see these are important relationships.

Our security ties are no less significant. France, Spain, Germany, and The Netherlands are leading members of NATO. Switzerland is a vital counterterrorism partner, helping the United States dismantle terrorist financial support networks. The strengths of these partnerships have helped forge an unprecedented era of peace and stability on a continent long ravaged by the great power of conflict.

As the highest representative of the United States to these countries, you will be tasked with maintaining and strengthening these crucial relationships.

Again, I want to thank all the nominees for accepting this responsibility, being willing to serve. It is a sacrifice. It is going to be a sacrifice for you and your family. And having spoken and met with all of you, I am sure you will represent this Nation well.

Before I introduce the nominees for their opening statements, I would like to recognize the distinguished ranking member of this committee, Senator Murphy.

**STATEMENT OF HON. CHRIS MURPHY,
U.S. SENATOR FROM CONNECTICUT**

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

I look forward to hearing your testimony and getting to questions and answers.

Let me reiterate the chairman's thanks to you and to your families for your willingness to serve. When there is a problem in the world that needs United States leadership to solve it, the first place we turn is to Europe. This is a bond forged both by enduring values and interests around the world. And you are going to help, we hope, solidify a transatlantic partnership that has helped lead to an era of relative world stability that we hope can endure.

You are going to face challenges. You will be working for an administration that cheered Britain's withdrawal from the European Union, that pulled the United States out of the Paris Climate Accord, that now threatens to pull the United States out of the U.S.-EU led Iran nuclear agreement. This is a very perilous moment for the transatlantic relationship because of the policies of this administration. You are going to both have the responsibility of soothing those tensions and reporting back accurately to this administration what people in Europe think about the President's policies.

But we are very glad that you have chosen to take this responsibility, and we look forward to your testimony today.

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Senator Murphy.

Again, we welcome the nominees, and we certainly welcome their family. I encourage you, in your opening statements, to introduce family members that are in the audience.

Our first nominee is the Honorable Peter Hoekstra. Peter is the President's nominee to be the U.S. Ambassador to The Netherlands. Mr. Hoekstra is a politician and business executive who served in Congress from 1993 to 2011, representing Michigan's second district. He was chairman of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence from 2004 to 2007 and the ranking Republican on the committee until 2011. Mr. Hoekstra continues to be active on public policy issues and in business affairs as a consultant, researcher, and writer. Mr. Hoekstra?

**STATEMENT OF HON. PETER HOEKSTRA, OF MICHIGAN, TO BE
AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE KINGDOM OF THE
NETHERLANDS**

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Thank you, Chairman Johnson, and good to be with you Ranking Member Murphy and other distinguished members of the committee. It is an honor to be with you today.

I am deeply appreciative of the nomination that President Trump has provided to me to be the Ambassador to the Kingdom of The Netherlands. Obviously, with your concurrence and approval, I look forward to beginning my work in The Netherlands and once again serving the people of the United States of America.

As all of us who have served in public office know, we could never get there without the support of many other people. Today I am joined by my wife of 42 years, Diane, right here. And also, we have had the support of my children and my daughter-in-law for the 18 years that I spent in Congress. We all know the frustra-

tions and the joys that a family can go through when their father or their mother is called Congressman or Senator. But for our family, it has been a richly rewarding experience, and we look forward to the opportunity to serve again.

I am also deeply appreciative of the kind words from Senator Stabenow and the support that I am also receiving from Gary Peters. I maybe could stop right now and say I cannot add anything more. I can only do damage to the very, very kind words that Senator Stabenow provided. As she said, in Michigan, we know that politics stops at the water's edge. Whether that is Lake Michigan or whether that is the Atlantic, that is how we always thought, and we always had the opportunity to work together. And when we disagreed, it was never on a personal basis, and we always remained friends and respected each other.

Obviously, this is a special opportunity for me. I am a native-born Dutchman. I was born in The Netherlands in 1953. My parents immigrated in 1956. My parents were liberated by American and Canadian troops during World War II. So they had that fondness and appreciation for America. But packing up three kids and moving to this country was a wonderful opportunity and it was a leap of faith.

My parents made the commitment that they would become Americans. They actually changed the name of one of their kids because they wanted to make sure that he would be fully able to integrate into American society and become an American.

We lived the American dream. My dad ran a small bakery. My mom was a stay-at-home mom. Their kids all had the opportunity to go to college. And 36 years after emigrating to the United States, they had the opportunity to see their son get sworn into Congress. America was all that they had hoped for, and for all of us, it has become our home.

The opportunity to go back and represent the United States—it is a humbling opportunity. The Netherlands was the second country to formally recognize this newly born country in 1782. So this is truly a unique and unbroken relationship.

The Dutch have continued their strong economic ties. They are one of the top foreign investors in the United States. We have a trade surplus with them of roughly \$24 billion per year.

They are a strong military ally. They supported us in our war for independence. They supported us in the war in Afghanistan. 25 Dutch soldiers have sacrificed their lives in Afghanistan. And obviously, that is an important relationship with the threats that we face today, whether it is terrorism, the threat from Russia and other unnamed threats that we may face in the future. It is hard to find an ally that has been more dedicated and consistent than what the Dutch have been.

Obviously, if provided with the opportunity, it will be my job to manage that relationship and leave it stronger and better than what we have inherited. We stand on the work of hundreds and thousands of people that have built this relationship over 200 years, the proud professionals of our Foreign Service. I had the opportunity to meet with many of them when I was on the Intelligence Committee. I respect their work. I have relied on their for-

eign intelligence experience, and I will in the future. They are truly amazing people.

I recognize the obligation of implementing the strategies and policies of the United States. These policies are established in Washington, D.C. I recognize the responsibility to the President. I recognize my responsibility to the Secretary of State. But as a person of the House, I also recognize my responsibility to the Congress of the United States, and I pledge that I will work faithfully and hopefully effectively with both the House and the Senate.

With your approval, I look forward to once again having the opportunity to serve this great country. Thank you very much for your time, and I look forward to answering any questions you may have.

[Mr. Hoekstra's prepared statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF PETER HOEKSTRA

Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member Murphy, and distinguished committee members, it is an honor to be with you today.

I am deeply appreciative of President Trump for the nomination to be the next U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of the Netherlands. With your concurrence and approval, I look forward to beginning my work in the Netherlands and once again serving the people of the United States of America.

As those who have been a part of public service know, there are many individuals that have helped us achieve these opportunities. I would like to recognize Diane, my wife of more than 42 years, for her unconditional love and support. Our children, Erin, Allison, and Bryan, and daughter-in-law Rebecca, have been supportive throughout the joys and frustrations of having a congressman as a father. The time in public service was a special and rewarding time for all of us.

I'm also deeply appreciative of the support that Senators Debbie Stabenow and Gary Peters have expressed. As a Michigan delegation, we always knew when to set aside partisan considerations and support our State and each other. As they have stated, in America politics stops at the water's edge. Thank you Senators Stabenow and Peters.

This is a special opportunity. I am a native Dutchman. I was born in the Netherlands in 1953. In 1956 my parents immigrated to the United States with their three young children. For them it was the beginning of an adventure in "the land of opportunity." They had some previous experience with Americans, as it was American and Canadian troops who liberated them and an occupied Netherlands in 1945, but this was a leap of faith.

My parents made the commitment that they would become "Americans," even changing the name of one of their children so that he would fit in.

We lived the American dream. My dad operated a small bakery. My mom was a stay-at-home mother. Their kids all graduated from college and 36 years later they saw their son sworn into the United States Congress. America has been all they had hoped for. For all of us, it became our new home.

The opportunity to go back and represent the United States to the Netherlands is a humbling opportunity. The Netherlands was the second country to formally recognize this newly born country in 1782. It supported the struggle for independence, supplying weapons and ammunition. The United States and the Netherlands have had an unbroken record of friendship going back more than 240 years. This is truly a unique and unbroken relationship.

The Dutch have and continue to be a strong economic partner. They are one of the largest foreign direct investors in the United States. The U.S. also enjoys the largest trade surplus in any bilateral relationship with the Netherlands, roughly \$24 billion. I recognize the strength of this relationship and will look at ways to build the economic ties even stronger for the benefit of both countries.

The Dutch have also been a strong military ally of the United States. In Margraten, a small Dutch town, the citizens have adopted the graves of 8,301 U.S. military personnel who paid the ultimate price in helping liberate the Netherlands and defeat the Nazi's in World War II. The Dutch have also been a full partner in the efforts to defeat the threat from terrorism. Twenty-five Dutch soldiers have died in the Afghan war. From the founding of our country, through many conflicts including today's, the two countries have always stood shoulder to shoulder, never against

each other. That needs to continue as we face the threats of terrorism, Russia, and other unnamed future challenges.

Economically and militarily, it is difficult to find any ally who has stood by our side, hand in hand, for such a long period of time. As such, I recognize that the work of the men and women of the U.S. embassy in The Hague is a part of this long relationship with the Dutch. We will stand on the foundation laid by those who have served so effectively and diligently for the last 200 plus years. We will be entrusted to manage this relationship today and must leave it stronger and better than what we have been given.

We walk and work in the footsteps of the first U.S. Ambassador to the Netherlands, John Adams, and the thousands of individuals who have built this strong and special relationship through the years.

Personally, I look forward to working with those who have dedicated their lives to the foreign service. In my eighteen years in Congress, and especially my ten years on the Intelligence Committee, I observed the talents and the skills of our State Department professionals firsthand. Their knowledge of how to conduct foreign policy is something that I have relied on in the past and will continue to rely on in the future. They are truly amazing people.

As a Congressman, I have interacted frequently with the Dutch on trade, military and intelligence, and cultural issues. This position will enable me to build on that experience.

As an ambassador, I recognize the obligation of implementing the strategies and policies of the United States. These policies are established in Washington, D.C. I recognize the responsibilities that I have to the President and Secretary of State Tillerson; and as a man of the House, the responsibility to the Congress of the United States.

With your approval, I look forward to once again having the opportunity to serve this great country. Thank you very much for your time today. I look forward to answering your questions.

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Congressman Hoekstra.

Our next nominee is Mr. Richard Duke Buchan, and Mr. Buchan is the President's nominee to be the U.S. Ambassador to Spain. Mr. Buchan is the founder and CEO of Hunter Global Investors LP. He and his family own and manage farms that grow over 100 varieties of heirloom vegetables and raise horses. He is active in a number of educational and philanthropic causes. Mr. Buchan established the University of North Carolina's largest single endowment focused on Spanish languages, literature, and culture. Mr. Buchan?

STATEMENT OF RICHARD DUKE BUCHAN III, OF FLORIDA, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE KINGDOM OF SPAIN

Mr. BUCHAN. Thank you, and thank you, Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the committee.

A special thanks to Senator Johnson again for your introduction and support.

It is a great honor to appear before this distinguished committee. I am deeply grateful to President Trump and humbled to be his nominee to serve as the United States Ambassador to the Kingdom of Spain and the Principality of Andorra. If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to represent the interests of the United States of America and to further enhance our strong partnerships with these two great nations.

Each of us has followed a unique path to public service. As a 10th generation North Carolinian who grew up on a tobacco and cattle farm, I know that I am here because of the people and the land that nurtured me. I would like to recognize those in attendance today from my family: my amazing wife, Hannah—they are

all behind me—my three dear children, Cate, Beau, and John; and my charming and insightful mother Betty. My father is here in spirit. I would also like to take a moment to remember my grandmother who taught me that I have two ears and I have one mouth and that I should use them accordingly. And that lesson has served me well in life so far.

If confirmed, I look forward to joining the extraordinary team from the State Department led by Secretary Tillerson. The talented staff of the U.S. mission to Spain works diligently to serve our great Nation. I want to recognize their families who serve alongside them with equal honor, dedication, and commitment. My career in international finance has focused on building bridges often between diverse individuals and groups to bring out the best in others to solve problems. I hope to apply those skills leading Mission Spain.

Global engagement is vital to America's success. My 3 decades of work in Spain, other European countries, Latin America, and Asia have taught me the importance of listening to and learning from others to forge solutions. If confirmed, this experience and international perspective will be vital to my role as the U.S. Ambassador.

This opportunity to serve my country is a dream come true. I have loved Spain since my childhood when I first read about that faraway land of Don Quixote and Picasso in the World Book Encyclopedia. In 1980, as an eager and curious high school student, I first convinced my parents to let me study abroad in Valencia, Spain.

At the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, I double majored in Spanish and economics, studying an entire academic year in Seville, Spain. In the years since, my family has worked to strengthen ties to Spain and Latin American countries by establishing The Buchan Excellence Fund, which was previously mentioned. It is UNC's single largest endowment focused on Spanish languages, literature, and culture. It embodies my conviction that knowledge, understanding and, above all, human connections are the keys to success in business, diplomacy, and life. As a family, we have a deep appreciation and respect and love for the Spanish people and culture. It is only surpassed by our love for the United States of America.

Sadly, Spain like America has faced terror attacks at home, most recently in Barcelona. As we share their grief, we deeply admire their resolve in the face of evil. Spain also understands this is a global conflict, bravely committing blood and treasure to combat terror around the world. It is a significant contributor to NATO, EU, and U.N. peacekeeping missions. For over 60 years, Spain has been a welcoming host to our military. Rota Naval Station and Moron Air Base are essential for major coalition operations in the fight against terrorism. We thank the Spanish Government and people for their support. If confirmed, I will work to strengthen these historic ties as we confront our common enemies.

As I know firsthand from my years as a global investor, Spain is a vital economic partner. The United States and Spain generated \$24 billion in two-way trade in 2016. Spain is our ninth largest source of foreign direct investment. U.S. subsidiaries of Spanish firms employ more than 80,000 U.S. workers. My career has been

built on finding and pursuing opportunities. If confirmed, I will strive to increase Spanish investment in the U.S. and to increase opportunities for U.S. businesses in Spain.

Our human connections to Spain are deep and meaningful, stretching back to before the founding of our republic. Over 2 million Americans traveled to Spain last year to explore its rich culture and beautiful landscape. Approximately 770,000 Spaniards visit the U.S. each year, spending about \$1.7 billion. More than 200,000 Americans live in Spain. If confirmed, the safety and security of these American citizens will be a top priority.

