

**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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CONTENTS

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

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

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

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

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

APPENDIX

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

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2017

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:35 a.m. in Room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Marco Rubio presiding.

Present: Senators Rubio [presiding], Risch, Gardner, Kaine, Cardin, and Shaheen.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. MARCO RUBIO, U.S. SENATOR FROM FLORIDA

Senator RUBIO. This is the Senate Foreign Relations Committee nominations hearing for Governor Sam Brownback to be the Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom, and Ms. Michele Sison to be the U.S. Ambassador to Haiti.

Thank you both for being here with us today and for your willingness to serve.

As I told the nominees earlier, I am going to abbreviate my opening statement, because we do have votes scheduled in the Senate at 11. These are important nominations, and I want to make sure everybody has time to answer questions.

I would also encourage the nominees, as your opening statements will be in the record, make sure you say what you need to say, but I know our members are looking forward to engaging with you, and we want to make sure that they have the full opportunity to do that.

On international religious freedom, I just think any sort of cursory glance around the globe will reveal daily assaults on religious freedom. In Burma, we have nearly half a million Rohingya Muslims that have been forced to flee their homes due to horrific violence. In Iraq and Syria, ancient Christian communities, Yazidi, and other religious minorities are on the verge of extinction. In Iran, the Baha'i minority is ruthlessly persecuted. In Pakistan, draconian blasphemy laws sentence innocent people to death. In China, the Government shuts down underground churches, bulldozes Tibetan Buddhist centers. In Cuba, the Castro regime regularly arrests the Ladies in White on their way to mass every Sunday, including this past Sunday. In Saudi Arabia, the official textbooks teach hate and intolerance toward religious minorities.

So sadly, there is no corner of the map that is untouched. That is why a robust American engagement on behalf of the beleaguered

faith communities is an urgent need and, I think, international security interest. So the hearing could not be timelier.

As I said, Governor Brownback has been a long-time champion of the issue of religious freedom globally and sought to ensure that America's first freedom is infused into our U.S. foreign policy.

Among other things, he was the driving force in passing the original International Religious Freedom Act in 1998, which created the position he is now nominated to fill.

In Haiti yesterday, Ms. Sison and I spoke about the challenges and opportunities in Haiti. Florida, my home State, has the largest Haitian-American diaspora, and I remain engaged in the community and in many challenges facing their nation of birth.

One of the major areas of concern is the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, known as MINUSTAH, is scheduled to withdraw on October 15, just a few days from now. The new security mission is smaller than the original mission. So it is vital that the United States support international efforts to enhance and maintain security in Haiti.

Ongoing natural disasters, global health challenges like HIV/AIDS, malaria, and cholera have also undermined Haiti's ability to meet its full potential.

I personally have seen firsthand the potential of the Haitian community when they have been given the opportunity, as they have in Florida. And I am committed to supporting U.S. initiatives that promote good governance and security, and, hopefully, our foreign policy will remain committed in that direction.

I will now introduce Senator Kaine. And then, obviously, also our ranking member, Senator Cardin, joins us, and he may have some comments that he would like to make at the opening. And then, hopefully, we can proceed to brief introductory statements and get right into the questions.

Again, we apologize. But as Governor Brownback knows, the Senate does things this way. [Laughter.]

Senator RUBIO. So, anyway, Senator Kaine?

**STATEMENT OF HON. TIM KAINE,
U.S. SENATOR FROM VIRGINIA**

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have enjoyed working with you on religious liberty issues.

The day I got back from a wild 105-day ride in November 2016, you and I introduced a bill about combating anti-Semitism around the globe through the State Department, and I have appreciated your partnership.

I also am really thrilled to have both of these nominees who have strong public service track records, but also my friend and a great champion of religious liberty, Frank Wolf, here.

I am not going to give an opening comment, except to say that it is important that we have Governor Brownback's hearing on the same day we are going to follow up with a substantive hearing about the situation of minorities, including religious minorities, in Iraq. So I am glad that we are doing both of these together.

And that will be all opening comments that I will make.

Senator RUBIO. Thank you. And the ranking member, Senator Cardin, is here. He and I have worked together now on countless

human rights issues, so much so that people are starting to say that we look alike. I do not know. [Laughter.]

Senator RUBIO. That would be good for me.

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

Senator CARDIN. That is a great compliment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate it.

Senator Rubio has been a great champion on human rights. I think he would agree with me that we are all students of Frank Wolf.

Frank, we thank you for your long commitment to human rights. It was a real honor to serve with you in the House of Representatives. It is always good to see you. You are a great friend, a great role model for all of us. So thank you for being here.

It is Senator Brownback, not Governor. We take the higher title. [Laughter.]

Senator CARDIN. The Senator was a great leader on the Helsinki Commission. We worked together on many human rights issues. A great record, he has an excellent record of working across party lines to get things done in the United States Senate. We very much admire your continued interest to serve the public.

And we thank you and your family for being willing to serve our country. It is a tremendous sacrifice.

And to Ms. Sison, I understand that you are a Marylander, and you have served a career in diplomatic service. We thank you for your willingness to continue to serve our country.

Again, we thank you and your family.

You had the best sense to live in the State of Maryland, so we appreciate that very much.

Senator RUBIO. All right, Ms. Sison, we will begin with you, for your opening.

**STATEMENT OF MICHELE JEANNE SISON, OF MARYLAND, A
CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE,
CLASS OF CAREER MINISTER, TO BE AMBASSADOR EX-
TRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED
STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF HAITI**

Ambassador SISON. Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you as President Trump's nominee to serve as U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Haiti. I am grateful for the confidence the President and Secretary Tillerson have placed in me.

For the past 3 decades, I have been honored to represent our country as a career Foreign Service Officer.

I want to give a shout-out today to my daughters, Allie and Jessica, U.S. Foreign Service kids who traveled the world with me.

I have been privileged to lead our embassies in the United Arab Emirates, Lebanon, and Sri Lanka as U.S. Ambassador, and currently serve as the U.S. Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed by the Senate, I pledge to work closely with the Congress to advance America's interests in Haiti.

The U.S. and Haiti share a long history. We are close neighbors and are linked through a sizable Haitian-American diaspora.

Over the years, Haiti has suffered periods of violence and political instability that slowed its economic growth. I first served in Haiti in the early 1980s, my first tour with the State Department. Then, as now, it was clear that Haiti needed to strengthen governmental institutions, good governance, and transparency, if it was to prosper and lift its citizens from deep poverty.

Today, after 2 years of political impasse, Haiti has a democratically elected government in place. The United States and the international community now have a long-term partner with whom we can engage. The United States has worked in partnership with the Haitian-led process to help the country build a more promising future.

Thanks to broad bipartisan support in Congress, U.S. assistance has helped advance economic opportunities for Haitians, develop a comprehensive food security strategy, provide access to basic health care and water and sanitation services, and improve educational opportunities for youth. This strong U.S. engagement helps encourage Haitians to live and work in Haiti rather than embark on often dangerous and illegal migration, including to the United States, which in turn supports U.S. efforts to secure our borders.

Since 2010, U.S. assistance has seen notable successes. For example, \$8 million in investment capital from the private sector and other sources has been mobilized through a USAID project to assist small- and medium-sized enterprises creating jobs for over 13,000 Haitians, about a third of whom are women. In addition, almost 13,000 jobs have been created in northern Haiti's industrial park with U.S. support. And some 70,000 farmers have increased incomes while the U.S. Government has also introduced new technologies, including improved seeds, fertilizer, irrigation, to another 118,000 farming households.

The Haitian national police is now a stronger, better trained force with U.S. support.

And many health indicators continue to improve through the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the USAID programming. We have provided more than \$100 million to prevent and respond to cholera as well.

But Haiti's long-term development will require the Government of Haiti to continue to institutionalize rule of law and anticorruption efforts, uphold more transparent and accountable institutions to improve the future of Haitian citizens, and address the factors contributing to migration and trafficking in persons.

Our rule of law assistance, as I mentioned, supports the Haitian national police in supporting its capacity. We are also working to support judicial independence, reduce pretrial detention levels, and support legislative reforms.