We can also rely on Spain to share our broader geopolitical interests. Spain has been a reliable backer of EU sanctions against Russia and North Korea. Spain is also an important partner in seeking democratic reforms in Venezuela. If confirmed, I will vigorously represent our policies to ensure that the United States and Spain continue to work together closely.

While I have spoken much of Spain, if confirmed, I will also represent the United States before the Principality of Andorra. Situated in the Pyrenees Mountains, this breathtaking country is also rich with history and culture. Andorra has been a reliable partner in key votes at the United Nations and other important international fora. It has taken great strides in diversifying its economy. The embassy works closely with our Andorran partners on educational exchanges and trade promotion. If confirmed, I will be honored to represent U.S. interests in the Principality of Andorra and to build our long friendship and close bilateral cooperation.

Distinguished Senators, I would like to thank you again for your time. I began by talking about our shared journey. My family and I have been blessed in so many ways. We owe so much to America. If you will honor me, I pledge to give my all to strengthen and advance the partnership with our long-term and unwavering friends, Spain and Andorra. I welcome your comments, questions, and a continued relationship. Thank you. And God bless America.

[Mr. Buchan's prepared statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF RICHARD DUKE BUCHAN III

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Murphy and distinguished members of the committee. And another special thanks to you, Chairman Johnson for your personal introduction and for your support.

It is a great honor to appear before this distinguished committee. I am humbled to be President Trump's nominee to serve as the United States Ambassador to the Kingdom of Spain and the Principality of Andorra. I am deeply grateful to President Trump for his confidence in me. If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to represent the interests of the United States of America, and to further enhance our strong partnerships with these two great nations.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Murphy and distinguished members of the committee, I want to start by thanking each of you for your service to our great nation. We need public service now more than ever, and as an American I want to say how much I appreciate all that you do for this country that we love.

Each of us has followed a unique path to public service. As a 10th generation North Carolinian who grew up on a tobacco and cattle farm, I know that I am here because of the people and the land that nurtured me. I would like to recognize those in attendance here today: my amazing wife Hannah; my three dear children Cate, Beau and John; and my charming and insightful mother Betty. My father is here in spirit. I would also like to take a moment to remember my grandmother who taught me that I have two ears and one mouth and that I should use them accordingly. The lessons my family and community have taught me—including the importance of hard work, of listening to and respecting others, of dreaming big—will con-

tinue to guide and inspire me if I am allowed to represent the United States of America overseas.

If confirmed, I look forward to joining the extraordinary team from the State Department led by Secretary Tillerson and the many other U.S. agencies that work together to represent our nation around the globe. The staff of the U.S. Mission to Spain works diligently to serve American citizens, promote American business and advance U.S. interests. I am awed by the talent of these patriots. I also want to recognize their families who serve alongside them with equal honor, dedication and commitment. My career in international finance has focused on building bridges often between diverse individuals and groups to bring out the best in others to solve problems. I hope to apply those skills leading Mission Spain.

Global engagement is vital to America's success. Our international relationships impact all levels of our economy, our national security and our shared responsibility to address the world's toughest problems. My three decades of work in Spain, other European countries, Latin America and Asia have taught me the importance of listening to and learning from others to forge solutions. If confirmed, this experience and international perspective will be vital to my role as a U.S. Ambassador.

The opportunity to serve my country as U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Spain and the Principality of Andorra is a dream come true. I have loved Spain since my childhood, when I first read about that faraway land of Don Quixote and Picasso in the World Book Encyclopedia. In 1980, as an eager and curious high school student, I first convinced my parents to let me study abroad at La Universidad de Valencia.

At the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, I double majored in Spanish and economics, studying an entire academic year at La Universidad de Sevilla. In the years since, my family has worked to strengthen ties to Spain and Latin American countries by establishing The Buchan Excellence Fund, which is UNC's single largest endowment focused on Spanish languages, literature and culture. It embodies my conviction that knowledge, understanding and, above all, human connections, are the keys to success in business, diplomacy and life. One of our Fund's hallmark projects is 21st Century Pen Pals, a video exchange program between American and Spanish schoolchildren. As a family we have a deep appreciation, respect and love for the Spanish people and culture. It is only surpassed by our love for the United States.

Few countries are as united in history and culture as Spain and the United States. These centuriesold ties have only strengthened in recent years as Spain has become one of our chief allies in the fight against terrorism, and the broader effort to uphold democracy and to promote prosperity around the globe. We could not ask for a better partner. It is an alliance based on shared values, respect and collaboration.

Sadly, Spain, like America, has faced terror attacks at home, most recently in Barcelona. As we share their grief, we deeply admire their resolve in the face of evil. And just as we do, Spain understands this is a global conflict, bravely committing blood and treasure to combat terror around the world. It is a significant contributor to NATO, EU and U.N. peacekeeping missions. There are currently 3,000 Spanish troops deployed overseas, including in the Baltics, Turkey and West Africa. For over 60 years Spain has been a welcoming host to our military, and today, we have more than 4,000 personnel based there. Rota Naval Station and Morón Air Base are essential for major coalition operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and West Africa. We thank the Spanish government and people for their support. If confirmed, I will work to strengthen these historic ties as we confront our common enemies.

The Trump administration is keenly aware that these efforts involve not just the military but law enforcement as well; and it is appreciative of Spain's work. We rely on Spain to help us track and apprehend foreign fighters. Spanish authorities have also worked closely with the DEA to battle the scourge of drugs. If confirmed, I will enhance this robust cooperation.

As I know first-hand from my years as a global investor, Spain is a vital economic partner. The United States and Spain generated \$24 billion in two-way goods trade in 2016. Spain is our 9th largest source of foreign direct investment. Its total capital investment in the U.S. exceeds \$72 billion; U.S. subsidiaries of Spanish firms employ more than 80,000 U.S. workers in financial services, construction, alternative energy, tourism and consumables. My career has been built on finding and pursuing opportunities. With Spain's economy predicted to grow at over three percent this year, if confirmed, I will strive to increase Spanish investment in the U.S. and to increase opportunities for U.S. businesses in Spain.

Our human connections to Spain are deep and meaningful, stretching back to before the founding of our Republic. They remain strong today because of our shared values and interests. Over two million Americans traveled to Spain last year to ex-

plore its rich culture and beautiful landscape. Approximately 770,000 Spaniards visit the U.S. each year, spending about \$1.7 billion. Over 28,000 Americans study in Spain each year and around 6,600 Spaniards study in the U.S. More than 200,000 Americans live in Spain. If confirmed, the safety and security of these American citizens will be a top priority.

We can also rely on Spain to share our broader geopolitical interests. Spain has been a reliable backer of EU sanctions against Russia and supports implementation of the Minsk agreement even as it shares our desire to find areas of common ground with Russia where appropriate. Spain is a strong supporter of tough, effective sanctions enforcement, and recently took action to enhance pressure on North Korea. Spain is also an important partner in seeking democratic reforms in Venezuela, and remains a strong voice within the EU for sanctions and other measures. If confirmed, I will vigorously represent our policies to insure that the United States and Spain continue to work together closely.

While I have spoken much of Spain, if confirmed, I will also represent the United States before the Principality of Andorra. Situated in the Pyrenees Mountains, this breathtaking country is also rich with history and culture. Andorra has been a reliable partner in key votes at the United Nations and other important international fora. It has also advanced its fight against money laundering and is diversifying its economy. These steps have already borne fruit in a revitalized and increasingly outward-looking market. The Embassy works closely with our Andorran partners on educational exchanges and trade promotion. If confirmed, I will be honored to represent U.S. interests in the Principality of Andorra and to build on our long friendship and close bilateral cooperation.

Distinguished Senators, I would like again to thank you for your time. I began by talking about our shared journey. My family and I have been blessed in so many ways. We owe so much to America. If you will honor me, I pledge to give my all to strengthen and advance the partnership with our long-term and unwavering friends, Spain and Andorra. I welcome your comments, questions and a continued relationship. Thank you. And God bless America.

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Mr. Buchan. We would all do well to heed your grandmother's advice.

Our next nominee is Mr. Richard Grenell, and Mr. Grenell is the President's nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to Germany. Mr. Grenell is a foreign policy writer and commentator. He founded the international consulting firm, Capital Media Partners, in 2010. For nearly 2 decades, he has served as the primary communications advisor for public officials at the local, State, federal, and international levels, as well as for a Fortune 200 company. Mr. Grenell is the longest-serving United States spokesman of the United States having served four U.S. Ambassadors. Mr. Grenell?

**STATEMENT OF RICHARD GRESELL, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE
AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC
OF GERMANY**

Mr. GRESELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member, and members of the committee.

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

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

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

With your consent, I pledge to return the favor. I pledge to serve this country and its interests with honor and distinction. I pledge to respect its Constitution, and I pledge to uphold its values, spreading our deeply-held commitment to democracy, freedom, and human rights. With your consent, I will commit myself to the interests of this great Nation on behalf of all Americans as the Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany.

All of us owe a great deal to those who helped us along the way. I am here today with my partner of 15 years, Matt Lashey. I want to publicly thank Matt for his many sacrifices, but most of all, for his incredible love and support. Throughout every challenge and opportunity that I have faced, including cancer, Matt has supported and encouraged me every step of the way. I would not be able to serve the President nor the American people without Matt's commitment by my side. Thank you.

I must also add a thank you to my father, who would have been sitting right next to Matt if he were alive today, and to my mom watching from Michigan.

If confirmed, I would be honored to once again have the opportunity to serve at the State Department. For 8 years, I served on the Executive Management Team at the United States Mission to the Europe, serving at the pleasure of four different—in fact, very different—U.S. Ambassadors.

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

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

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

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

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

NATO. But in doing so, I will reinforce to the German people our Nation's commitment to a strong, united West. No other nation will disrupt this important bond that we share.

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

[Mr. Grenell's prepared statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF RICHARD GRENELL

Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member Murphy, and members of the committee, first, let me say that I greatly appreciate the time and commitment you all have made to serve the American people. I am thankful for the sacrifices you and your families have made throughout your tenure in public office.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Mr. Grenell.

Our next nominee is Ms. Jamie McCort. Ms. McCourt is the President's nominee to be the U.S. Ambassador to France. Ms. McCourt is an entrepreneur, an attorney, and has founded leading entrepreneurial enterprises in Los Angeles and Boston. She is a former co-owner, President and CEO of the Los Angeles Dodgers. She also serves as an adjunct professor at the UCLA Anderson School of Management. Ms. McCourt possesses a unique global perspective, having lived and worked both domestically and abroad in numerous industries, including sports, law, finance, education, and real estate. Ms. McCourt?

STATEMENT OF JAMIE McCOURT, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE FRENCH REPUBLIC, AND TO SERVE CONCURRENTLY AND WITHOUT ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION AS AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE PRINCIPALITY OF MONACO

Ms. MCCOURT. Thank you, Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member Murphy, and members of the committee. It is my great honor to be here today as President Trump's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to France and Monaco. I am extraordinarily grateful to the President for this opportunity to serve the American people as his envoy to our oldest and certainly one of our closest allies.

Knowing I have not made this journey alone, I would like to take a moment to express my gratitude to my parents who are first-generation Americans, born and raised in Baltimore, Maryland, as was I, and to my four best start-ups, my four boys, Drew, Travis, Casey, and Gavin, two of whom are here today.

As the first person in my family to attend college, I received a B.S. in French here at Georgetown University with a year at La Sorbonne in Paris, a J.D. from University of Maryland School of Law and ultimately an M.S. in management from the MIT/Sloan School of Management. And as you said, I have been an adjunct professor teaching leadership at UCLA/Anderson Business School of Management. I obviously believe education is the great equalizer.

I believe in the opportunity to succeed through hard work, determination, and initiative. In other words, I believe in the American dream. Therefore, I am deeply honored to be here and incredibly touched to have the opportunity, if confirmed, to give back to and serve my country.

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the U.S. entry into World War I. Beginning in 1917, American and French soldiers

fought side by side and died together in defense of a free and peaceful Europe.

President Trump's visit to Paris in July as President Macron's guest of honor during the National Day celebrations, commemorating the centennial anniversary of this U.S. entry into the war, was a vivid reminder of that sacrifice in defense of our common values.

A few decades later, in 1941, the United States went to war again, and Americans once more fought and died to defend and liberate European allies. One of those soldiers was my uncle, killed in action at the age of 27, leaving behind two young babies.

Having grown up listening to my mostly stoic father tearfully reminisce whenever he spoke of his older brother, and having been extremely close to my grandmother, I have always felt a special connection to Europe and to the purpose for which my uncle gave his life. The thought of serving as an ambassador in Europe, therefore, is particularly personal for me and my family, and it would be the greatest honor of my life if confirmed for this position.

Following World War I and World War II, America's alliance with France has only grown stronger as we, together with France and our other allies, founded NATO to ensure a secure, free, and prosperous future for our descendants.

If confirmed, I pledge to do everything in my power to continue to nurture our crucial alliance with France, and together we will address challenges to our global security, including ensuring a strong and capable NATO alliance, combating terrorism, hastening the defeat of ISIS, countering Russian malign influence, stepping up pressure on North Korea, and improving nuclear security.

In fact, France is our most capable and willing ally in support of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS in Syria and Iraq through air strikes, aircraft carrier deployments, and training of operational forces on the ground; through Defeat-ISIS efforts in Libya; and through its lead in sub-Saharan Africa where it combats violent extremism and illicit trafficking through Operation Barkhane.

France is in support of countering Iran's malign activities including development of nuclear weapons capabilities and advocates for security policy reform at the EU level, leading efforts to tighten boarder security and promote better information sharing among member states to meet evolving terrorist threats. France, along with Germany, participates in the Normandy format to negotiate a peaceful resolution to the conflict in eastern Ukraine.

As well, France is a key partner in America's prosperity, and if confirmed, I will work assiduously to promote American exports to France and French investments in the United States.