As you mentioned, Senator, recently, the U.N. Security Council voted unanimously to withdraw the military component of the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Haiti, a mission that had been deployed since 2004. This U.N. vote reflected recognition of the progress Haiti had made toward stabilization and return to democratic quarter.

A smaller police-only U.N. successor mission will launch on October 16 and will focus on police development, strengthening the rule of law, and protecting human rights. If confirmed, I will work to ensure strong coordination between the Haitian Government and U.N. rule-of-law efforts, and our own U.S. programming in this critical sector.

Finally, while continuing to take into account the challenges in Haiti, we must not lose sight of the factors working in Haiti's favor, including its vibrant civil society and media, and, of course, our strong and engaged Haitian-American population here at home.

Of course, the most important of these factors is the continued support of congressional committees and staff. What happens in Haiti is important to the United States. Haiti is a neighbor whose stability and success bolsters our own security and that of the region.

A Haiti that takes full responsibility for its own prosperous and democratic future is certainly in our interests. And if confirmed, I will do my best to promote the U.S.-Haitian partnership and lead our talented U.S. interagency team at Embassy Port-au-Prince.

I appreciate your consideration of my nomination, and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have for me.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

[Ambassador Sison's prepared statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MICHELE J. SISON

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you as President Trump's nominee to serve as U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Haiti. I am grateful for the confidence the President and Secretary Tillerson have placed in me.

For the past three decades, I've been honored to represent our country as a career Foreign Service officer. I've been privileged to lead our Embassies in the United Arab Emirates, Lebanon, and Sri Lanka as U.S. Ambassador, and currently serve as U.S. Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed by the Senate, I pledge to work closely with the Congress to advance America's interests in Haiti.

The U.S. and Haiti share a long history. We are close neighbors and are linked through a sizable Haitian-American diaspora. Over the years, Haiti has suffered periods of violence and political instability that slowed its economic growth.

I first served in Haiti in the early 1980's—my first tour with the State Department. Then, as now, it was clear that Haiti needed to strengthen governmental institutions, good governance, and transparency if it was to prosper and lift its citizens from deep poverty. Today, after two years of political impasse, Haiti has a democratically-elected government in place; the United States and the international community now have a long-term partner with whom we can engage.

The United States has worked in partnership with a Haitian-led process to help the country build a more promising future. Thanks to broad bipartisan support in Congress, U.S. assistance has helped advance economic opportunities for Haitians; develop a comprehensive food security strategy; provide access to basic health care and water and sanitation services; and improve educational opportunities for youth.

This strong engagement helps encourage Haitians to live and work in Haiti, rather than embark on dangerous and illegal migration to the United States, and supports U.S. efforts to secure our borders.

Since 2010, U.S. assistance of \$8 million in investment capital from the Haitian private sector and other sources has been mobilized to assist small-and medium-sized enterprises—creating jobs for over 13,000 Haitians, about one-third of whom are women. In addition, almost 13,000 jobs have been created in northern Haiti's industrial park. Some 70,000 farmers have increased incomes and the U.S. Government has also introduced improved seeds, fertilizer, irrigation, and other new technologies to over 118,000 farmers. And the Haitian National Police is now a stronger, better-trained force. Many health indicators continue to improve, and through the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. Agency for Inter-

national Development, the United States has provided more than \$100 million to prevent and respond to cholera.

But Haiti's long-term development will require the Government of Haiti to continue to institutionalize rule of law and uphold more transparent, accountable institutions to improve the future of Haitian citizens and address the factors contributing to migration and trafficking in persons. U.S. rule of law assistance in Haiti supports the Haitian National Police in improving its capacity and growing its ranks to better serve and protect the Haitian people. The Haitian National Police has made significant progress with U.S. support, including increasing its community policing, counter-narcotics and anti-kidnapping capabilities. Our assistance is also aimed at strengthening judicial independence, reducing pre-trial detention levels, and supporting legislative reforms.

Recently, the U.N. Security Council voted unanimously to withdraw the military component of the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Haiti, a mission that had been deployed since 2004. The U.N. vote reflected recognition of the progress Haiti had made towards stabilization and return to democratic order. A smaller, police-only U.N. successor mission will launch on October 16, 2017, and will focus on police development, strengthening the rule of law, and protecting human rights. If confirmed, I will work to ensure strong coordination between Haitian Government and U.N. rule of law efforts and our U.S. programming in this crucial sector.

Finally, while continuing to take into account the challenges in Haiti, we must not lose sight of the factors working in Haiti's favor, including its vibrant civil society and media. Of course, one of the most important of these factors is the continued support of Congressional committees and staff. What happens in Haiti is important to the United States; Haiti is a neighbor whose stability and success bolsters our own security and that of the region. A Haiti that takes full responsibility for its own prosperous and democratic future is certainly in our interest. If confirmed, I will do my best to promote the U.S.-Haitian partnership and lead our talented U.S. inter-agency team at Embassy Port-au-Prince.

I appreciate your consideration of my nomination, and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have for me.

Thank you.

Senator RUBIO. Thank you very much.

The Honorable Frank Wolf is here. We welcome him to the committee. He is here to introduce the President's nominee to be Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom.

STATEMENT OF FRANK R. WOLF, DISTINGUISHED SENIOR FELLOW, 21ST CENTURY WILBERFORCE INITIATIVE, FALLS CHURCH, VIRGINIA

Mr. WOLF. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Senators. I will be very brief.

It is an honor to be here with Governor and Senator Brownback today.

I have watched the Governor involved in international religious freedom, advocacy for the bill, trafficking in victims and persons, Sudan Peace Act, North Korea Human Rights Act.

Senator Brownback was the first Senator to go to Sudan, Darfur, during the genocide. I was with him on that trip. I watched him in action. We were in a village when the Janjaweed were doing things to women. And I watched Sam, and I just have to tell you, he will be an outstanding Ambassador for us.

Senator RUBIO. Thank you.

Governor or Senator?

Governor BROWNBACK. Governor, please.

Senator RUBIO. All right, Governor.

STATEMENT OF HON. SAMUEL DALE BROWNBACK, OF KANSAS, TO BE AMBASSADOR-AT-LARGE FOR INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Governor BROWNBACK. I am currently occupied but interested and hopeful to be confirmed for this position to be able to move into the role of Ambassador.

I have to say, Frank Wolf, he is a mentor of mine. I think he is probably the mentor of several of us. He just has taught me so much on how you do these issues and the passion that you need to do them with. Because to me, you have to have a passion about these things to be able to stick with it the length of time it takes to get them done. And he has done that, and I am honored that he would be here to introduce me.

I also would like to recognize Ambassador Rabbi David Saperstein, who is the most recent occupant of this position, who I have consulted with a couple times already on the phone. I worked with him previously. When I was in the Senate, he was on the commission, not the Ambassador himself. And I found him great to work with.

And I would like to say to my former colleagues here, this is a position that this body created. We did it in 1998, and then you renewed it last year under the Frank Wolf Act. It is one of those topics that this place has worked very hard to keep bipartisan. And because of that, it has had a strength that I think some other issues tend not to have.

I pledge to you to continue that bipartisan effort on it. I have worked in this town over a number of years in different capacities and in different ways. The way you get things done is often to really try to build that coalition. And often, there are people who do not agree on different pieces of the topic. But if you can build the coalition and you can sustain it, you can have something that has longevity, and you can have something that will have impact. And I believe that is what that position can and will be able to do.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with a number of you on specific international religious freedom issues. And Lord knows, there are enough of them around the world, whether it is Rohingya that is taking place now, whether it is the Nineveh plains. You could probably go around the world and list a bunch.

I have read through these reports recently, because I have been serving as Governor recently. But going back through it, the situation just keeps getting worse. Until, I think, we really engage this topic of international religious freedom and say that, look, this is a fundamental right that you have, to do with your own soul what you choose. This is your right. You need to be able to do it without interference by government or groups. This is a right that we will stand up and defend wherever you are, whoever you are, whatever you believe, or no belief at all. We will stand for you. And we are going to stand committed for you to be able to practice what you see fit.

I think this is one of these fundamental human rights that, if we start to get it right, and it starts to penetrate further around the world, you are going to see more peace breakout in places. And you are going to see the rest of a number of human rights continue to, hopefully, grow and flourish.

If we do not get it right, if we do not have religious freedom around the world, you are going to see a continuation of many more conflicts like we have today, and probably growing and accelerating taking place.

I think this issue is just so critical. It is foundational to our Constitution. It is foundational to the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights. It was started by this body. It is continued by this body. This position was created here in the Congress.

And I really look forward, if confirmed, to working with a number of you, because if we do not, we are going to miss an opportunity. And if we miss this opportunity, there is going to be far more difficulty in the world. That is what it is going to be like.

And, Mr. Chairman, I would like to submit my full statement for the record.

Senator RUBIO. Absolutely. There will be no objection to that.
[Governor Brownback's prepared statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF GOVERNOR SAM BROWNBACK

Good Morning Chairman Rubio, Ranking Member Kaine, and members of the committee. It is an honor to appear before the committee as the President's nominee for the position of Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom. I thank the President, Vice President, and Secretary Tillerson for their confidence in me in making this nomination.

Religious freedom is a fundamental right of every human no matter where they live, who they are, or what they believe. It is the right to do with your own Soul what you choose, without the interference of any government or group.

So declares Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. So states our Constitution. So say our hearts in our universal yearning to be free.

Freedom begins on the inside. It is the nature of our hearts to chaff against bondage. Yet millions in the world live in countries where they are not free to worship and indeed risk their lives to pursue their faith. This administration will not tolerate the continued assault on of religious freedom.

Promotion of international religious freedom is in our national interest, and it directly supports national security priorities including the defeat of ISIS and other violent extremist groups. When Secretary Tillerson released the 2016 International Religious Freedom Report recently, he noted that, "Where religious freedom is not protected, instability, human rights abuses and violent extremism have a greater opportunity to take root," and, "no one should have to live in fear, worship in fear or face discrimination for his or her beliefs."

Further, the Secretary emphasized that protection of the rights of religious minorities and other victims of violent extremism is a human rights priority for the Trump administration, and that the administration will "continue working with our regional partners to protect religious minority communities from terrorist attacks and to preserve their cultural heritage."

The Congress is to be commended for focusing the federal government on this alarming deterioration of freedom with the groundbreaking International Religious Freedom Act of 1998, an Act I was honored to sponsor. During my fourteen years serving in the United States Senate, I was involved in a diverse range of issues related to religious freedom. I spoke out against atrocities committed against Christians in the Sudan, and pushed passage of the Darfur Peace and Accountability Act in 2005, to expand peacekeeping and logistical support for the region. In 2009, I co-sponsored a resolution condemning the state sponsored persecution of the Baha'i minority in Iran. In 2000, I was instrumental in enacting the Trafficking Victims Protection Act. Human trafficking of individuals is often associated with religious persecution.

As a Senator serving on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for eight years, I presided over hearings, Senate oversight hearings of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom. I fully understand the important role of the Commission in informing United States decision makers and other world leaders about religious freedom. Last year, you passed, and President Obama signed into law, the Frank R. Wolf International Religious Freedom Act to further address and focus the U.S. Government on the dire plight of religious minorities around the world.

This position of Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom is integral to our priority foreign policy goals, and if confirmed I pledge to use my energies and the range of diplomatic tools to strengthen international religious freedom issues and concerns in U.S. foreign policy. As called for in the International Religious Freedom Act, I pledge to: "[Stand] for liberty and [stand] with the persecuted, to use and implement appropriate tools in the United States foreign policy apparatus, including diplomatic, political, commercial, charitable, educational, and cultural channels, to promote respect for religious freedom by all governments and peoples."

You have spoken with clarity and conviction of the commitment of our people to this most basic right. It is now incumbent on the Executive Branch to fully implement the law. If confirmed, I will do my utmost to implement the law to its fullest by working with Department bureaus, posts and missions to elevate and fully integrate international religious freedom into security strategies and strategic planning, and will work with other government agencies to develop a comprehensive whole-of-government approach.

Further, if confirmed, I will press the leaders of other countries for the release of religious prisoners and for needed reforms, and be on alert for bilateral and multilateral opportunities to protect religious freedom victims and advance international religious freedom. I will also review diplomatic training to ensure that there is a strong curriculum that sensitizes all Ambassadors, Chiefs of Mission, officers departing for overseas posts, and all entry-level officers, and ensures that international religious freedom is fully integrated into policy, programs, casework and other initiatives.

Finally, if I am confirmed I will reach out to USCIRF in order to optimize our cooperation, and will meet with religious leaders, people of faith, and civil society groups to pursue our religious freedom goals. And I pledge to look to Congress for wisdom and help, as I know first-hand of the long-standing dedication you have to this cause, and I value your advice.

Time is short. Every passing day finds more people persecuted, imprisoned, tortured and even killed for simply practicing their innermost convictions.

We cannot let this dire situation continue without an aggressive response. We as Americans must stand strong for this first freedom or we will see the world spin into increasing conflicts and violence. We must act to protect and preserve this most basic right for all people.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to your questions.

Senator RUBIO. I am going to defer my opening questions. I know members have votes, and I am going to be here a while.

So Senator Gardner, by order of attendance.

Senator GARDNER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thanks to both of you for your willingness to serve our country. I appreciate your willingness to serve.

And, certainly, thanks to your families as well for this commitment.

Governor Brownback, we had a great conversation and opportunity to visit in the office. One of the things that we did not get into too much—well, a little bit—was water. So the Colorado-Kansas water issues we will defer to another day, although it may take a religious perspective at some point between our two States. [Laughter.]

Governor BROWNBACK. Yes, you have to quit doing what you guys are doing. [Laughter.]

Senator GARDNER. Unfortunately, you had better lawyers than we have had. [Laughter.]

Senator GARDNER. Governor Brownback, during our conversation in the office, we talked a little bit about some of the unfortunate situation that has occurred, the incidents in India with a Christian organization called Compassion International. It is based out of Colorado Springs. Many people are familiar with it.

Compassion International has been in India since 1968. But in March last year, it was forced to shut down because of the Government's spurious objections over its activities.

Compassion provided health, nutrition, medical services, tutoring to over 145,000 children. Now, these children are left to their own devices. This organization situation raises overall concerns about religious freedom issues in India.

According to the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, in 2015, religious tolerance deteriorated and religious freedom violations increased in India. Minority communities experience numerous incidents of intimidation, harassment, violence.

Furthermore, there seems to be a real crackdown on religious NGOs by the Indian Government in the last year. According to the same report, in April 2015, the Ministry of Home Affairs revoked the licenses of nearly 9,000 charitable organizations.

Now I think India is an incredibly great nation, and I have the utmost respect for that nation. But I want to make sure that it is not taking a direction for the worse and make sure that we are aware of what is happening there. So could you talk about maybe some of the root causes of this religious intolerance and what we can help do to change that situation?

Governor BROWNBACK. Thank you very much, Senator, for the question. I am familiar with the issue that has arisen. I have not gotten internal briefs on what all has taken place, because I am not confirmed for the position, so I do not know any more than what I have been reading that is available publicly on it.

I have worked with the Indian Government previously. When I started on this committee at a chair over here at the end, I was the subcommittee chairman that dealt with India, and I worked with the Government a great deal, the former BJP Government, not the current one. I am familiar with India.

I think this is something we have to press them on, and we have to press hard. India has, in the past, had a very good track record, overall, of dealing with a lot of religious tolerance. It is a very religiously diverse Nation.

I do not know what is causing this, but I pledge to you my work to press the Government of India to be a government that honors religious freedom for everybody. And we will look into the issue of what has taken place with Compassion International.

I hope to be able to work with your office on it, too.

Senator GARDNER. Thank you very much, Governor. Obviously, my work on the East Asia Subcommittee has brought greater attention to the plight of persecution in Myanmar and the plight of the Rohingya there, and what we need to be doing to make sure that we provide guidance, leadership, and objection to the activities and the treatment that is taking place there, but also concern in China as well toward the Christian minority in China and what we can be doing around the globe.

~~So thank you for your willingness to serve, both of you, again. And I will go back my time.~~

Senator RUBIO. Thank you.

Senator KAINE?

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Again, to the witnesses, I congratulate you for your nominations.