Today, France is the fifth largest investor in the U.S. and our eighth largest trading partner. French investment in the U.S. supports approximately 574,000 jobs. Over \$1 billion in commercial transactions take place every single day between our two countries.

As someone who has long been involved in business ventures myself, including as the co-owner, President and CEO of the Los Angeles Dodgers, as well as through my investments in high-value real estate, biotech ventures, technology start-ups, and even art, I would like to further expand this relationship to provide new business opportunities.

Additionally, if confirmed, I look forward to nurturing our relationship with the Principality of Monaco and working together with His Serene Highness Prince Albert and his government to further our joint objectives. Monaco has been a trusted partner for the United States in advancing our shared interest in a secure and prosperous world.

Moreover, the Department of State's highest calling is to protect U.S. citizens abroad. The horrific terror attacks in France that claimed the lives of innocent people and injured countless others, including Americans, are a stark reminder of our overarching duty to protect our citizens.

If confirmed, I will consider my primary responsibility to ensure the safety and security of the embassy community and of all U.S. citizens in France and Monaco. I assure you our mission and its staff will have no higher priority.

If confirmed, I will lead the mission to do everything possible to support French efforts to prevent another tragedy. To this end, I will seek to deepen U.S.-French counterterrorism cooperation and information sharing so that violent extremists in Europe will not be able to threaten the U.S. homeland.

In closing, the U.S. partnership and alliance with France is a cornerstone of our cooperation with Europe.

Drawing on the strength of the entire U.S. Government, including the dedicated officers of our U.S. Foreign Service and the many talented individuals representing multiple agencies of our government in France, I would, if confirmed, work every day to advance our mutual interests in a secure and prosperous world.

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today. I look forward to answering your questions, and if confirmed, I look forward to working with all of you to further enhance the relationship between the United States and France and Monaco.

[Ms. McCourt's prepared statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JAMIE MCCOURT

Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member Murphy, and members of the committee, it is my great honor to be here today as President Trump's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to France and Monaco. I am extraordinarily grateful to the President for this opportunity to serve the American people as his envoy to our oldest and certainly one of our closest allies.

Knowing I have not made this journey alone, I would like to take a moment to express my gratitude to my parents, who are first-generation Americans, born and raised in Baltimore, Maryland, as was I, and to my four best start-ups, my four boys, Drew, Travis, Casey, and Gavin.

As the first person in my family to attend college, I received a B.S. in French at Georgetown University, with a year at La Sorbonne in Paris, a J.D. from University of Maryland School of Law and ultimately a M.S. in Management from the MIT Sloan School of Management and having been an adjunct professor teaching leadership at UCLA/Anderson School of Management, I obviously believe education is the great equalizer.

I believe in the opportunity to succeed through hard work, determination and initiative; in other words, I believe in the American Dream. Therefore, I am deeply honored to be here and incredibly touched to have the opportunity, if confirmed, to give back to and serve my country.

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the U.S. entry into World War I. Beginning in 1917, American and French soldiers fought and died together in defense of a free and peaceful Europe.

President Trump's visit to Paris in July as President Macron's guest of honor during the National Day celebrations, commemorating the centennial anniversary of

the U.S. entry into the war, was a vivid reminder of that sacrifice in defense of our common values.

A few decades later, in 1941, the United States went to war again, and Americans once more fought and died to defend and liberate European allies. One of those soldiers was my uncle, killed in action at the age of twenty-seven, leaving behind two young babies.

Having grown up listening to my mostly stoic father tearfully reminisce about his older brother, and having been extremely close to my grandmother, I have always felt a special connection to Europe and to the purpose for which my uncle gave his life. The thought of serving as an ambassador in Europe is, therefore, particularly personal for me and my family, and it would be the greatest honor of my life if confirmed for this position.

Following World War I and World War II, America's alliance with France has only grown stronger as we, together with France and our other allies, founded NATO to ensure a secure, free, and prosperous future for our descendants.

If confirmed, I pledge to do everything in my power to continue to nurture our crucial alliance with France, and together we will address challenges to our global security, including ensuring a strong and capable NATO alliance, combatting terrorism, hastening the defeat of ISIS, countering Russian malign influence, stepping up pressure on North Korea, and improving nuclear security. In fact, France is our most capable and willing ally in support of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS in Syria and Iraq through air strikes, aircraft carrier deployments, and training of operational forces on the ground; through Defeat-ISIS efforts in Libya; and through its lead in Sub-Saharan Africa where it combats violent extremism and illicit trafficking through Operation Barkhane.

France is in support of countering Iran's malign activities including development of nuclear weapons capabilities, and advocates for security policy reform at the EU level, leading efforts to tighten border security and promote better information sharing among member states to meet evolving terrorist threats. France, along with Germany, participates in the Normandy format to negotiate a peaceful resolution to the conflict in eastern Ukraine.

As well, France is a key partner in America's prosperity, and if confirmed, I will work assiduously to promote American exports to France and French investment in the United States.

Today, France is the 5th largest investor in the U.S. and our 8th largest trading partner. French investment in the U.S. supports approximately 574,000 American jobs. Over \$1 billion in commercial transactions take place every day between our two countries.

As someone who has long been involved in business ventures myself, including as the Co-Owner, President and CEO of the Los Angeles Dodgers, as well as through my investments in high-value real estate, biotechnology ventures, technology start-ups, and even art, I would like to further expand this relationship to provide new business opportunities.

Additionally, if confirmed, I look forward to nurturing our relationship with the Principality of Monaco, and working together with His Serene Highness Prince Albert and his government to further our joint objectives. Monaco has been a trusted partner for the United States in advancing our shared interest in a secure and prosperous world.

Moreover, the Department of State's highest calling is to protect U.S. citizens overseas. The horrific terror attacks in France that claimed the lives of innocent people, and injured countless others, including Americans, are a stark reminder of our overarching duty to protect our citizens.

If confirmed, I will consider my primary responsibility to ensure the safety and security of the Embassy community, and of all U.S. citizens in France and Monaco. I assure you our Mission and its staff will have no higher priority.

If confirmed, I will lead the Mission to do everything possible to support French efforts to prevent another tragedy. To this end, I will seek to deepen U.S.-French counterterrorism cooperation and information sharing so that violent extremists in Europe will not be able to threaten the U.S. homeland.

In closing, the U.S. partnership and alliance with France is a cornerstone of our cooperation with Europe.

Drawing on the strength of the entire U.S. Government, including the dedicated officers of our U.S. Foreign Service and the many talented individuals representing multiple agencies of our government in France, I would, if confirmed, work every day to advance our mutual interest in a secure and prosperous world.

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today. I look forward to answering your questions and, if confirmed, I look forward to working with all

of you to further enhance the relationships between the United States and France and Monaco.

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Ms. McCourt.

Last but not least, our final nominee is Mr. Edward McMullen, Jr. Mr. McMullen is the President's nominee to be the U.S. Ambassador to Switzerland and Liechtenstein. Mr. McMullen has served in public policy, political, and business positions for over 30 years. He is currently President of McMullen Public Affairs, a full-service advertising and corporate public affairs company. His firm's clients have included several Fortune 100 companies. Mr. McMullen has been appointed to serve on key South Carolina statewide boards and commissions. Mr. McMullen?

STATEMENT OF EDWARD T. McMULLEN, JR., OF SOUTH CAROLINA, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE SWISS CONFEDERATION, AND TO SERVE CONCURRENTLY AND WITHOUT ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION AS AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN

Mr. McMULLEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member Murphy, and members of the committee.

I would also like to thank Senator Graham for his kind introduction. He is a good friend and I am thankful he took the time to be here.

It is an honor and quite humbling to be with you today as the President's nominee to be the U.S. Ambassador to Switzerland and Liechtenstein. Thank you for this opportunity to offer my thoughts and to answer any questions that you may have.

There are many who have joined me in this journey, and I would like to express my love and thanks to my wife of 28 years, Margaret Ann, who is here today; our two children, Thomas and Katherine are in Charleston and Los Angeles with career and college commitments; and my parents, in-laws, extended family and friends, including my Hampden-Sydney College professors, all of whom selflessly inspired me in ways that made today possible.

I consider it a great privilege, if confirmed by the Senate, to represent our country in Switzerland and Liechtenstein to articulate the President's and Congress' positions on pressing international issues, and foster, at every opportunity, improved diplomatic relations and deeper economic and cultural connections. Happily, in the case of Switzerland and Liechtenstein, we build on a very strong foundation.

In 1995, I visited Switzerland for the second time, after being selected to be a part of the American-Swiss Foundation's young leaders program. I joined an accomplished group of young Americans and Swiss business and political leaders who inspired my interest and love for this impressive country and her people. The program was comprehensive, and participants interacted directly with Swiss businesses and government, from the highest level CEOs to important government officials.

Please allow me to offer a few observations about Switzerland. Since I come from the private sector, I will start with a private sector fact that I hope you will find as impressive as I do.

Switzerland is the seventh largest direct investor in the United States, this from a country the size of Maryland and a population of 8 million people. This one fact tells us a lot about Switzerland, not least of all that the Swiss have found a great formula for success. But this also tells us that Swiss companies are creating jobs in the United States and that there is extensive and mutually beneficial economic activity between our countries, and I look forward to having the opportunity to build on that, if confirmed by the Senate.

However, our ties are not only economic. Switzerland is a constitutional republic. Its constitution is modeled on ours. We share common values, including respect for rule of law and the notion that government is responsible to the people. Switzerland is neutral, but it is a natural friend because of the values and constitutional principles that we share. To the extent there are areas of dispute and conflict, we share a common vocabulary for its resolution.

This is an area where the Swiss excel. In international relations, Swiss good offices have proved vitally important over and over. It is important that the U.S. work closely with Switzerland in addressing a wide variety of international challenges.

One final observation. Switzerland is an acknowledged superpower in both applied and basic research. It is not an accident that European nuclear research entity, CERN, and its Hadron collider are located in Switzerland, or that the Swiss have shrewdly placed a research-centric consulate literally halfway between Harvard and MIT in Cambridge, Massachusetts. If confirmed, I will work to build ever closer ties between the United States, Swiss, and Liechtensteiner communities, particularly in the research area, particularly in promoting also apprenticeships between our three countries.

I recognize that a key role for the U.S. Ambassador is to explain American foreign policy as it is defined by the President. Part of doing that, if confirmed, will be to reach out and directly communicate with Swiss officials, business people, and citizens. I am confident my prior experience in public relations and communications will prove helpful, and I commit to you that I will devote the time and energy necessary to mastering the details of my job. I also commit to ensure that, if confirmed, the concerns of this committee will be heard and respected.

Before closing, I would like to note that, if confirmed, I will eagerly draw on the strength of the entire U.S. Government, including the devoted officers of our U.S. Foreign Service and the many talented individuals representing multiple agencies of our federal government. While serving as part of our mission in Switzerland, I would, if confirmed as Ambassador, endeavor to deepen our partnership so as to respond effectively to regional and global challenges.

I am profoundly grateful for the opportunity to serve our great country in a new and demanding capacity. Mr. Chairman, members

of the committee, thank you, and I would be very pleased to answer any questions.

[Mr. McMullen's prepared statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF EDWARD T. McMULLEN, JR.

Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member Murphy, and members of the committee, It is an honor and quite humbling to be with you today as the President's nominee to be the US Ambassador to Switzerland and Liechtenstein. Thank you for this opportunity to offer my thoughts and to answer any questions you may have.

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I am profoundly grateful for the opportunity to serve our great country in a new (and demanding) capacity. Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you, and I would be pleased to respond to any questions.

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Mr. McMullen.

I want to thank all of you for your opening statements.

I have got just kind of a basic opening question here, and I will start with Congressman Hoekstra. If confirmed for this position, can you tell me really what your top priority will be as Ambassador to the country you will be representing?

Mr. HOEKSTRA. The top priority would be making sure that the post in The Hague is a very effective, functioning team, to make sure that the other priorities that we are working on, whether it is economic cooperation and development between us and The Netherlands, national security cooperation, and those types of things, fighting the war on extremism, that we can effectively execute each of those three missions. But the bottom line is we need an effective team working together in The Hague.

Senator JOHNSON. Mr. Buchan?

Mr. BUCHAN. Thank you, Senator, for that question.

As we all know, Spain has been a tremendous ally for a very long time to America.

My priorities would be, first and foremost, to protect American people in Spain. Then security and economic prosperity are two areas I would like to work on, as well as cultural and arts. But I do think there is a lot to do in both security and particularly economic prosperity, and those would be my two primary focuses, as well as anything else the administration would ask me to do.

Senator JOHNSON. Mr. Grenell?

Mr. GRENELL. Thank you, Senator.

My top priority is going to be security and safety for embassy and consular staff, first and foremost. After that, I think the German-U.S. relationship is so strong that I want to further the ties in every area, whether it be economic prosperity, information sharing, human rights. I think I am lucky in that this bond that we have with the Germans is very strong, and I want to make sure that we make it even stronger.

Senator JOHNSON. Ms. McCourt?

Ms. MCCOURT. For certain, the very top priority is to ensure the safety of those in the mission and then all Americans in all of France, and also to prevent, to the extent possible, and to work towards preventing anything happening to the U.S. homeland.

That said, it is obvious counterterrorism and countering global security issues is of the utmost importance, including supporting NATO, and thereafter promoting trade and investment, which I know is high on the administration's agenda.

Senator JOHNSON. Mr. McMullen?

Mr. MCMULLEN. Senator, I think continuing to build on the Swiss-Liechtenstein-U.S. relationship is critical. And in doing that, if you look at the economic side with jobs, the President has made job creation a major component of his administration. Swiss investment in the U.S. with 480,000 jobs, many of which are high tech, great jobs that pay well over \$100,000 in salary—I think this is an area that we really can expand. And I look forward to Swiss busi-

ness, Liechtensteiner business, and investing in the U.S., continuing that investment and building on it.

Senator JOHNSON. So let us go down the line again in terms of what is the top area of cooperation economically with those countries? Congressman Hoekstra?