Governor Brownback, you are supported by a number of people I really care about and respect, and you are suited for this position in many ways. I do have a couple concerns, so let me just jump right to them.

In 2015, you issued an executive order retracting an 8-year executive order in Kansas that provided protection in the State work force against adverse employment action on the grounds of sexual orientation. Describe why you did that.

Governor BROWNBACK. That was an order that created a right by the executive branch that was not available to other people, and it was not passed by the legislative branch. I believe those sorts of issues should be passed by a legislative branch.

Senator KAINÉ. Do you commonly issue executive orders?

Governor BROWNBACK. What is that?

Senator KAINÉ. Do you commonly issue, as Governor, executive orders?

Governor BROWNBACK. Some, but not a huge number.

Senator KAINÉ. Isn't that kind of the point of an executive order? You issue an executive order on something that the legislature has not passed. If it was clearly in statute, you would not need to issue an executive order.

Governor BROWNBACK. Yes, but this is a foundational issue that you are creating a right for State employees that was not available to the rest of the people in the State.

Senator KAINÉ. Was it bad to give State employees that right?

Governor BROWNBACK. I believe these sorts of things ought to be passed by the body. I am one who feels like you ought to create and have the law passed itself. So that answers why we did that, why I did that.

Senator KAINÉ. As the Governor, do you appoint cabinet secretaries?

Governor BROWNBACK. I do.

Senator KAINÉ. Do you appoint agency heads?

Governor BROWNBACK. Most, not all, but I do.

Senator KAINÉ. And do you take those appointments seriously, interview people to make sure they are competent, honest, that they can do the job well?

Governor BROWNBACK. To the best of my ability.

Senator KAINÉ. Do you feel like you have high standards in the people that you appoint?

Governor BROWNBACK. Yes.

Senator KAINÉ. Wouldn't it be appropriate, in terms of setting a standard for your work force, for your cabinet secretaries and agency heads, for you to say to them, "I do not think you should discriminate against people on the grounds of their sexual orientation?" If you are hiring for honesty, if you are hiring for competence, wouldn't that be an appropriate thing that the Governor, as the chief of a State personnel operation, would want to know about leaders in State Government?

Governor BROWNBACK. I think that would be a rational thing. I just do not think it is a right that the executive branch should create without the legislative branch.

Senator KAINÉ. When I was Governor, the first day, I did an executive order that protected people in a variety of ways, including

on the grounds of sexual orientation. The first order I signed, about 10 minutes after I was inaugurated in Williamsburg.

And I had an attorney general who made the same point to me. He said, well, the legislature didn't do this. And I said, but I am hiring agency heads and cabinet secretaries who are administering State Government. And I think, as the chief executive, one of the things I want to know about them is that they will not discriminate against employees.

Can't you see that the retraction of an executive order like this that had been in place for 8 years sends a message that that is not a value, nondiscrimination against folks on the grounds of sexual orientation, that is not a value that you share?

Governor BROWNBACK. I do not think it sends that message. And furthermore, as being the Ambassador on Religious Freedom, I look forward to working with people, working with you, working with everybody, regardless of their ideas or views, on how we can advance the agenda of religious freedom.

There may be differences on other topics. There are differences that Ambassador Saperstein and I have on other topics.

Senator KAINE. Let me connect it to religious freedom.

Governor BROWNBACK. But the beauty of this topic has been that people, we tend to focus on what bipartisan things there are that we agree upon. And I pledge to you to do that in this role as Ambassador for Religious Freedom—

Senator KAINE. Let me connect—

Governor BROWNBACK [continuing]. And continue the work that Ambassador Saperstein has done on this as well.

Senator KAINE. Let me connect this to religious freedom.

Are you aware that there are countries around the world where you can be imprisoned, and even executed, if you are LGBT?

Governor BROWNBACK. I believe that is correct.

Senator KAINE. And are you also aware that, in some of those countries, the asserted justification for criminal treatment of people based on LGBT status is a religious justification? That is what is cited as the justification for the criminal punishment for people who are LGBT.

Governor BROWNBACK. I had a lengthy conversation yesterday with Randy Berry, who worked with Ambassador Saperstein in the prior administration, who has Kansas roots, as you do some as well.

We had a good conversation about how these two offices work together. And I do not see doing anything any different than what they worked together on, as far as the topics.

Senator KAINE. That was not really my question.

Governor BROWNBACK. But that really is the point of the job.

Senator KAINE. Is there any circumstance under which religious freedom can justify criminalizing, imprisoning, or executing people based on their LGBT status?

Governor BROWNBACK. Well, I agree with what Randy Berry did around the world on that topic. I am not fully briefed on the various and the specifics. But what he basically did and described to me yesterday, the work they did back and forth with Ambassador Saperstein, I wouldn't see changing.

Senator Kaine. Okay, but I am going to close just with this question. I would like an answer to this question.

Is there any circumstance under which criminalizing, imprisoning, or executing somebody based on their LGBT status could be deemed acceptable because somebody asserts that they are religiously motivated in doing so?

Governor Brownback. I do not know what that would be, in what circumstance, but I would continue the policies that have been done in the prior administration in working on these international issues.

Senator Kaine. I really would expect an unequivocal answer on that.

But my time is up.

Senator Rubio. Senator Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Congratulations, Governor Brownback, Ambassador Sison. Thank you both for your willingness to serve.

Ambassador Sison, I am especially appreciative that you are taking on the role in Haiti. I know that you have had other challenging roles in Lebanon and other places as Ambassador. So thank you for your willingness to do that.

Governor Brownback, I want to ask you about your thoughts about what message it sends to the rest of the world with respect to religious persecution, because I agree, one of our first lessons as children in school is learning that the United States was founded because people were fleeing religious persecution. We have a group of Indonesians in New Hampshire who have been here fleeing persecution from Indonesia, religious persecution. They are Christians. And they are now under threat of deportation, even though they are not criminals.

They are being sent back to Indonesia, where the record of religious persecution of Christians has gotten worse in the last several years.

So what kind of message do you think that sends to the rest of the world, as we are holding the United States up as a model for trying to make sure that people of all faiths can be treated fairly here, to send back to a country where they are certainly going to be persecuted again because of their religion?

Governor Brownback. I do not know the specific circumstances of what you are talking about, Senator. I will be happy to look into it, because it does not sound appropriate.

Senator Shaheen. My question was really, what kind of a message does that send to the rest of the world when we are not willing to accept people fleeing religious persecution in the United States?

Governor Brownback. Well, I think we should accept people that are fleeing religious persecution.

I used to do a lot of this work, on helping people that were persecuted for their faith in various countries to get to the United States and help them when they would resettle in my State. And then there are often a lot of different circumstances engaged, other than just the one. The one is important, and it should not be one that causes them not to come. But often, there is just a series of

what I found issues. And I am very sympathetic to people fleeing a plight because of the religious persecution.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. I appreciate the work you did in the Senate to address religious persecution. My concern is that sometimes that support has come at the expense of other groups, women, in particular. I think women's health is sometimes put at risk because of suggestions of ensuring individual's religious freedom.

So how do you address that, for women who have been denied access to health care, even women who are victims of rape and incest who are not able to access abortion services? Why is that okay in the name of religious freedom for certain individuals?

Governor BROWNBACK. I am going to answer a broader question and then drill into your point here.

The beauty of what this job has been I think under the prior administration and this one is that there are contentious issues that people do not agree upon, and this position has tried to stay in its lane on religious freedom. And we could veer off into a lot of other debate points and lose the support of the Congress, and lose support around the world.

But I think the key piece is to stay in the lane of religious freedom. And those things that start to pull you out of it, you should not go there, whether it is the issue you are talking about or others, just because this one is so critical and difficult enough as it is without trying to venture into the difficult abortion debate or other debates domestically. And the focus is on international and the places we agree upon.

That is how I did the original bills working on this, on human trafficking with Paul Wellstone. There were differences of opinion on what all should be included in that. But the ones that he was pursuing from his side of the aisle that I could not agree on, he dropped. The ones that I was pursuing on my side of the aisle that he wouldn't agree on, I dropped. And we ended up with a pretty decent bill.

That is why I think this is an important position not to get into a number of these more difficult debate points that we are in, in the United States. And I pledge to you to stay there in this lane on a bipartisan basis.

Senator SHAHEEN. So will you commit to this committee that you will work with civil society organizations who are defending human rights, not just for religious minorities but for women and for people in the LGBTQ communities?

Governor BROWNBACK. I will work with anybody that I can on the topic of religious freedom and not veer out of that lane, because I think if you start to veer out of that lane, you get pulled to other topics that other people are charged with doing. You are going to lose the bipartisan support for the position, which is critical to have.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator RUBIO. Thank you.

So Senator Kaine went to vote. When he gets here, he will assume the gavel until I get a chance to get over there and get back.

So in the interim, I will just use that time to try to get my questions in.

Just to bring further clarity, because a number of questions have pulled you in that direction, Governor Brownback, I want to kind of refocus a little bit on the job that you will have.

The job of the Ambassador-at-Large is to advocate for religious liberty, which is oftentimes challenged or invariably challenged in places where either the population of that particular religious view is a minority in numbers, or even if they are a majority, the Government is of a different persuasion and targets those individuals for persecution.

So the job that you have been nominated to do is basically to advocate for the religious liberty of all religious entities and denominations and views around the world, irrespective of the size, their theology, their views on one particular issue versus another. If there is persecution on the basis of religion, or oppression on the basis of religion, or the denial of liberty on the basis of religion, your job would be to advocate for that freedom for them to practice in peace.

That is the scope of the job that you have been nominated to, is that correct, not to litigate theological points or policy differences beyond the scope of that liberty?

Governor BROWNBACK. That is. And I also think that is the strength of the position, is to stay in that lane that is bipartisan agreed to, that has seen these bills pass by large majorities or by unanimous consent on international religious freedom.

If you start to veer into these more difficult issues and discussions, you will lose support for the job. You will lose support for the position. And the position will be less effective, if effective at all.

Senator RUBIO. Now in terms of the position itself, last year, the Congress passed the Frank Wolf International Religious Freedom Act, which, among other things, elevated the position you have been nominated to internally within the State Department, so that it now is, by statute, required to report directly to the Secretary, which was designed to combat years of the position and the issue being relegated to a sort of secondary concern rather than being fully integrated into U.S. foreign policy.

Secretary Tillerson has informed the Senate of his intent to have this role report to the Under Secretary for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights. And I want to state clearly here and on the record, that runs contrary to the legislative intent of the law the Congress passed, and it is something that we object to.

I am not asking you to opine on it, but I do want to use this opportunity to make clear that that is not the intent of that law, and we would view that as in direct violation and contradiction of the law that was passed.

That said, I want to hear more about how you intend, obviously recognizing the limitations we have before us here today, what would you do, that you could share with us, to elevate the international religious freedom issues within the U.S. foreign policy at large and within the ranks of the U.S. State Department? Because that was the intent of this law, not just to require direct report but

to elevate the importance of this as a critical component of our broader foreign policy.

Governor BROWNBACK. As one of the original sponsors of the 1998 act, I thought the Frank Wolf act really improved on what took place in the 1998 act. The 1998 act was groundbreaking, but I think it had some limitations to it that a number of people saw.

One of the big things I think needs to take place is what you put in the act of having a cross-agency, cross-section group that meets to advise and work on international religious freedom issues, so it is not just within the State Department. It is also a security apparatus and the aid organizations.

And I look forward to working with that and bringing that multi-agency approach to this task of religious freedom. I think that is the effectiveness that Congress is looking for that I certainly want to implement in this particular bill and this particular area.

As I said at the outset, I am just firmly convinced, we have to get more focus on this by a broader cross-section, or we will not be effective in this. And if we are not effective on religious freedom, you are going to see violence continue to grow in many places around the world.

So I look forward to implementing the Frank Wolf act.

Senator RUBIO. Just as an aside, and perhaps an editorial moment here for me, and you can agree if you would like, in fact, I would prefer if you did—[Laughter.]

Senator RUBIO. With that what I am about to say, but I think you will because we spoke about this yesterday.

You see the plight of the Rohingya Muslims that are facing persecution in Burma, and I would argue that has a direct national security implication for the United States. To their credit, the leaders of that community have been very resistant to, and they have rejected, efforts by radical elements to reach out and sort of take advantage of the situation.

That said, when a population of people anywhere in the world is being persecuted, mistreated and, in this case, even killed, they become vulnerable to outside actors showing up and trying to take advantage of those circumstances. It is yet another example beyond the humanitarian concerns of why it is in the national security interest of the United States to ensure that people around the world have an opportunity to live in peace and prosperity.

It is the right thing to do morally. It is also the pragmatic thing to do, because that instability, that suffering, that violence, those humanitarian catastrophes all create the conditions within which radical elements and bad actors around the world—that is their playground. That is what they took advantage of in Syria, with regard to the sectarian abuses occurring on behalf of the Assad regime. So, again, this is another example of why that is so important.

I want to now turn to Haiti for a moment, obviously a very important part of this nomination. I always tell nominees, if you are not getting a lot of questions in a hearing, that is a good thing.

But I do want to ask, because it is so important to Florida. Haiti has such a difficult history. We know the struggles they have had. On the issue of Haiti, one of the decisions the White House and the

administration will have to make soon is about whether or not to continue to extend temporary protective status.

I am not asking you to opine on what they should do. I am asking you to give us insight as to what the implications would be if, in fact, TPS is not extended and Haiti is asked to assume a significant number of people over a short period of time.

In your view, what would the implications of that be for the Haitian Government, in terms of absorbing this reentry? What would the implications be for them, if TPS was not extended and people were forced to return? What would it mean to the Haitian Government, to their capacity and to their ability to handle that?

Ambassador SISON. Thank you, Senator, for that question.

As we know, TPS was extended for an additional 6 months and is set to expire January 22, 2018. So the process is, of course, that under the Immigration and Nationality Act, the Department of Homeland Security Secretary has the authority to designate a foreign state for temporary protective status. But before a decision is made for what will happen in January 2018, of course, DHS will consult all relevant government agencies, including the Department of State, in determining whether conditions for TPS continue to be met in Haiti.

Senator RUBIO. I apologize. I understand the process for making the decision. My question is, what, in your view, would it mean? I am not asking you to tell me whether they should or should not extend it. I am just curious about your views on what it would mean for Haiti if, in fact, TPS is not extended.

Ambassador SISON. Exactly, Senator. The Embassy in Port-au-Prince is part of this process. They are contributing to a country conditions assessment that looks at infrastructure, health, sanitation services, continued ability to respond to disasters. So, if confirmed, I am going to want to keep the lines of communication open with you, Senators, and the staff.

In terms of the implications for the U.S. partnership on the ground and what we are doing with Haiti, I believe that a number of the programs that we actually have in place now in terms of assisting with economic livelihoods, assisting with agricultural and food security, these economic growth programs, these educational programs, these health programs all help build a resilience with our Haitian partners in order to respond not only to the natural disasters—of course, the TPS was put into place after the earthquake in 2010—but also building the resilience for the eventual return, if this is determined, of approximately—

Senator RUBIO. I apologize. I have to go vote. My time has expired, and I know Senator Kaine has questions about Haiti as well. I would just say I understand, as a nominee, why you do not want to delve into, "This is what it would mean to Haiti."

So I just want to say this. I think it would be difficult for them to absorb it, if that is the decision the administration makes, which I hope they do not. But if they did, my view is that the Embassy will have a lot of work on its hands, and the Government of Haiti will require a lot of assistance.

So it is my advice that, if and when confirmed, as I anticipate you will be, that you make that argument, that, in essence, you guys make the decision you need to make, but if you decide to ter-

minate TPS, we better step up our presence and our operations here, because the Haitian Government is already struggling with the people who are there now. Any large influx of returnees will strain that, and we will need to have greater capacity to help them meet that demand.

Again, unsolicited advice, but I think it is good advice, but it is my advice, so—

Ambassador SISON. I look forward to continuing to work with you, Senator. Thank you.

Senator KAINE. I second that emotion. I think that is very good advice.