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Well, the Dutch cooperate with us on a number of areas, in terms of the economy, whether it is agricultural issues, technology issues, water management, and those types of things. Those are the areas where we have cooperated and I think provide an opportunity for additional investment, additional exploration.

Senator JOHNSON. Mr. Buchan?

Mr. BUCHAN. Thank you, Senator.

You know, the Spaniards have been very active investing in banking, construction, consumables, et cetera. It would be my goal to continue to work along those industries. And I think in particular there is an opportunity in energy, and that is an area that I would really like to pursue.

Senator JOHNSON. Mr. Grenell?

Mr. GRENELL. I would say the first two are energy, specifically liquid natural gas, and expand the auto trade. As you know, Senator, there is an enormous German trade surplus, and I look forward to the Commerce Department coming out with a report later on that trade deficit report, which would give us a lot more information.

Senator JOHNSON. Ms. McCourt?

Ms. MCCOURT. France has a broad goods and services reach, and I would say that certainly it reaches into the air space and the military space, the IT space, the pharma space, and definitely increasingly in the energy space.

Senator JOHNSON. Mr. McMullen?

Mr. MCMULLEN. Mr. Chairman, I think trade with Switzerland, for a small country the size of Maryland, is pretty impressive. And when you look at the types of trade, it is pharmaceuticals, aerospace, gold, chemicals, and something that Americans seem to enjoy, their Rolex and their Patek Philippes. So I think that is one of the great Swiss assets that we have got, and it is a major trading opportunity for the U.S.

Senator JOHNSON. Well, thank you. I have efficiently used my time. Senator Murphy?

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

I enjoyed all of your opening comments. Again, I appreciate your willingness to serve.

Ms. McCourt, let me start with you. Russia used very familiar cyber espionage tactics to try to manipulate France's recent national election, tactics that we saw employed here in the United States in 2016. Unfortunately, nearly half of U.S. voters today do not believe that Russia interfered in the 2016 election, largely because our President regularly calls reports of that interference a hoax.

So I wanted to ask you two questions. One, what is your personal view of the extent of Russia's interference in the 2016 election? Do you believe it happened? And if so, what do you think that we can do with France to make sure that it does not happen again either here or in France?

Ms. McCOURT. Thank you for your question, Senator.

By all accounts from multiple intelligence agencies, it appears that Russia attempted to interfere with our elections. That is my personal view.

As to what can be done about it in terms of working with France, I believe we need to leverage our information sharing. We need to share watch lists. We need to deal with anything that comes across our way that further enhances relationships so that we can figure out where these things are coming from. And the cyber issue is a huge issue.

Senator MURPHY. Thank you for that response.

I would add to that having a coordinated strategy of repercussions for Russian individuals and Russian entities that have tried to interfere in both of our elections. I think that will be a key point of cooperation with the French as well.

Mr. Grenell, you and I had the chance to talk about this subject, and I want to bring it up in open session. You have had a lot of experience that prepares you for this very important role of being Ambassador to one of the United States' key transatlantic allies. But there are few professions that probably prepare you worse for being a diplomat than being a cable news commentator. You, in that role or connected to that role, have said some very inflammatory things that will be brought with you, whether you like it or not, as you seek to represent the United States of America in Germany.

In particular, there is a litany of very derogatory comments about women's personal appearances in your portfolio. I am not going to read through them, but they include derogatory comments about personal appearances of Hillary Clinton, Madeleine Albright, Calista Gingrich, Rachel Maddow.

Do you regret making these statements? And do you understand the concern some of us have about these inflammatory statements coming with you as you seek to represent the United States as a whole in Germany?

Mr. GRENELL. Thank you, Senator, for that question and for the chance and opportunity to speak to it.

First of all, let me say I never want to be mean. I am not that guy. It is certainly never my intentions to hurt anyone's feelings. Anybody who knows me knows that I am a very caring person and very sensitive person. And I also appreciate good humor. Unfortunately, there are times where what was intended to be humorous turned out to be not so humorous.

Again, that was never my intention, and I regret that and want to make sure that you understand that I view my career in two different phases: one, for almost 16 years as a U.S. official working for State and local in international work. That includes 8 years at the UN. In that capacity, I understood that when you are speaking as a U.S. official, it is not your opinion that you are pushing, but it is a well thought-out U.S. policy. I can simply say that going back into the State Department, I look forward to taking on that role again where it is a well thought-out U.S. policy not my personal opinion.

Senator MURPHY. Thank you, Mr. Grenell.

Permit me to ask one quick question of Mr. Buchan.

You rightly referenced the important counterterrorism work that we have to do with Spain. Do you have any thoughts in your preparation for this role about the importance of information sharing within Europe with respect to terrorist threats and the importance of the United States pressing the Europeans to talk to each other in a much more coordinated way to make sure that the information that we are ultimately getting is the result of a collaborative process. The bilateral relationship is important, but pressing our European partners to work better in coordination, especially those like Spain that are under a direct counterterrorism threat, seems important as well. I wanted to raise that issue with you to see if you had considered it.

Mr. BUCHAN. Thank you, Senator Murphy.

What I do know is that the information sharing between Spain and the United States is quite strong. Again, they have been a tremendous ally and friend. So I believe that relationship is there. Certainly in all situations, there is room for improvement.

To the extent that the administration or Senators such as yourself view this as a high priority, of course, I will do my best to execute on that.

As far as specifics between Spain and the rest of Europe, candidly I have not had privy to that information at this point in time. But if it is important to people in the administration and people in this room, we certainly will make it a top priority.

And again, thank you for that question.

Senator MURPHY. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator JOHNSON. Senator Kaine?

Senator KATNE. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And congratulations to each of the nominees. Not only is it a real honor to carry the title of ambassador, should you be confirmed, but you are also going to work with great people.

And I will tell you something that I always do when I travel. I go to missions and I ask to meet with first and second tour Foreign Service officers without the Ambassador present. So these are people who are new in their career at the State Department. This is what I say to them. I say congratulations. You have gotten a job that is really hard to get. What will make the difference between you staying at this job and making a career out of it or leaving after a few years? And then I do not have to say anything more, and we have about a 2-hour discussion that is fascinating. Not anybody has yet said you got to change out my ambassador. That is going to be make or break.

They instead bring up all kinds of issues. And a lot of them kind of go to an issue that I hope you will all be mindful of if you are confirmed, and that is they say to me some version of this. It was really hard to get this job, and I had to go through pretty intense security vetting to do it. And now I am in the job but I get micro-managed. So like to order five pencils, I have to take a lie detector test. If you trusted me enough to vet me to do the job, trust me enough to do the job. And I think you have this great group of people. The sky is the limit in terms of of what they can do and the effectiveness, and they sometimes feel really weighted down by the kinds of things that often happen in large organizations. So just

please recognize the quality of the people you have in your various posts and let them be all they can be.

I am going to confine my question to Mr. Buchan because this U.S.-Spain relationship is really important to me too, and you have a really great background for this position. There is a 501(c)(3) organization called the U.S.-Spain Council that was created in the 1990s, and the tradition is that the U.S. chair is a Senator and the Spanish chair is an industrialist. Currently I am the U.S. chair, completing my fourth and final year as chair. The Spanish chair, Jose Manuel Entrecanales, is the CEO of Acciona, which is a large Spanish infrastructure firm.

It was created at a time when the relationship had challenges. Spain was having fairly common street protests and riots about whether they should stay in NATO. And over the course of the 25 years of the organization, it has really built up to be a very effective organization. We just had our annual meeting this past weekend in Williamsburg, and we had Secretary Mattis talking about the future of NATO. We had the Spanish American chef Jose Andres talking about shared culture. It has really turned into something strong.

The U.S. Ambassador to Spain always participates. The King and Queen of Spain often participate. And so I would just hope to see you in your capacity as Ambassador, Mr. Buchan, should you be confirmed, in future years' meetings.

And then really just one question. I think it is an opportunity, a really important one, for the U.S. and Spain right now. I know Prime Minister Rajoy was with the President yesterday in the Oval Office. By all accounts, that meeting went well.

And the opportunity that I think is a shared one is Puerto Rico. So obviously, Spain and the United States both have deep, deep historical connections to Puerto Rico. Spain—through the settlement in the 1530s, Puerto Ricans are Americans and have been since the early 1900s. Puerto Ricans volunteer and serve in our military to a degree virtually more than just about any other State, patriotic Americans who are suffering one of the worst humanitarian crises in any part of this country probably in our history.

There is going to be a tremendous need to rebuild Puerto Rico, infrastructure, hospitals, electricity, ports, airports, roads. Spaniards are excellent at infrastructure. The chair of the U.S.-Spain Council is an infrastructure guy. One of the three topics that we had this weekend in Williamsburg was about infrastructure. Virginia does public-private partnerships in a really interesting way. I did it when I was Governor. And often it was the Spaniards who were the contracting firms and the Australians who would figure out how to finance the deals, and we would do these projects in Virginia.

I think there is a critical humanitarian need to really be firm in our commitment to the Americans in Puerto Rico and to help rebuild. And I think the Spaniards not only have expertise but have a real deep cultural interest in this, and there might be some wonderful opportunities right out of the gate for a U.S. Ambassador to work together to help forge partnerships to do it. And I just wanted to put that on the table and say I think there is going to be a great

opportunity immediately, and I would love to work together with you on a matter like that, should you be confirmed.

Mr. BUCHAN. Thank you, Senator Kaine.

I too agree that there is a great opportunity here. We can certainly address the human needs. It is all about building bridges in opinion and making the human connection. And this sounds like a great idea. We know that some of the largest construction and infrastructure firms in the world are based in Spain. We also know that some of those are based in the United States. So I look forward to working with you and whomever else on this fantastic idea. And thank you for that.

Senator KAINE. Great. Thank you so much.

Thanks, Mr. Chair.

Senator JOHNSON. Senator Markey?

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

And congratulations to each of you on this nomination.

Jamie McCourt I have known for decades and her background is very diverse. She brings a life of very, very interesting and I think instructive life experience that can help her be a very good Ambassador for our country to France. One of her sons—she talked about her four sons, her start-ups. One of them was an intern in my office 10 years ago. So I have known the family for a long time.

So I guess my first question I will just throw to you because you are arriving just as President Macron is really beginning his presidency and saying that he wants to reinvigorate the EU, that he wants to reexamine its institutions. People on this committee do believe in a strong EU–American partnership. It has been basically the cornerstone of civilization since World War II.

Can you talk about what you think the role of the United States can be in partnering with France to strengthen the EU in the years ahead?

Ms. MCCOURT. First, Senator, thank you for those wonderful words. I hope I live up to it, should I be confirmed.

And second, yes, I would love to address your question. I think where we share a lot of value and values is with free trade, and I know that President Macron is a strong advocate of free trade within the EU and puts a lot of pressure on others in the EU in that regard, and I think that is incredibly helpful.

I think that there is a great respect for goods trade, services, capital, and all of the things that we also care about. And I think that it is very important that we work together to ensure that there is a very healthy trade between the EU and the United States.

Senator MARKEY. Thank you.

Mr. Grenell, Russia has an increasingly aggressive military posture. They are in violation of the INF agreement. This increased tension is something that is obviously going to require U.S. and German partnership in order to deal with this changing Putin era of defense view of our relationship. Can you give us some sense of how you perceive the INF issue, what you would encourage the Germans to do in response to those violations, and how you might think that we could achieve that in a partnership between our country and the Germans?

Mr. GRENELL. Thank you, Senator, for that question.

I would first start by saying I spent 8 years at the U.N. working with the EU-3 and Germany very closely. So the Germans, the British, and the French I think are very keen on working together. Despite the issues that the EU are going through right now, I think we can rely on those three to really confront the Russia issue. I have been very encouraged by Chancellor Merkel even through this election with the possible coalition that is forming. They are all united, no matter what the coalition comes out to be, that Russia must be stopped, that the NATO alliance, that the European alliance is crucial. I look forward to working with the Germans to strengthen that. I know we have had some issues and I know Congress has some very specific issues on NATO spending, and I look forward to working with the Germans to increase that as well.

Senator MARKEY. Could you speak specifically to this INF issue, however, which is a cornerstone of security in the European theater?

Mr. GRENELL. Sure. Senator, I look forward to working with the team at the German mission. I look forward to working with the State Department on this issue. This is one issue that we have not been fully briefed on, and what I would want to do is have a very well thought-out U.S. policy on that.

Senator MARKEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Senator Markey.

Senator Murphy does have a couple extra questions.

Senator MURPHY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Just a few additional questions.

Congressman Hoekstra, good to see you. I would like to think that I set a trend here. I got to introduce my 2012 Senate opponent before the committee that was considering her nomination to be the Administrator of the SBA. And so I was glad to have Senator Stabenow here with you today giving you a similar ringing endorsement.

Here is my only question for you. I mentioned in my opening remarks that our unique partnership with Europe—and The Netherlands is clearly an important ally in Europe—is based on interests and values. And The Netherlands have some of the most progressive laws on LGBT rights in the world. Your personal and political views on that subject might not match up with those that are enshrined in the law there. Can you just speak to that issue and the concern that some of us may have about sending an ambassador who may bring with him or her a record on an issue that is very important your host country views you may not share?

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Yes. I mean, the Dutch and the United States share a tradition of defending human rights, the value, the dignity of every individual. And so while my personal views may differ from where the Dutch have moved in terms of their public policy, the bottom line is my personal respect and value that I have for every single human being I think matches the Dutch very, very well. We may differ on some political processes or some political implementation of those values, but the fundamental respect for every individual is consistent. If confirmed, my job as the Ambassador is not to go and try to influence those. It is to respect the

decisions that they have made, that they believe are most appropriate for their country. And I will respect their decisions.

Senator MURPHY. Well said. Thank you.

Mr. Grenell, one final question on policy not on style. But one of the constant challenges in our relationship with Germany is making sure that they both walk the walk and talk the talk on the issue of energy independence. Ultimately Russia's ability to manipulate continental affairs in Europe is related to their continued ability to send large amounts of petroleum products into Europe. And one of the ways they are seeking to tighten that grip is a new pipeline called Nordstream II that would essentially allow them to circumvent Ukraine, thus frankly increasing their leverage over Ukraine, decreasing Ukraine's potential leverage over Russia.