Ambassador Sison, April 2017, the U.N. Security Council decided that the U.N. stabilization mission in Haiti, which was established in 2004, would come to an end later this year. I think on October 15, we are coming up on the date. That would include a full withdrawal of the mission's military component, which is about 2,000 personnel.

Talk about this transition and what it might mean in Haiti. And is the Haitian Government sort of prepared to take on these responsibilities? And things that you might be able to do in your capacity, should you be confirmed, to help in this next chapter?

Ambassador SISON. Thank you, Senator.

Yes, MINUSTAH, U.N. stabilization force, winds down October 15. And the very next day, October 16, MINUJUSTH, the justice sector support force, police only, stands up.

And I am up at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations now tracking this very issue. And in conversations with the Department of Peacekeeping up at the U.N., I am well aware that the U.N. is on track, both for the timing of this transition, for the budgeting of this new police-only justice sector support mission that will focus on police development, and rule of law, and human rights. The locations are spread throughout the country appropriately, standing up civilian staff corrections officers, 38, to cover countrywide some of these pretrial detention issues that I mentioned in my opening statement. Individual police officers and formed police units, seven formed police units, the total number of police there between the IPOs and the foreign police units, 1,275. The support, the medical, aviation, legal, all of this package is on track.

Combined with that, we continue our own U.S. bilateral rule of law and police development support. And that is also an important factor here.

That U.N. vote that you mentioned, of course, was unanimous. And it was recognition of the success that Haiti has had in returning in their democratic transition after the elections, the recent elections, and also to the fact that the Haitian national police is much stronger today. And again, a lot of that is thanks to U.S. bilateral support that we have provided to stand up the force that will be up to 15,000 by the end of this year. We have provided, through U.S. support, training, equipping, and we have really partnered with the other donors, including the U.N., to enhance law and order on the ground, but also Haiti's ability to combat the scourge of narcotics, for example, which has become a transnational threat.

So short answer to your question is that our U.S. partnership, but also the role that we play at the U.N., is I think setting this up to be a successful transition later on this month.

Senator KAINE. [Presiding.] Thank you for that thorough answer. I appreciate that.

Governor Brownback, quickly, you have taken some steps, or Kansas has during your tenure as Governor, that have been perceived as anti-Muslim, pulling out of the Federal refugee resettlement program, voicing support for the Muslim ban first announced by President Trump in January, signing an anti-Sharia law bill.

I would like to give you the opportunity to talk about, because you clearly have a track record of battling for religious minorities in this body and elsewhere, I would like to have you talk about your commitment, actions in the past, your commitment to battle for Muslims when they are in minority status around the world.

The chair's opening comments talked about the deplorable situation with Rohingya Muslims in Burma. The situation of Shia in some nations like Bahrain have raised human rights about their minority religious status.

I suspect this is something that you have worked on in the past, and I want to give you a chance to address that issue.

Governor BROWNBACK. It is something I have worked on in the past, and I will work on it in this job, if confirmed for it, as well.

I believe in the fundamental right to practice religion as you see fit, whoever you are, whatever your belief, if it is a Muslim group, if it is a Christian group, if it is Buddhist, Hindu, Baha'i, any, Jewish group. Whatever it is, you have that right. And I will fight for protection so that you will be able to exercise your religious freedom in peace from any government or group, period. That is what I have done in the past.

The Rohingya is a terrible situation. I pushed back against the Government in Burma before when I was here. They were persecuting a tribe of people in the north that were being trafficked into Bangkok into a number of prostitution places.

I worked on the Darfur Peace and Accountability Act. That was a Muslim, generally, population that was being persecuted there, and I was one of the original carriers of that bill.

You read the International Religious Freedom report, and you see how much persecution there is of Muslims around the world, to your specific point. That is wrong. It should not take place. I will stand up and fight for those communities, as I have in the past. I will do that in the future.

Senator KAINE. Thank you for that answer. I agree with you. This is foundational. It is in our First Amendment for a reason.

We have a little bit of Virginia pride in Jefferson's authorship of the Statute for Religious Freedom that became the basis of the First Amendment that was drafted by another Virginian, Madison. And it could have been put in the Fourth or Fifth Amendment, but it was put up front for a reason, and it is so very important. And I appreciate that answer.

And I think, with that, I think the chair gave me the permission to close this portion of the hearing. Other members may ask questions in writing. If they do, I would appreciate you all responding promptly. We will leave the record open until 5 o'clock tomorrow

afternoon for members to submit questions. Try to respond promptly, if you can.

And thank you again for appearing today. Congratulations on your nominations.

With that, this portion of the hearing is adjourned. And we will wait until the return of our chair, and start a second hearing about the treatment of minorities in Iraq.

[Whereupon, at 11:25 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

Additional Material Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO MICHELE J. SISON 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 Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations since 2014, I have negotiated a number of key resolutions relating to the protection of human rights in the U.N. General Assembly, including spearheading successful passage of human rights resolutions critical of both Iran and Syria. I also led negotiations on behalf of the United States that led to the U.N. General Assembly voting to establish the International, Impartial, and Independent Mechanism to support the investigation and prosecution of those responsible for violations of international humanitarian law and human rights violations and abuses in Syria. In addition, I worked to secure U.N. accreditation for the U.S.-based Committee to Protect Journalists, which had repeatedly been denied such accreditation due to the efforts of undemocratic U.N. member states.

I have promoted human rights and democracy throughout my 35-year career as a Foreign Service officer, and have listed a number of additional examples below.

Sri Lanka

As the U.S. Ambassador 2012–2014, I led our Embassy's work related to investigating and documenting allegations of war crimes and other abuses and to supporting civil society in the face of a ban by the former government on NGO press conferences and workshops. When government-sanctioned mob and police actions limited the right of peaceful assembly, we successfully countered the closing space for civil society through U.S. Embassy social media activities and a WiFi-enabled bus to bring "citizen journalist" outreach to remote areas. Our Embassy's extensive documentation of human rights defender intimidation, targeting of members of Christian and Muslim minority communities, and restrictions on media freedom was credited with contributing to the successful passage of successive U.N. Human Rights Council resolutions on Sri Lanka and the creation of a U.N. fact-finding mission.

Iraq

As Assistant Chief Mission for Rule of Law Assistance 2011–2012, I oversaw a \$500 million program aimed at improving access to justice, providing police and corrections training, and strengthening an independent judiciary. Our trainers integrated instruction on protection of human rights and counter-trafficking in persons into Iraq law enforcement development programs. The programs I oversaw also supported local NGOs and law schools in providing legal aid to underserved and disadvantaged populations across Iraq, including women, internally displaced persons, persons with disabilities, and minorities.

Lebanon

As the U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon 2008–2010, I oversaw U.S. Government programming that supported the development and strengthening of civil society (including, notably in areas controlled by terrorist group Hizballah). Our programming also strengthened the independence of the judiciary and access to justice for members of vulnerable populations (including legal aid clinics for refugees), as well as inaugurated a first-ever police training program. We built Lebanon's judicial training institute's curriculum and infrastructure, and, working with Lebanese authorities, sup-

ported improvements to the recruitment/selection process for judicial candidates and judicial ethics reform.

United Arab Emirates

During my tenure as U.S. Ambassador to the UAE 2004–2008, my sustained advocacy led to UAE Government action to rescue and shelter more than 800 child victims of human trafficking, repatriate hundreds of trafficking victims, and pass a law criminalizing the exploitation of child camel jockeys. The Department of State's Office of Trafficking in Persons named me the 2005 "Abolitionist Ambassador of the Year" in recognition of these efforts.

Earlier Tours

As Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary in the South Asia Bureau, I argued successfully for increased democracy funding and programing for Pakistan and Afghanistan. In Cote D'Ivoire as political counselor in the 1990's, I brought in new U.S. elections assistance programming and lobbied successfully for the first-ever international elections observers. As a young desk officer for Nicaragua in the 1980's, I developed a reliable data base on the country's human rights record. And in my first Foreign Service tour—Haiti—I was responsible for the Embassy's human rights reporting 1982–1984. This included visiting activists under house arrest and reporting on their conditions in order to show visible support for the important work of these human rights defenders.

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

Answer. The most pressing human rights issues in Haiti include the trafficking issues related to an estimated 286,000 children working in domestic service; the chronic prolonged pretrial detention problem; squalid prison conditions; corruption; weak rule of law; and violence against women.

If confirmed, I will work with the Government of Haiti, civil society, international partners, and religious leaders to institutionalize the rule of law and uphold more transparent, accountable institutions to improve the future of Haitian citizens. Our U.S. Embassy team will continue to build the capacity of Haiti's National Anti-Trafficking Committee and Child Welfare Agency to prevent child exploitation. I will also work to create public messaging about the benefits of children being raised at home with their families. We will continue to support an innovative three-year alliance with the Government of Haiti for the protection of children, to reduce violence against children, mitigate human trafficking, including forced labor of children, protect unaccompanied and separated children, and explore alternative care and protection services for children through pilot interventions. We will also continue to work with local NGOs and the Government of Haiti to raise awareness about trafficking risks in Haitian orphanages.

In addition, through the justice system strengthening program our USAID colleagues will continue to be a partner to Haitians building a professional, accountable, and modern justice system. I will support USAID programs that support justice and legal aid. Since 2011, USAID interventions have helped provide legal aid for over 24,000 individuals. Our State Department Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) has spent decades working with the Haitian National Police, and is helping make badly-needed administrative and organizational reforms to improve conditions for Haiti's prison population. In addition, through our PEPFAR, INL, and USAID programs, we are training law enforcement officials to better investigate gender-based violence, improving women's access to medical treatment, and empowering women to play a larger role in government and civil society to raise the national profile of the challenges they face.

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 Haiti advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. Political instability, corruption, and weak rule of law are all major challenges to sustained human rights improvements in Haiti. Today, after two years of political impasse, Haiti has a democratically-elected government and a window of opportunity to implement democratic reforms to ensure that constant political crises no longer threaten to derail Haiti's future. Yet only 20 percent of Haitians turned out for the most recent Presidential elections. After years of political strife, the trust between Haiti's Government and its people must be restored.

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

Answer. I am absolutely committed to meeting with human rights, civil society, and other NGOs both in the United States and in Haiti. October 5, 2017

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

Answer. While Haiti does not at present have high-profile cases of political prisoners, our U.S. Embassy team will remain vigilant and engaged with the Government of Haiti, civil society, and human rights-defenders to protect members of Haiti's vulnerable populations.

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

Answer. If confirmed, I will ensure all agencies at the U.S. Embassy continue to adhere to the Department's Leahy policy to ensure that U.S. security assistance programs promote and advance human rights.

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

Answer. If confirmed, I will indeed engage personally with Haitian civil society on matters of human rights, including civil rights, and governance. I will also ensure Embassy Port-au-Prince continues to engage with Haitian civil society on matters of human rights, including civil rights, and good governance. Embassy Port-au-Prince has created an internal interagency democracy, human rights, and governance working group to ensure that all of our U.S. Embassy efforts work to incorporate these key U.S. values, and I intend to keep the working group's responsibilities a key U.S. Embassy priority.

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

Answer. I firmly believe that diversity of experience and background enhances our diplomatic and representational work as Department of State employees. Throughout my career, including as Director for Career Development and Assignments in State's Bureau of Human Resources (HR/CDA), I have focused on the need to promote and support diversity. I also worked to foster a work environment free of discrimination by maintaining an affirmative outreach program as HR/CDA director (2010–2011) and served as the mentor for a number of the Department's affinity group employee organizations to help strengthen and support diversity during that tour. If confirmed, I will build upon this experience to promote diversity at Embassy Port-au-Prince through personal mentoring and serving as a role model for the Embassy with respect to fairness, equity, and inclusion.

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. If confirmed, I will work to ensure a diverse, inclusive, nondiscriminatory workplace environment, making sure that any Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) complaints or harassment inquiries are appropriately investigated and handled. I will ensure that EEO liaisons are provided for both U.S. and Locally Employed Staff to coordinate EEO counseling and training. I will also ensure that EEO refresher training for the mission-wide U.S. and locally employed staff and their EEO liaisons is available. In doing so, I will emphasize EEO and diversity training is mandatory for all managers and supervisors.

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 Haiti?

Answer. No.

Question 13. Please provide your assessment of current U.N. efforts to address the cholera in Haiti, U.S. investments and response to addressing the cholera epidemic in Haiti, and your goals as Ambassador, if confirmed, in addressing the issue going forward.

Answer. The United States remains deeply concerned by Haiti's tragic cholera epidemic and its impact. If confirmed, my goal will be to support the Haitian Government in its efforts to prevent, detect, and respond to cholera, among other diseases. To ensure sustained focus on this disease, the U.S. Government, through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is helping Haiti to improve cholera surveillance and laboratory testing capacity. Additionally, CDC and USAID support investments to improve water, sanitation, and hygiene infrastructure and related behavior change. The U.S. Government team works closely with the Haitian Government and partners to ensure U.S. Government activities complement the Government of Haiti's Medium-Term Plan for the Elimination of Cholera in Haiti. Over the last seven years, the United States has provided more than \$100 million for cholera detection, treatment, and prevention efforts in Haiti. This assistance has promoted improved water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities; supported the establishment and operation of cholera treatment centers; provided training for Haitian health care workers in preventing, diagnosing, and treating cholera; supported the establishment of a national cholera surveillance system; and provided cholera treatment and prevention materials.

If confirmed, I will seek to coordinate continued U.S. bilateral assistance to Haiti to prevent, detect, and treat cholera among other communicable diseases, as well as to continue the U.S. Mission's work side-by-side with the Government of Haiti and other partners on the public promotion of safe health and hygiene practices and support to Haiti's overall health system. Of course, the United States recognizes the international community must do more, and we recognize and commend the United Nation's ongoing efforts to design and implement an assistance package for those most affected by cholera. If confirmed, I commit to addressing these issues directly with U.N. leadership, including regular contact with the U.N. Secretary General's recently-named special envoy for Haiti, Josette Sheeran, and her team. This is an issue in which I have engaged as the Deputy Permanent U.S. Representative to the United Nations, and I look forward to continuing to work with the United Nations to ensure that its approach is tailored in a manner that best addresses the unique and pressing situation in Haiti.

Question 14. Do you believe that conditions in Haiti have improved to the point where TPS is no longer needed for Haitian nationals in the United States?

Answer. Section 244 of the Immigration and Nationality Act gives the Secretary of Homeland Security the authority to designate a foreign state for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) after consultation with appropriate agencies of the U.S. Government, which typically includes the Department of State. As the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) works to review Haiti's TPS designation prior to its expiration, the Department of State will contribute to DHS's review process. This input will draw upon the State Department's country and regional expertise to evaluate country conditions against the criteria set out in the TPS statute, as well as any relevant foreign policy considerations.

Question 15. Do you assess that the Haitian Government has sufficient capacity and the needed policies and programs to repatriate more than 50,000 individuals in an orderly manner that ensures people's health and safety?

Answer. Following two years of political impasse and stalled elections, Haiti now has a new government in place with an elected president, a confirmed cabinet, and a full parliament. We are encouraged by this progress in Haiti and believe the post-election stability, combined with President Moïse's private sector experience, should lead to more effective development. The Government of Haiti is focused on reforms to bolster economic opportunities that will allow Haitian citizens to help build their country. In addition, the Haitian Government affirmed its commitment to ensuring that those Haitian citizens, who may be affected in the event that TPS is not extended, return to Haiti safely, with dignity, and to opportunities.

Question 16. If the repatriation of the 50,000 Haitian TPS beneficiaries did not proceed in an orderly manner, what could be the potential negative outcome; how would it affect the people and government of Haiti; and how would such an outcome affect U.S. national interests?

Answer. The U.S. Government through the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) continues to work with the Government of Haiti to ensure that repatriations occur in the most humane manner possible. As a long standing partner of Haiti, the U.S. Government remains committed to the country's long-term security, democratic development, and economic growth.