I just want to ask if you are familiar with this product and how you see advocacy on the issue of stopping Nordstream II as part of your mission.

Mr. GRENELL. Thank you, Senator, for that question.

Yes, I am familiar with this issue and I view it very much as a security issue. I think we can really make the case that having a broader energy policy for the Germans and for all of Europe is better for security. I look forward to making that case, working with the State Department. And I know the mission in Berlin is focused on it as well.

Senator MURPHY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Senator Murphy.

Again, I want to thank all of our witnesses, your willingness to serve, your families. Being Ambassador of the United States to these nations is a critical job. You need to represent American values to those countries, but it is also important that you recognize you have to represent their viewpoint back to the United States. It is really a two-way street.

So I was struck in my meetings with all of you—and I appreciate the time you took—that you have a great affinity for the countries that you have been nominated to represent. Many of you speak fluently the language, which is going to be extremely helpful. So I do commend President Trump on five, I think, very qualified decent human beings that are going to be America's representatives as Ambassadors to these nations. So again, thank you for your willingness to serve and sacrifice.

With that, the hearing record will remain open for 2 days until September 29th at 5:00 p.m. for the submission of statements and questions for the record.

This hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 3:30 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

Additional Material Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO PETER HOEKSTRA 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. Human rights have been an important focus throughout my career. On my overseas trips, I would meet frequently with and advocate on behalf of those individuals and groups who face discrimination in their countries. Some of these included the Coptic Christians in Egypt and Chaldeans in Iraq. I also met secretly on occasion with these Christian communities because of the risk to them to meet with me publicly.

Since then, the conditions of Chaldeans have deteriorated significantly with the surge of ISIS in Iraq. I would like to believe that meeting with these Christians provided encouragement to them—they knew the U.S. Congress was interested in their situation.

Question 2. What are the most pressing human rights concerns in the Netherlands today? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to advance human rights and democracy in the Netherlands and, working in partnership with the Dutch, to promote human rights around the globe? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. Chapter 1 of the Constitution of the Netherlands codifies many human rights, and the Netherlands is signatory to all relevant international human rights instruments. In practice the Netherlands is a strong advocate of human rights globally. However, as in many countries, challenges remain.

The most significant human rights issue is increasing societal animosity and discrimination against members of certain ethnic and religious minority groups, particularly Muslim immigrants from North Africa, Turkey, and the Middle East, and rising anti-Semitism. There are also concerns about discriminatory rhetoric from far-right political party leaders and members. If confirmed, I will seek ways to cooperate with the Government of the Netherlands on these issues, as the Netherlands is also seeking ways to address these challenges. I will also work with my staff in our Mission to see what creative programming we can bring to bear in our outreach activities to promote religious tolerance and equality.

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 the Netherlands in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. The Government of the Netherlands is a global leader in addressing human rights issues at home and around the world, and I commend their recent efforts such as their new national campaign featuring well-known personalities to “knock down” discrimination, and enhancements to their national action plan to counter discrimination, including stronger security for Jewish and Muslim communities. Countering societal discrimination in particular is a challenge for many countries, as it involves changing beliefs and attitudes toward other groups which are sometimes deep-rooted and often sparked by a lack of knowledge of the other. Building more communication channels and interfaith cooperation is a critical part of this, as well as economic and social integration. If confirmed, I look forward to supporting the Netherlands’ efforts in dealing with this challenge; one that is occurring in many countries, where there has been an increase in migrants fleeing the violence and conflict in their home countries.

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 from the Netherlands?

Answer. Yes. I recognize the value of meeting with civil society—not only to encourage those involved in this vital part of society but to also gain a better understanding of the dynamics, context, and environment related to a particular issue. Like many of our diplomatic missions overseas, the staff at our Mission The Hague already knows the critical role that civil society as a whole, including faith community members and leaders, plays in promoting human rights and accountability. Civil society engagement is a key part of Mission engagement with host countries around the world, and if confirmed, I would facilitate and strongly support this. As a member of the Executive Committee of the Netherlands American Foundation, I am fortunate to be in a position to reach out easily to NGOs here in the United States that may be involved or interested in the Netherlands.

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

Answer. We are not aware of such cases in the Netherlands, but if confirmed I would engage, together with my embassy team, to address any cases of persons possibly unjustly targeted should such occasions arise.

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. I will support my team in the Mission in the Netherlands in implementing the provisions outlined in the Leahy Law, which requires vetting of security force units including police and military who receive assistance from the United States. If there is credible information that a security force unit or individual committed gross violations of human rights, we will take the necessary steps in accordance with the law and Department policy, including working to ensure the responsible units and individuals do not receive U.S. assistance and assisting their respective governments in bringing them to justice.

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

Answer. Yes. I am committed to ensuring our Mission remains engaged on these issues. As Secretary Tillerson has said, American leadership requires moral clarity. We are strongest when our values and those of our allies are aligned. No one should have to live in fear, worship in secret, or face discrimination because of his or her beliefs. If confirmed, I will ensure that engagement on human rights and good governance remains an integral component of our mission.

Question 8. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff members who come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the State Department?

Answer. Diversity is one of the things that makes America great. Throughout my career, both as a member of the House of Representatives and in the private sector, I have worked to ensure the organizations I led reflected the diversity of our country and upheld the principals of equal opportunity. If confirmed, I would uphold the same principles of equality and equal opportunity throughout Mission the Netherlands. As I stated in my testimony, I have a fundamental respect for every individual, and if confirmed, I will demonstrate that as Ambassador.

Question 9. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. I understand the critical importance of ensuring Mission the Netherlands remains a welcoming and inclusive environment. If confirmed, I will not only lead by example, demonstrating my own commitment to diversity and inclusiveness, but I will also work with my Deputy Chief of Mission and Country Team to ensure that all Mission the Netherlands supervisors uphold equal employment opportunity principles. I will also direct our Mission managers responsible for hiring and recruitment to ensure that Embassy The Hague and Consulate General Amsterdam remain diverse and inclusive workplaces where all team members have an equal opportunity to achieve success.

Question 10. 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 11. 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 12. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in the Netherlands?

Answer. My investment portfolio includes companies that have a presence in the Netherlands, but I have worked closely with the State Department Ethics Office and the Office of Government Ethics and will divest my interests in those companies the State Department Ethics Office deems necessary to avoid a conflict of interest. I am committed to ensuring that my official actions will not give rise to a conflict of interest, and I will remain vigilant with regard to my ethics obligations.

Question 13. Have there have been any material changes to your financial assets, income, or any other information requested by the OGE financial disclosure form since the date you signed it? If so, please list and explain below, and whether you have raised them with OGE.

Answer. I know of no significant change in my financial affairs since I filed my report. I am committed to ensuring that my official actions will not give rise to a conflict of interest and will remain vigilant with regard to my ethics obligations.

Question 14. Unity with European partners on Russia sanctions is critical to their success. What is your diplomatic plan to build support within the Netherlands for stronger sanctions on Russia?

Answer. If confirmed, I will be committed to working closely with the Netherlands to maintain unity on Russia sanctions and their implementation. The U.S. Government has employed a collaborative and consultative approach with the Netherlands on sanctions, and I will continue to seek feedback from the Dutch, who have been reliable partners on Russia sanctions.

The Dutch are steadfast on Russian sanction issues, and we will continue to coordinate closely on these sanctions, which support our important, common work in resolving the conflict in Ukraine, opposing the Russian occupation of Crimea, and preventing future meddling by Russia in foreign elections-while also remaining vigilant against unintended consequences for our partners. Close coordination with allies such as the Netherlands is crucial for the sanctions to achieve their ultimate goal of changing the Russian Government's behavior.

Question 15. How will you seek to boost resilience to Russian meddling within Dutch institutions and civil society? What assistance priorities will you push with Dutch counterparts to shore up resilience elsewhere in Europe?

Answer. Russia is engaged in a campaign of disinformation and malign influence activities to undermine core institutions of the West and to weaken faith in the democratic and free-market systems. Given the nature and breadth of Russia's campaign, it is important for the United States not only to pursue a whole-of-government approach but also work closely with Allies to expose and counter these campaigns.

The Netherlands has first-hand experience of Russian malign influence. The Dutch intelligence service AIVD publically confirmed Russia tried to influence the March 2017 Dutch elections by spreading fake news, though Dutch intelligence found that Russia did not succeed in "substantially influencing" the election process. The Netherlands shares our concerns about ongoing Russian disinformation campaigns and malign influence activities across the region. If confirmed, I will make it a priority to work to strengthen our coordination with the Netherlands to detect and counter these activities that seek to undermine democratic institutions and principles.

Question 16. If the United States withdraws from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action without evidence of a material breach, how do you anticipate that the Netherlands will respond based on statements from the past few weeks as well as EU statements?

- Do you believe that the best policy for the United States, if we walk away from the nuclear agreement with Iran, is to impose sanctions on European companies and banks that continue to do business with Iran?
- What national security priorities other than Iran could be negatively impacted by tensions in the transatlantic alliance stemming from unilateral U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA?

Answer. The administration is currently conducting a review of the JCPOA and our broader approach to Iran. While that review is ongoing, the United States will continue to implement its JCPOA commitments, and expects Iran to do the same. In addition, the United States seeks to ensure strict implementation of the JCPOA, a goal shared by Netherlands and all of our European partners. I cannot prejudge the outcome of the administration's review in terms of sanctions implications or how Netherlands will respond.

Regardless of the outcome of the administration's review, close coordination with Europe will be crucial. If confirmed, it will be one of my highest priorities to ensure that we closely coordinate with the Netherlands to ensure the effectiveness of any measures to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon, steps to combat Iran's malign activities more broadly, including its ballistic missile program and support for terrorism, and other U.S. national security priorities.

Question 17. International cooperation to address climate change is a top priority for the Netherlands. The U.S. is historically, across multiple past administrations, a constructive partner with the Netherlands and other European allies on addressing climate change through multilateral forums including the UN.CCC and the Paris Agreement, the IPCC, G20, G7, the GEF and GCF. Given the President's antipathy towards international cooperation on climate change, how do you intend to approach this issue that the Netherlands' leaders care deeply about?

As one of the lowest lying nations in the world, the Netherlands is highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, namely sea level rise. In light of this risk, the Dutch lead the world in engineering solutions to sea level rise and have created climate change adaptation technologies that the Dutch can export and develop around the world. How will you approach discussing climate change action and investment in a country that is experiencing the very real and present threats from climate change, as a representative of an administration that very plainly denies the existence of this threat and is actively defunding federal investments in science and technology that could help the Dutch and others better understand the threat of climate change? What lessons do you think the U.S.'s most climate vulnerable communities can learn from the Dutch's experience and investments?

Answer. The administration supports a balanced approach to climate policy that lowers emissions while promoting economic growth and ensuring energy security. The President determined the terms of our current engagement in the Paris Agreement did not balance those factors, and on June 1, he announced the intent to withdraw from the Paris Agreement. As the President has indicated, he is open to re-engaging in the Paris Agreement if the United States can identify more favorable terms. The United States respects the efforts of those countries that continue to participate in the Paris Agreement.

At the G20 Leaders' Summit in Hamburg, Germany, the United States joined the other G20 members in reiterating a collective commitment to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, including through increased innovation in sustainable and clean energy and energy efficiency, and working towards low greenhouse-gas emission energy systems. The Dutch are proactively addressing rising sea levels through innovative technologies and initiatives, and they have successfully turned their expertise into opportunities for Dutch companies. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Dutch interlocutors and our European allies to seek common ground and develop a way forward on this important issue.

Finding ways to bring together Dutch engineering and water management solutions and U.S. technology and innovation presents a profound opportunity to enhance both of our countries efforts in this arena. Many state and local governments have already sought out Dutch expertise on water management, and many low lying areas in the United States could benefit from adapting Dutch solutions to mitigate the effects of sea level rise. I will make it a priority to build on existing relationships and identify new opportunities for collaboration between our countries to harness innovation and technology breakthroughs to combat climate change and its effects.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO
RICHARD DUKE BUCHAN III BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question 1. Have you employed or paid any workers (including but not limited to farmhands, housekeepers, nannies, gardeners, handymen, drivers, caretakers) that you have become aware may not have had legal documentation or for whom taxes were not properly withheld? If yes, please provide details and an explanation of the issue.

Answer. No, to the best of my knowledge.

Question 2. Have you paid all legally required employer taxes for any workers you have employed in the previous 10 years?

Answer. Yes, to the best of my knowledge.

Question 3. 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. Human rights and democracy are not just ideas but fundamental values that have shaped our society and my life. My family taught me to always respect the honor and dignity of everyone around me. Everybody must be treated equally. No one should face discrimination, especially not because of race, sex, religion, age, disability, national origin or any other status. I also believe in American democracy and its eight tenets: individual worth, individual freedom, equality, popular sovereignty, majority rule, minority rights and limited government. It is these democratic values that enable people to control their own lives, which is the most basic human right.

While these values are natural and self-evident, they must be nurtured. That's why I believe in inclusion. I have always promoted diversity in the businesses that I have worked for and owned. That's also why my family has long provided mean-

ingful support to educational institutions such as Harvard University that fervently promote human rights and democracy, to organizations whose good works include educating young girls in impoverished countries, and to church missions. I have also volunteered in electoral politics in an effort to get more people involved in our democratic elections.

Although it is difficult to measure the impact of my actions, I believe they have been positive. If confirmed, I will continue to advance human rights and democracy as Ambassador to Spain.

Question 4. What are the most pressing human rights concerns in Spain today?

- What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to advance human rights and democracy in Spain and Andorra?
- What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?
- 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 Spain and Andorra in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. Spain and Andorra are strong partners in advancing human rights around the world. Nevertheless, some important challenges remain. In Andorra, issues persist regarding the rights of workers to bargain collectively. Andorran law does not provide sufficient protection from anti-union discrimination. Access for persons with disabilities is another area where improvements can be made.

In Spain, the recent European refugee and migration challenge has brought to light reports concerning the denial of access to asylum and forced returns of asylum seekers by police. Human trafficking, including labor and sex trafficking, remains a prominent concern, as well as gender-based violence and continued societal discrimination against members of racial, religious, and ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, and members of the LGBTI community. However, Spain's strong actions in the area of human rights have been essential in addressing these concerns. For example, the Barcelona administration launched a 28-point action plan in January 2017 to address rising anti-Muslim sentiment. Spain also earned a Tier 1 ranking in the State Department's annual Trafficking in Persons Report, a mark of the Government's full commitment to combat human trafficking, as outlined in the report.

If confirmed, I am committed to continuing Mission Spain/Andorra's engagement with Spanish and Andorran officials to combat all forms of intolerance and to strengthen respect for human rights. I would also look forward to strengthening Mission Spain/Andorra's programs in combating human trafficking and corruption, addressing human rights abuses against refugees and migrants, and promoting good governance. If confirmed, I will strongly support the Department of State's ongoing work with these European partners.

Question 5. 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 Spain and Andorra?

Answer. If confirmed, I am committed to sustaining engagement with a broad spectrum of society among European publics, including human rights activists, civil society, religious groups, and the organizations that represent them.

Question 6. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Spain to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted?

Answer. I am not aware of such cases in Spain or Andorra, but if confirmed, I would certainly engage with Spanish and Andorran authorities to address cases of persons unjustly targeted when such occasions arise.

Question 7. 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 confirmed, I will ensure the Mission continues to vet thoroughly all individuals and units nominated to participate in U.S.-funded security assistance activities, in accordance with the Leahy law. If there are findings of credible information regarding gross violations 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 and will assist their respective governments to bring them to justice.

Question 8. Will you engage with Spanish and Andorran officials on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. I am committed to ensuring our Mission remains engaged on these issues. As Secretary Tillerson has said, American leadership requires moral clarity. We are strongest when our values and those of our allies are aligned, and when we

hold our rivals accountable for human rights abuses at home. If confirmed, I will ensure that engagement on human rights, civil rights, and governance remains an integral component of our Mission.

Question 9. 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's diverse and inclusive?

Answer. I am committed to equal employment opportunity principles. If confirmed, I will foster a diverse and inclusive team across Mission Spain, and will communicate that this is a priority for me as the Ambassador. If confirmed, I will urge the Mission to reflect our whole-of-mission commitment to promoting diversity and inclusion. In keeping with Secretary Tillerson's strong emphasis on diversity, I will ensure all supervisors have access to and avail themselves of opportunities to receive regular formal training and regular guidance on EEO principles, diversity, and inclusion to sensitize them to these important issues and maximize diverse talents in our workforce.

Question 10. 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 11. 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 12. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in Spain or Andorra?

Answer. My investment portfolio includes companies that have a presence in Spain/Andorra, but I have worked closely with the State Department Ethics Office and the Office of Government Ethics and will divest my interests in those companies the State Department Ethics Office deems necessary to avoid a conflict of interest. I am committed to ensuring that my official actions will not give rise to a conflict of interest, and I will remain vigilant with regard to my ethics obligations.

Question 13. Have there have been any material changes to your financial assets, income, or any other information requested by the OGE financial disclosure form since the date you signed it? If so, please list and explain below, and whether you have raised them with OGE.

Answer. Since my OGE financial disclosure statement dated April 2017, there have not been material changes in my overall financial assets and income. In June 2017, I invested in an assisted living and memory care facility located in the Southeastern United States for the amount of \$3.9 million that will have an asset value of approximately \$20 million. I am committed to ensuring that my official actions will not give rise to a conflict of interest and will remain vigilant with regard to my ethics obligations.

Question 14. Russia Sanctions: Unity with European partners on Russia sanctions is critical to their success. What is your diplomatic plan to build support within Spain for stronger sanctions on Russia?

Answer. If confirmed, I will be committed to working closely with Spain to maintain unity on Russia sanctions and their implementation. The U.S. Government has employed a collaborative and consultative approach on sanctions, and I will continue to seek feedback from Spain, which has been a steadfast partner on Russia sanctions.

My goal is to ensure these sanctions support our important, common work in resolving the conflict in Ukraine, restoring control of Crimea to Ukraine, and preventing future meddling by Russia in foreign elections-while also remaining vigilant against unintended consequences for our partners. I will likewise remain mindful of our many foreign policy priorities related to Europe as the U.S. Government and the EU implement these sanctions, including our commitment to promoting European energy security. Close coordination with our allies is crucial to enabling the sanctions to achieve their ultimate goal: imposing costs on Russia sufficient to change the Russian Government's behavior.

Question 15. Russian Malign Influence: How will you seek to boost resilience to Russian meddling within Spanish institutions and civil society? What assistance priorities will you push with Spanish counterparts to shore up resilience elsewhere in Europe?

Answer. Russia is engaged in a campaign of disinformation and malign influence activities to undermine core institutions of the West and to weaken faith in the democratic and free-market systems. This campaign is aggressive, coordinated, and involves the entire Russian Government. The United States should continue to work closely with its Allies and partners, such as Spain, to enhance collective resilience against these threats. Given the nature and breadth of Russia's campaign, it is important for the United States not only to pursue a whole-of-government approach but also work closely with Allies such as Spain to expose and counter these campaigns. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Spanish Government to support this effort.

Question 16. If the United States withdraws from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action without evidence of a material breach, how do you anticipate that Spain will respond based on statements from the past few weeks as well as EU statements?

- Do you believe that the best policy for the United States, if we walk away from the nuclear agreement with Iran, is to impose sanctions on European companies and banks that continue to do business with Iran?
- What national security priorities other than Iran could be negatively impacted by tensions in the transatlantic alliance stemming from unilateral U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA?

Answer. The administration is currently conducting a review of the JCPOA and our broader approach to Iran. While that review is ongoing, the United States continues to implement its JCPOA commitments, and expects Iran to do the same. In addition, the United States seeks to ensure strict implementation of the JCPOA, a goal shared by Spain and all of our European partners. I cannot prejudge the outcome of the administration's review in terms of sanctions implications or how Spain will respond.

Regardless of the outcome of the administration's review, unity with Europe will be crucial. If confirmed, it will be one of my highest priorities to ensure that we closely coordinate with Spain to ensure the effectiveness of any measures to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon, steps to combat Iran's malign activities more broadly, including its ballistic missile program and support for terrorism, and other U.S. national security priorities.

Question 17. International cooperation to address climate change is a top priority for Spain. The U.S. is historically, across multiple past administrations, a constructive partner with Spain and other European allies on addressing climate change through multilateral forums including the UN.CCC and the Paris Agreement, the IPCC, G20, G7, the GEF and GCF. Given the President's antipathy towards international cooperation on climate change, how do you intend to approach this issue that Spain's leaders care deeply about?

Answer. The administration supports a balanced approach to climate policy that lowers emissions while promoting economic growth and ensuring energy security. The President determined the terms of our current engagement in the Paris Agreement did not balance those factors, and on June 1, he announced the intent to withdraw from the Paris Agreement. As the President has indicated, he is open to re-engaging in the Paris Agreement if the United States can identify more favorable terms. The United States respects the efforts of those countries that continue to participate in the Paris Agreement.

At the G20 Leaders' Summit in Hamburg, Germany, the United States joined the other G20 members in reiterating a collective commitment to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, including through increased innovation in sustainable and clean energy and energy efficiency, and working towards low greenhouse-gas emission energy systems. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Spanish interlocutors and our European allies to seek common ground and develop a way forward on this important issue.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO
RICHARD DUKE BUCHAN III BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

Question 1. If confirmed, do you commit to discuss consistently with the Spanish Government the U.S. position on the Castro regime?

- If confirmed, would you encourage the Spanish Government to consider similar measures to isolate the Castro regime?

Answer. Human rights in Cuba remain a significant concern. President Trump's new Cuba policy is an important step in the right direction to put pressure on the Government to address these troubling issues.

If confirmed, I will advocate for the official U.S. position on Cuba consistently with the Spanish Government and will encourage it to make human rights a priority issue in its dealings with the Cuban Government.

Question 2. If confirmed, do you commit to create and maintain a dialogue with the Spanish Government on the need to oppose the anti-democratic Maduro regime?

- If confirmed, would you encourage the Spanish Government to consider similar measures to isolate the Maduro regime?

Answer. Venezuela's further slide away from democracy is deeply troubling, and the July 30 Constituent Assembly elections imposed on the Venezuelan people undermine their right to self-determination. Spain is an important partner in pushing back against the Maduro regime's abuses of power. Spain has been a strong voice in Latin America and within the EU for sanctions and other measures.

If confirmed, I look forward to coordinating closely with Spain on additional steps to address the crisis in Venezuela. Already, Spain has actively worked with us and with EU partners on additional measures similar to those already implemented by the United States. If confirmed, I will encourage Spain to continue leading within the EU on this issue.

Question 3. If confirmed, do you commit to discuss consistently with the Spanish Government the U.S. position on the Castro regime?

- If confirmed, would you encourage the Spanish Government to consider similar measures to isolate the Castro regime?

Answer. Human rights in Cuba remain a significant concern. President Trump's new Cuba policy is an important step in the right direction to put pressure on the Government to address these troubling issues.

If confirmed, I will advocate for the official U.S. position on Cuba consistently with the Spanish Government and will encourage it to make human rights a priority issue in its dealings with the Cuban Government.

Question 4. If confirmed, do you commit to create and maintain a dialogue with the Spanish Government on the need to oppose the anti-democratic Maduro regime?

- If confirmed, would you encourage the Spanish Government to consider similar measures to isolate the Maduro regime?

Answer. Venezuela's further slide away from democracy is deeply troubling, and the July 30 Constituent Assembly elections imposed on the Venezuelan people undermine their right to self-determination. Spain is an important partner in pushing back against the Maduro regime's abuses of power. Spain has been a strong voice in Latin America and within the EU for sanctions and other measures.

If confirmed, I look forward to coordinating closely with Spain on additional steps to address the crisis in Venezuela. Already, Spain has actively worked with us and with EU partners on additional measures similar to those already implemented by the United States. If confirmed, I will encourage Spain to continue leading within the EU on this issue.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO
RICHARD GRENELL 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. In the roughly eight years I spent as the Head of Press and Public Diplomacy at the United States Mission to the U.N. I consistently raised the issue of human rights, highlighted the abuses of authoritarian regimes, and advocated for the rights of gays and lesbians around the world. In particular, I sought out ways to support international organizations concerned about gay and lesbian equality in

countries throughout Africa and the Middle East who were petitioning the U.N. for greater action. I regularly met with foreign diplomats based at the U.N. or visiting the U.N. who were gay, to understand their issues and concerns and to learn from them as to what the U.N. and specifically the U.S. could do to help them. I regularly highlighted to senior State Department officials in Washington, DC the stories of violence endured by gays and lesbians in other countries and regularly requested that State Department spokespeople publicly condemn the violence. The impact of my regular and continued advocacy is still unknown. While I have seen some actions taken to condemn egregious violence, I still believe more can be done to promote equality for gays and lesbians in foreign countries. As a foreign policy commentator, I have also spoken about and written numerous articles condemning autocracies, such as Venezuela and Russia, and advocating for America to prioritize democracy promotion.

Question 2. What are the most pressing human rights concerns in Germany today? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to advance human rights and democracy in Germany and, working in partnership with Germany, to promote human rights around the globe? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

- 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 Germany in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. Germany has a strong overall record of protecting human rights at home and is a valuable partner in defending human rights around the globe. One of the most pressing human rights concerns in Germany is the integration of asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants who have arrived in Germany over the past several years. The influx of such a large number of asylum seekers and refugees has exacerbated tensions within society; consequently, extremism and xenophobia have been an increasingly significant problem, including attacks on ethnic non-Germans. The German Government has taken steps to counter such extremism and xenophobia, and the authorities continue to implement measures to facilitate the integration of the recently-arrived refugees and migrants. There have also been reports of anti-Semitic and homophobic attacks, discrimination of persons with disabilities, and unfair treatment of Muslim women wearing headscarves in the workplace. We saw progress on this front when the Bundestag voted on June 30 to amend Germany's civil code to legalize same-sex marriage. Also positive is the fact that legal recourse is available to women who feel they have been treated unfairly or denied employment for their religious dress.

If confirmed, I will use every opportunity to promote the message of the importance of diversity and human rights, including the rights of LGBT individuals, migrants, minorities, women, and persons with disabilities. Germany is already a global leader in advancing human rights and democracy around the world and it regularly raises concerns both publicly and in its bilateral and multilateral engagements with foreign governments, including with Iran, Russia, China, and Venezuela. Berlin also frequently coordinates with Washington in supporting United Nations resolutions and U.N. Human Rights Council (HRC) statements that highlight human rights. If confirmed, I intend to continue this close partnership with Germany in advocating for human rights throughout Europe and the world.

Question 3. 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 Germany?

Answer. If confirmed, I am committed to working with human rights, civil society groups and NGOs to advance U.S. priorities, including human rights. If confirmed, I would welcome the opportunity to meet with experts in these areas in both the United States and Germany.

Question 4. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Germany to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with German authorities to press countries around the world to address cases of key political prisoners and persons otherwise unjustly targeted.

Question 5. 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 confirmed, I will ensure the Embassy continues to vet thoroughly all individuals and units nominated to participate in U.S.-funded security assistance activities, in accordance with the Leahy law. If there are findings of credible infor-

mation regarding gross violations 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 and will assist their respective governments to bring them to justice.

Question 6. Will you engage with Germans on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will continue the U.S. Mission's strong partnership with the German Government and German civil society to engage on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance.

Question 7. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff members who come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the State Department?

- 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 commit to promoting, mentoring, and supporting staff members from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups. I will make it a priority to foster a diverse and inclusive team at our Mission and encourage all supervisors to take available courses on EEO principles, diversity, and related issues. I will lead by example and articulate my desire to hear diverse opinions and diverse backgrounds. I will also visibly lead public diplomacy events with outreach to gays and lesbians in Germany, including in immigrant communities.

Question 8. 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 9. 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 10. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in the Germany?

Answer. Neither I, nor any member of my immediate family, has any financial interests in Germany.

Question 11. I understand that you have written many articles and op-eds over the past eight years on foreign policy issues, including with respect to Moldova. Did you receive any payment or any other form of compensation for your writings on Moldova? If so, who provided those payments? Was any compensation you received on behalf of, or provided indirectly, by a foreign government, foreign political party, foreign organization, or foreign national?

Answer. I have written numerous personal opinion pieces on foreign policy and national security issues over the years. I have also expressed my views and opinions through television interviews. A small number of these opinion pieces and interviews have related to Moldova, primarily to highlight Russia's campaigns of misinformation, propaganda and meddling around the world. Russian interference in other countries' domestic affairs has been a consistent theme in my work, including my work to highlight examples in Turkey, Ukraine, Montenegro, Poland, Georgia, Estonia, and with Radio Free Europe and Voice of America. I did not receive any compensation for that work. I believe strongly in confronting threats to democracy, and all of those views were my own opinion.

Question 12. Did anyone request or direct you to write op-eds on Moldova? If so, who? Was any request made on behalf of a foreign government, foreign political party, foreign organization, or foreign national? If not, what motivated you to write the op-eds?

Answer. No, the op-eds that you are referring to—like all of the op-eds I have written or the personal opinions I have expressed publicly—reflect my informed views and ideas and not anyone else's. Russian meddling in Central and Eastern Europe has been a constant theme in my work; and current events have borne out my long-held views. My motivation in writing or speaking on any particular subject is because I think it is important. Additionally, I am heartened to see how impor-

tant the subject of Russian meddling has become with the U.S. media and with Americans.

Question 13. Have there have been any material changes to your financial assets, income, or any other information requested by the OGE financial disclosure form since the date you signed it? If so, please list and explain below, and whether you have raised them with OGE.

Answer. No. There have been no material changes to my financial assets, income, or any other information since the date I signed the OGE financial disclosure form.

Question 14. Russia Sanctions: Unity with European partners on Russia sanctions is critical to their success. What is your diplomatic plan to build support within Germany for stronger sanctions on Russia?

Answer. If confirmed, I will be committed to working closely with Germany to maintain unity on Russia sanctions and their implementation. The U.S. Government has employed a collaborative and consultative approach on sanctions, and I will continue to seek feedback from our allies, who have been steadfast partners on Russia sanctions.

My goal is to ensure these sanctions support our important, common work in resolving the conflict in Ukraine, restoring control of Crimea to Ukraine, and preventing future meddling by Russia in foreign elections-while also remaining vigilant against unintended consequences for our partners. I will likewise remain mindful of our many foreign policy priorities related to Germany as I contribute to the U.S. Government's implementation of these sanctions, including our commitment to promoting European energy security and encouraging interoperability in NATO weapons systems. Close coordination with our German allies is crucial to enabling the sanctions to achieve their ultimate goal: imposing costs on Russia sufficient to change the Russian Government's behavior.

Question 15. How will you seek to boost resilience to Russian meddling within German institutions and civil society? What assistance priorities will you push with German counterparts to shore up resilience elsewhere in Europe?

Answer. Russia uses a constellation of approaches, overt and covert, to influence the policies of other governments and undermine domestic stability in Europe. Russia seeks to weaken European unity and erode faith in democratic institutions. A Europe whole, free, and at peace is in the interests of the United States. Efforts to disrupt democratic processes and weaken unity directly and negatively affect U.S. interests and security, while institutionalized respect for human rights, good governance, and rule of law contributes to long-term stability. By promoting our shared democratic values, and by holding our European partners accountable to their commitments and the rule of law, the United States strengthens our partners' capabilities to mitigate vulnerabilities to malign influences and counter threats to their security and sovereignty. The approach to this must be comprehensive and whole-of-government, and the Department of State has a critical role to play in addressing this threat.

The German Government has become increasingly concerned about Russian interference in its politics. If confirmed, I will prioritize efforts to build and strengthen Germany's resilience against Russia's efforts to undermine these democratic processes, including through exchanges of information and best practices, as well as programming for the German public. Secretary Tillerson has been clear that he views as the highest priorities for U.S. assistance those areas of Central and Eastern Europe affected by pressure from the Russian Federation. We will work with our German partners to continue ongoing assistance efforts and engagements that seek to build and reinforce the rule of law, support democratic institutions, promote human rights, and drive economic development in vulnerable countries in Europe.

Question 16. If the United States withdraws from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action without evidence of a material breach, how do you anticipate that Germany will respond based on statements from the past few weeks as well as EU statements?

Answer. German authorities at various levels have underscored publicly the importance Germany places on the JCPOA. The administration is currently conducting a review of the JCPOA and our broader approach to Iran. While that review is ongoing, the United States will continue to implement its JCPOA commitments, and expects Iran to do the same. In addition, the United States seeks to ensure strict implementation of the JCPOA, a goal shared by Germany and all of our European partners. I cannot prejudge the outcome of the administration's review in terms of sanctions implications or how Germany will respond.

Regardless of the outcome of the administration's review, close coordination with Germany will be crucial. If confirmed, it will be one of my highest priorities to en-

sure that we closely coordinate with Germany to ensure the effectiveness of any measures to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon, steps to combat Iran's malign activities more broadly, including its ballistic missile program and support for terrorism, and other U.S. national security priorities.

Question 17. Do you believe that the best policy for the United States, if we walk away from the nuclear agreement with Iran, is to impose sanctions on European companies and banks that continue to do business with Iran?

Answer. The administration is currently conducting a review of the JCPOA and our broader approach to Iran. While that review is ongoing, the United States will continue to implement its JCPOA commitments, and expects Iran to do the same. In addition, the United States seeks to ensure strict implementation of the JCPOA, a goal shared by our German partners. I cannot prejudge the outcome of the administration's review in terms of sanctions implications.

Regardless of the outcome of the administration's review, close coordination with Germany will be crucial. If confirmed, it will be one of my highest priorities to ensure that we closely coordinate with our German partners and the European Union to ensure the effectiveness of any measures to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon and to combat Iran's malign activities more broadly, including its ballistic missile program and support for terrorism.

Question 18. What national security priorities other than Iran could be negatively impacted by tensions in the transatlantic alliance stemming from unilateral U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA?

Answer. The administration is currently conducting a review of the JCPOA and its broader approach to Iran. While that review is ongoing, the United States will continue to implement its JCPOA commitments, and expects Iran to do the same. In addition, the United States seeks to ensure strict implementation of the JCPOA, a goal shared by our German partners.

Regardless of the outcome of the administration's review, close coordination with Germany will be crucial. Germany remains key to addressing any number of other pressing international issues, including combatting terrorism and addressing the threat from North Korea. Our German partners want to work with us to address these challenges, and if confirmed, I will focus on ensuring the United States and Germany remain in lockstep on these issues.

Question 19. International cooperation to address climate change is a top priority for Germany. The U.S. is historically, across multiple past administrations, a constructive partner with Germany and other European allies on addressing climate change through multilateral forums including the UNCCC and the Paris Agreement, the IPCC, G20, G7, the GEF and GCF. Given the President's antipathy towards international cooperation on climate change, how do you intend to approach this issue that Germany's leaders care deeply about?

Answer. The administration supports a balanced approach to climate policy that lowers emissions while promoting economic growth and ensuring energy security. The President determined the terms of our current engagement in the Paris Agreement did not balance those factors, and on June 1, he announced the intent to withdraw from the Paris Agreement. As the President has indicated, he is open to re-engaging in the Paris Agreement if the United States can identify more favorable terms. The United States respects the efforts of those countries that continue to participate in the Paris Agreement.

At the G20 Leaders' Summit in Hamburg, Germany, the United States joined the other G20 members in reiterating our collective commitment to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, including through increased innovation in sustainable and clean energy and energy efficiency, and working towards low greenhouse-gas emission energy systems. The United States has a strong record of reducing greenhouse-gas emissions through technology, innovation, and entrepreneurship. We will continue to be a world leader in innovation, particularly the development of next-generation energy technology.

The United States will send a delegation to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) 23rd annual Conference of the Parties (COP23) in November in Bonn and plans to continue to participate in negotiations related to the Paris Agreement—including those to develop guidance for the Paris Agreement—in order to protect U.S. interests. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Germany and our European allies to seek common ground and develop a way forward on this important issue.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO
JAMIE MCCOURT 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. As a Board member of Business Executives for National Security (BENS) since 2011, I have taken several field visits to countries affected by human rights issues. In 2012, we visited Myanmar. The goal of this trip was to learn firsthand about the challenges facing the country by focusing on political reforms, Myanmar's relationship to China, and the effectiveness of U.S. sanctions on Myanmar.

Also in 2015, I joined BENS on a trip to the Republic of Korea. This trip focused on the ROK-US alliance, the security situation on the Korean Peninsula, human rights issues past and present, the Japan-Korea relationship and the ROK economy.

I have also served on UNCEF's Southern California Regional Board since 2013 and support UNCEF's National Board. I traveled with the U.S. Fund for UNICEF to the Middle East where I visited the Za'atari refugee camp in Amman, Jordan. During this visit I was able to observe UNICEF programs in action and speak directly to the refugees to see what their most pressing needs were for additional help. After Jordan, we traveled to Israel to review the status and future of UNICEF's role there as well.

I am also a supporter of AIPAC, whose mission is to strengthen, protect and promote the U.S.-Israel relationship in ways that enhance the security and protect the democracies of the United States and Israel. In 2014, I attended the AIPAC Policy Conference in Washington, D.C. One of the main seminar topics was the status of the Middle East's Jewish refugees. Following the conference, I had the opportunity to travel back to D.C. for a private meeting at the AIPAC offices to further the conversation and to learn more about AIPAC's programs.

In addition, as a proud supporter of Israel and the Jewish community, I was extremely honored to receive the Scopus award in December of 2006. It is the highest humanitarian honor given by the American Friends of the Hebrew University.

In January of 2011, I traveled to Ethiopia to visit the Ethiopian Children's Fund (ECF) School in the Village of Aleltu for the groundbreaking of the Gelila Assefa Puck Vocational Training Center. Gelila and Wolfgang Puck are close friends and I was pleased to support this very worthwhile project. The vocational training center, which opened in 2013, provides those who have graduated from the ECF School with additional training toward a career.

I have supported Human Rights Watch (HRW) since being introduced to the organization by a very close friend who is the Co-Chair of the LA Committee and a member of the International Board of Directors, as well as by other friends who are officers of the organization. I have also had private conversations with Ken Roth, the Executive Director of HRW.

During the past several years, I have given a keynote address on financial self-sufficiency at many of the top graduate business schools including Harvard, Columbia and MIT. I am a strong advocate for education and a passionate supporter of financial self-sufficiency for women.

Question 2. What are the most pressing human rights concerns in France and Monaco today? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to advance human rights and democracy in France and Monaco, and, working in partnership with your host government, to promote human rights around the globe? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

- 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 France and Monaco in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. Respect for human rights is a core American value. There should be no room for hate crimes against members of vulnerable communities such as religious minorities, LGBTI individuals, migrants, or persons with disabilities. Although both France and Monaco have strong records on human rights, generally speaking, if confirmed, I will strongly support the Department of State's ongoing work with our French and Monegasque partners to combat all forms of intolerance and to strengthen respect for human rights.

America's alliances are strongest when our values and those of our allies are aligned. The United States has been diligent in encouraging its allies, including the French, to remain firmly committed to our shared democratic principles and rule of law. If confirmed, I will work in partnership with France to speak up against restrictions on civil society and free expression, discrimination against members of mi-

nority groups, and steps that undermine the independence of the judiciary or otherwise may threaten the foundations of constitutional order.

Question 3. 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 France and Monaco?

Answer. If confirmed, I am committed to sustaining engagement with a broad spectrum of society in the United States, France, and Monaco, including human rights NGOs, civil society, religious groups, and the organizations that represent them.

Question 4. Will you and your Embassy actively engage with relevant governments in France and Monaco to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly detained in their states?

Answer. I am not aware of such cases in France and Monaco, but if confirmed, I would certainly engage with French and Monegasque authorities to address cases of persons unjustly targeted when such occasions arise.

Question 5. 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 confirmed, I will ensure the Embassy continues to implement the provisions of the Leahy law. If there are findings of credible information regarding gross violations of human rights, we will take the necessary steps in accordance with the law and Department policy.

Question 6. Will you engage with the people of France and Monaco on matters of human rights, civil rights and accountable governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. I am committed to ensuring our Embassy and Consulates in France remain engaged on these issues. As Secretary Tillerson has said, American leadership requires moral clarity. If confirmed, I will ensure that engagement on human rights, including civil rights, and governance remain integral components of our mission.

Question 7. 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's diverse and inclusive?

Answer. I am committed to equal employment opportunity principles. If confirmed, I will foster a diverse and inclusive team within Mission France and communicate this as a priority for me as the Ambassador. If confirmed, I will urge the Mission to reflect our commitment to promoting diversity and inclusion.

Further, in keeping with Secretary Tillerson's strong emphasis on diversity, if confirmed, I will ensure all supervisors at all of our posts in France have access to and avail themselves of opportunities to receive regular formal training and regular guidance on EEO principles, diversity, and inclusion to sensitize them to these important issues and maximize diverse talents in our workforce.

Question 8. 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 9. 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 10. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in France and Monaco?

Answer. Potential conflicts involving any financial interests of mine have been addressed by the ethics officials of the Department of State and by the Office of Government Ethics and have been resolved in my ethics agreement. As for members of my immediate family, my adult sons have an interest in a professional football (soccer) team in Marseilles. I have no financial interest of any kind in the team. I will remain vigilant with regard to my ethics obligations and am committed to ensuring that my actions will not give rise to a conflict of interest.

Question 11. Have there have been any material changes to your financial assets, income, or any other information requested by the OGE financial disclosure form since the date you signed it? If so, please list and explain below, and whether you have raised them with OGE.

Answer. I know of no significant change in my financial affairs since I filed my report. I am committed to ensuring that my official actions will not give rise to a conflict of interest and will remain vigilant with regard to my ethics obligations.

Russia Sanctions

Question 12. Unity with European partners on Russia sanctions is critical to their success. What is your diplomatic plan to build support within France for stronger sanctions on Russia?

Answer. Maintaining transatlantic unity on sanctions has been a key component of U.S. policy towards Russia. If confirmed, I commit to working closely with France to maintain unity on Russia sanctions and their implementation. The U.S. Government has employed a collaborative and consultative approach on sanctions, and I will continue to seek feedback from France, which has been a steadfast partner on Russia sanctions.

My goal will be to ensure these sanctions support our important, common work in resolving the conflict in eastern Ukraine, restoring control of Crimea to Ukraine, and preventing future meddling by Russia in foreign elections-while also remaining vigilant against unintended consequences for our partners. I will likewise remain mindful of our many foreign policy priorities related to France as I contribute to the U.S. Government's implementation of these sanctions, including our commitment to promoting European energy security and encouraging interoperability in NATO weapons systems. Close coordination with our French allies is crucial to enabling the sanctions to achieve their ultimate goal: imposing costs on Russia sufficient to change the Russian Government's behavior.

Russian Malign Influence

Question 13. How will you seek to boost resilience to Russian meddling within French institutions and civil society? What assistance priorities will you push with French counterparts to shore up resilience elsewhere in Europe?

Answer. Russia is engaged in a campaign of disinformation and malign influence activities to undermine core institutions of the West and to weaken faith in the democratic and free-market systems. This campaign is aggressive, coordinated, and involves the entire Russian Government. The United States should continue to work closely with its Allies and partners to enhance collective resilience against these threats. Given the nature and breadth of Russia's campaign, it is important for the United States not only to pursue a whole-of-government approach but also work closely with Allies to expose and counter these campaigns.

If confirmed, I will promote cooperation with our Allies to build resilience in France and all NATO countries, as well as address vulnerabilities in Ukraine, Georgia, and the Western Balkans. I will push for the continuation of programs that promote the protection of human rights, build and reinforce the rule of law, support democratic institutions, and promote economic development in France and elsewhere in Europe. Furthermore, I will work closely with France on implementation of the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act to maintain unity on implementation of sanctions in order to further exert economic pressure on Russia to modify their aggressive behavior.

Question 14. If the United States withdraws from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action without evidence of a material breach, how do you anticipate that France will respond based on statements from the past few weeks as well as EU statements?

- Do you believe that the best policy for the United States, if we walk away from the nuclear agreement with Iran, is to impose sanctions on European companies and banks that continue to do business with Iran?
- What national security priorities other than Iran could be negatively impacted by tensions in the transatlantic alliance stemming from unilateral U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA?

Answer. French authorities at various levels have underscored publicly the importance France places on the JCPOA. The administration is currently conducting a review of the JCPOA and our broader approach to Iran. While that review is ongoing, the United States continues to implement its JCPOA commitments, and expects Iran to do the same. In addition, the United States seeks to ensure strict implementation of the JCPOA, a goal shared by France and all of our European partners.

I cannot prejudge the outcome of the administration's review in terms of sanctions implications or how France will respond.

Regardless of the outcome of the administration's review, unity with France will be crucial. If confirmed, it will be one of my highest priorities to ensure that we closely coordinate with France to ensure the effectiveness of any measures to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon, steps to combat Iran's malign activities more broadly, including its ballistic missile program and support for terrorism, and other U.S. national security priorities.

Question 15. We've seen France make leadership on climate action a central tenet of their foreign policy. This has been exemplified through the leadership they've shown on the issue through the Paris Agreement/G20/G7. Leaders from France have not been shy about raising climate change with President Trump and have publicly expressed frustration over the U.S. retreat from leading on this issue. What will you do to reassure France that the U.S. can be counted on as a strong leader and partner on climate action?

Answer. The administration supports a balanced approach to climate policy that lowers emissions while promoting economic growth and ensuring energy security. The President determined the terms of our current engagement in the Paris Agreement did not balance those factors, and on June 1, he announced the intent to withdraw from the Paris Agreement. As the President indicated in his June 1 announcement and subsequently, he is open to re-engaging in the Paris Agreement if the United States can identify terms that are more favorable.

The United States respects the efforts of those countries that continue to participate in the Paris Agreement. If confirmed, I look forward to working with French interlocutors and our European allies to seek common ground and develop a way forward on this important issue.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO
EDWARD T. McMULLEN, JR. 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. While my career has been in business, I have dedicated much of my personal time to charitable efforts ensuring opportunities for those less fortunate. One example, relevant to human rights concerns we have around the world, is the treatment of prisoners.

I have worked for 20 years as a mentor and donor to empower young low income adolescents in need. I began teaching an entrepreneurship class to students in the South Carolina Juvenile Justice prison. Most were low income minority offenders whose families offered no direction. These students, some of our state's most serious youth offenders, were acting with rage and living a life surrounded by drugs and weapons.

I developed a curriculum specific to helping these students have a mentor and skills that would build their self-respect. I taught them basic math and investment skills and then progressed to helping them start a business, all while they were incarcerated. I spent many hours—as long as they needed—to teach them and provide a true opportunity for rehabilitation. I personally funded some of their concepts and helped them see how hard work and ideas can change their lives. The resulting benefit of this work was watching these young and angry lost children become, over time, motivated, informed and eager entrepreneurs who could leave the prison with hope and opportunity.

Question 3. What are the most pressing human rights concerns in Switzerland and Liechtenstein today? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to advance human rights and democracy in Switzerland and Liechtenstein, and, working in partnership with your host government, to promote human rights around the globe? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

- 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 Switzerland and Liechtenstein in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. Switzerland and Liechtenstein each have a strong record on human rights and we are important partners in addressing human rights challenges around

the world based on the common values we share. The State Department's annual Human Rights Report lists challenges these countries face, including instances of discrimination against minority groups, and, if confirmed, I will continue to raise these issues. However, a larger part of our human rights work with Switzerland and Liechtenstein is our common efforts to advance human rights around the globe.

Human rights are a core value Switzerland advocated for multilaterally and bilaterally. Swiss efforts played a role in the releases of Chibok girls from Boko Haram in Nigeria in October 2016 and May 2017. Switzerland also holds regular human rights consultations with China, Russia, Iran, Vietnam, Cuba, Indonesia, and Tajikistan. In addition, the Government maintains a separate human rights strategy as part of the Foreign Ministry's wider strategic agenda.

We face numerous challenges in this work. Human rights issues around the world often seem intractable. Switzerland and the United States will sometimes have different areas of emphasis or different approaches to a problem. If confirmed, I will continue our work with Switzerland to ensure our efforts are coordinated, and that we achieve more together than we would have separately, such as with respect to major sporting organizations based in Switzerland. Ensuring that we keep lines of communication open will maximize our impact.

Question 3. 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 Switzerland and Liechtenstein?

Answer. If confirmed, I am committed to sustaining engagement with a broad spectrum of civil society in Switzerland and Liechtenstein, including human rights activists and religious groups, and the organizations that represent them.

Question 4. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Switzerland and Liechtenstein to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted?

Answer. If confirmed, I will engage Swiss and Liechtensteiner authorities and call on them to enlist their assistance in the resolution of cases involving victims of politically-motivated prosecution around the world in a fair and timely manner, respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms, including all the protections and fair trial guarantees necessary for their defense.

Question 5. 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 confirmed, I will ensure the Department continues to thoroughly vet all individuals and units nominated to participate in U.S.-funded security assistance activities, in accordance with the Leahy law. If there are findings of credible information regarding gross violations 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 and will assist their respective governments to bring them to justice.

Question 6. Will you engage with the Swiss on matters of human rights, civil rights and accountable governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will continue the U.S. Mission's strong partnership with the Swiss Government and civil society to engage on these topics.

Question 7. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff who come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the State Department?

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

Answer. I am committed to equal employment opportunity principles. If confirmed, I will foster a diverse and inclusive team at Embassy Bern and communicate this is a priority for me as the Ambassador. If confirmed, I will also urge the Embassy to reflect our whole-of-mission commitment to promoting diversity and inclusion. In keeping with Secretary Tillerson's strong emphasis on diversity, I will ensure all supervisors at the Embassy have access to and avail themselves of opportunities to receive regular formal training and regular guidance on EEO principles, diversity, and inclusion to sensitize them to these important issues and maximize diverse talents in our workforce.

Question 8. 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 9. 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 10. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in the Switzerland and/or Liechtenstein?

Answer. My investment portfolio includes diversified mutual funds that may have investments in Switzerland and Liechtenstein. However, investments in diversified mutual funds are exempt from the conflicts of interest rules. I will divest my interests in any future investments the State Department Ethics Office deems necessary to avoid a conflict of interest. I am committed to ensuring that my official actions will not give rise to a conflict of interest, and I will remain vigilant with regard to my ethics obligations.

Question 11. Have there have been any material changes to your financial assets, income, or any other information requested by the OGE financial disclosure form since the date you signed it? If so, please list and explain below, and whether you have raised them with OGE.

Answer. I know of no significant change in my financial affairs since I filed my report. I am committed to ensuring that my official actions will not give rise to a conflict of interest and will remain vigilant with regard to my ethics obligations.

Question 12. Russia Sanctions: Unity with European partners on Russia sanctions is critical to their success. What is your diplomatic plan to build support within Switzerland for stronger sanctions on Russia?

Answer. If confirmed, I will be committed to working closely with Switzerland to maintain unity on Russia sanctions and their implementation. The U.S. Government has employed a collaborative and consultative approach on sanctions, and I will continue to seek feedback from Switzerland, which has been a partner on ensuring Switzerland is not used to evade Russia sanctions.

The administration's goal is to ensure that sanctions support our important, common work in resolving the conflict in Ukraine, restoring control of Crimea to Ukraine, and preventing future meddling by Russia in foreign elections-while also remaining vigilant against unintended consequences for our partners. I will likewise remain mindful of our many foreign policy priorities, including our commitment to promoting European energy security, related to Europe as the U.S. Government and the EU implement these sanctions, and Switzerland works to prevent their circumvention through entities based in Switzerland. Close coordination with our partners is crucial to enabling the sanctions to achieve their ultimate goal: imposing costs on Russia, sufficient to change the Russian Government's behavior.

Question 13. Russian Malign Influence: How will you seek to boost resilience to Russian meddling within Swiss institutions and civil society? What assistance priorities will you push with Swiss counterparts to shore up resilience elsewhere in Europe?

Answer. Russia is engaged in a campaign of disinformation and malign influence activities to undermine core institutions of the West and to weaken faith in the democratic and free-market systems. In Europe, the United States is seeking to reduce vulnerabilities, strengthen democratic institutions, eliminate corruption, and diversify energy supplies. The effects of Russian pressure continue to be greatest in the neighboring states of Ukraine and Georgia, where Russia undermines the sovereignty and territorial integrity of those countries. The Western Balkans are also increasingly a target, as Russia is trying to block the Euro-Atlantic integration of the region. It is important our assistance deter Russian aggression against these countries as well as encourage reforms in them to eliminate fraud and abuse and reorient their economies away from Russian economic pressure.

If confirmed, I will promote cooperation with our partners to build resilience in Switzerland. I will push for the continuation of programs that promote the protection of human rights, build and reinforce the rule of law, support democratic institutions, and promote economic development in vulnerable countries in partnership with Switzerland. Furthermore, I will work closely with Switzerland as I contribute to the U.S. Government's implementation of the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act to maintain unity on implementation of sanctions in order to further exert economic pressure on Russia to modify its aggressive behavior.

Question 14. If the United States withdraws from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action without evidence of a material breach, how do you anticipate that Switzer-

land will respond based on statements from the past few weeks as well as EU statements?

- Do you believe that the best policy for the United States, if we walk away from the nuclear agreement with Iran, is to impose sanctions on European companies and banks that continue to do business with Iran?
- What national security priorities other than Iran could be negatively impacted by tensions in the transatlantic alliance stemming from unilateral U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA?

Answer. The administration is currently conducting a review of the JCPOA and our broader approach to Iran. While that review is ongoing, the United States continues to implement its JCPOA commitments, and expects Iran to do the same. In addition, the United States seeks to ensure strict implementation of the JCPOA, a goal shared by Switzerland and our European partners. I cannot prejudge the outcome of the administration's review in terms of sanctions implications or how Switzerland will respond.

Regardless of the outcome of the administration's review, unity with Europe will be crucial. If confirmed, it will be one of my highest priorities to ensure that we closely coordinate with Switzerland to ensure the effectiveness of any measures to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon, steps to combat Iran's malign activities more broadly, including its ballistic missile program and support for terrorism, and other U.S. national security priorities.

Question 15. International cooperation to address climate change is a top priority for Switzerland and Liechtenstein. The U.S. is historically, across multiple past administrations, a constructive partner with Switzerland, Liechtenstein, and other European allies on addressing climate change through multilateral forums including the UNCCC and the Paris Agreement, the IPCC, G20, G7, the GEF and GCF. Given the President's antipathy towards international cooperation on climate change, how do you intend to approach this issue that Switzerland's and Liechtenstein's leaders care deeply about?

Answer. The administration supports a balanced approach to climate policy that lowers emissions while promoting economic growth and ensuring energy security. The President determined the terms of our current engagement in the Paris Agreement did not balance those factors, and on June 1, he announced the intent to withdraw from the Paris Agreement. As the President has indicated, he is open to re-engaging in the Paris Agreement if the United States can identify more favorable terms. The United States respects the efforts of those countries that continue to participate in the Paris Agreement.

At the G20 Leaders' Summit in Hamburg, Germany, the United States joined the other G20 members in reiterating a collective commitment to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, including through increased innovation in sustainable and clean energy and energy efficiency, and working towards low greenhouse-gas emission energy systems. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Swiss and Liechtensteiner interlocutors and our European allies to seek common ground and develop a way forward on this important issue.