DHS consults all relevant government agencies to review the conditions of the country in question to determine whether conditions for the TPS designation continue to be met. There is no requirement in statute that the Secretary of State provide the Department's recommendation to the Secretary of DHS, although the Secretary has traditionally done so for countries for which there are significant Department of State foreign policy or national security equities.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO HON. SAMUEL DALE BROWNBACK 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. I was honored to help pass the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 while serving in the United States Senate. This important piece of legislation was significant both in its means and its ends. Working with a thoroughly bi-partisan group of advocates and elected officials, we passed a bill that helped push back on the rising epidemic of human trafficking. There is much work still to be done, but this important early step allowed us to prove that Americans of all backgrounds and political affiliations could come together to promote human rights and human dignity. It helped show that we can, and still do, stand in united opposition to the scourge of human trafficking.

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

Answer. If confirmed, my role as Ambassador-at-Large will be to promote the rights enshrined in Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which broadly encompass the freedom to adopt a religion or belief of one's choosing, the freedom to change one's beliefs, to speak about one's beliefs, teach one's beliefs to one's children, and to worship, individually or in community with others, in public or in private.

While my focus will be on religious freedom, if confirmed, I will work closely with my colleagues across the State Department to promote respect for fundamental freedoms, human rights and democratic governance. It is my firm belief that protecting the panoply of rights enshrined in the U.S. Constitution and in the ICCPR begins with the protection of religious freedom which often serves as a bellwether for those other rights.

Question 3. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service? What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. I have a deep respect for the institution of the Foreign Service and recognize the important efforts within the State Department to ensure that these representatives of the United States at our diplomatic missions abroad reflect the diversity of America. The Office of International Religious Freedom should, like the rest of the Department, foster an atmosphere of diversity and inclusion. If confirmed, I will take seriously my role to promote, mentor, and support the employees in our office as I have throughout my career.

Question 4. 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 any concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question 5. 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 any concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question 6. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests abroad?

Answer. No.

Engaging with Diverse Religious Communities

Question 7. Given that the position of Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom is responsible for promoting freedom and respect for all religions as a fundamental human right, how will you build trust, respect, and acceptance across all faiths, including in the Muslim communities around the world?

Answer. Religious freedom is a universal human right of every individual, regardless of creed, and should never be arbitrarily abridged by any government. If confirmed, I will pursue all means to engage governments and civil society leaders to promote every individual's right to freedom of religion or belief. To be effective, I will directly consult with individuals of varying religious beliefs and communities to intimately understand their experiences, the challenges they endure, as well as their policy concerns. This includes Muslims, many of whom face heavy restrictions on their ability to freely practice their faith in many countries around the world. I would rely on my own professional and personal contacts, in addition to those established by my colleagues, to reach out to these communities, continue to build and maintain strong and lasting relationships, and collectively work towards promoting and protecting religious freedom for all individuals, regardless of their faith or beliefs.

Building trust and respect with members of vulnerable religious communities will be critical to my success as Ambassador-at-Large, and if confirmed, I will prioritize this responsibility.

Interpretation of "Religious Freedom"

Question 8. As Governor, you supported the passage of the Campus Religious Freedom Bill, which became law in March 2016, which requires public colleges and universities in Kansas to recognize and fund religious student associations, even those that discriminate in their membership against LGBT individuals, women, African Americans, students with disabilities, or anyone else, so long as the student group's discrimination is rooted in a religious belief.

- Do you believe that a religious belief should allow a person, business, or government entity to discriminate against another person based on his religion, sexual orientation, race or ethnicity, or disability? Do you believe that funding can be granted to entities that discriminate as long as that discrimination is based on religious conviction?

Answer. I respect the fundamental right of people to hold whatever religious beliefs they hold; and that extends to those who hold no beliefs at all. But that respect cannot extend to condoning violence or persecution in the name of religion towards of any minority or group. Violence or persecution in the name of religion against members of the LGBT community is wrong, as is persecution or violence based on gender, race, faith, age, heritage, national origin, or disability.

Refugees

Question 9. As Governor you banned state agencies in 2016 from assisting in the resettlement of Syrian refugees to Kansas and later suspended Kansas' refugee resettlement program entirely citing security concerns in vetting as the reason for the suspension, although we know the vetting procedure is stricter than any other class of those who seek entry into the United States, including immigrants and tourists.

- With over 65 million refugees worldwide how will you support and defend the rights of refugees fleeing religious persecution and oppression in the world?

Answer. The global refugee crisis should be a concern for all of us. In many cases, these refugees—and internally displaced persons—are fleeing religious persecution and discrimination or conflict born of repression on the basis of religious identity or association. Notably, however, the repression of religious freedom may not end simply because a refugee has left their country. If confirmed, I will use all means at my disposal to address the causes of forced displacement as they relate to the repression of religious freedom. I will also work to ensure that the religious freedom of refugees is fully protected. Doing so will require that I and my office engage the United Nations, governments, and civil society leaders to promote every individual's right to freedom of religion or belief, wherever they are. Given the enormity of this crisis, a focus on refugees will be a priority for my work.

Minorities in the Middle East

Question 10. ISIS' brutal treatment of religious and ethnic minorities in the Middle East has drawn a great degree of attention over the last few years, including towards Yazidis, Christians, and Shia Muslims in areas it controlled. ISIS is also responsible for crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing directed at these same groups, and in some cases against Sunni Muslims, Kurds, and other minorities.

- How do you plan on defending the rights of all groups including religious and ethnic minorities in the Middle East from being persecuted in the Middle East?
- In your view, should the U.S. be working towards ensuring that religious minorities have a place in their home country or should we instead focus on resettlement of these communities in other countries?

Answer. The right to exercise one's freedom of thought, conscience, and religion is a universal human right for all people. It is enshrined in our Constitution's First Amendment and remains a core American value along with the interconnected freedoms of expression and peaceful assembly. If confirmed, I intend to advocate both publicly and privately on behalf of all those seeking to live their lives peacefully in accordance with their conscience. While limitations vary widely from country to country, I expect to utilize all diplomatic and programmatic tools available to encourage foreign governments to respect the religious freedom of everyone within their borders, including responding vigorously to persecution or victimization of members of any group, providing emergency assistance, encouraging and facilitating accountability for violations of such freedoms, promoting equality and diversity, and building coalitions with our international partners to do the same.

I am committed to cultivating the conditions where all individuals—including members of religious and ethnic minorities—have a secure future in their countries. When needed, we should also assist members of all religions, ethnicities, and nationalities who are fleeing persecution, consistent with U.S. refugee law.

I am deeply concerned about the plight of vulnerable religious minorities in Iraq, including Christians, Yazidis, and other groups. If confirmed, I will engage regularly with representatives of these groups in addition to officials in Baghdad and Erbil to hear their views and ideas. I will work with colleagues to help address the myriad issues—such as security, services, governance, employment, education, and justice important to members of minority groups, and indeed to all Iraqis. Our comprehensive response to assist the victims of atrocities and related crimes is reflected in the recently-passed ISIS accountability United Nations Security Council Resolution, but must also include provisions to strengthen the rule of law, and provide humanitarian, stabilization, and recovery assistance to all conflict-affected individuals, including members of religious and ethnic minority groups in Iraq. The U.S. government has supported demining operations, human rights programs, and other across Iraq, but has especially focused on traditional minority enclaves in newly liberated areas, including Sinjar and the Ninewa Plains. Though a significant amount of need-based contributions have benefitted conflict-affected members of minority communities, more remains to be done to enable their safe and voluntary return to their homes.

Rohingya

Question 11. The brutal violence we've seen over the past month in Burma has left nearly 800,000 Rohingya refugees fleeing for their lives. The Rohingya who are a Muslim minority group in Burma have been persecuted for decades and this latest crisis demonstrates the unfortunate, but predictable, consequence of oppressing a religious minority denying them citizenship or options for livelihoods.

- How will you engage the government of Burma in urging them to end their persecution of the ethnic Rohingya Muslims and push for the recommendations offered in the Kofi Annan Commission report on Rakhine?

Answer. I am deeply disturbed by the recent reports of violence and human rights abuses in Rakhine State in Burma, including allegations of extrajudicial killings, burning of villages, massacres, and rape, by security forces and by vigilante groups acting alongside security forces.

Rohingya Muslims in Burma have long faced discrimination and harsh treatment by the government, including severe restrictions on freedom of movement and access to citizenship, and coercive population control measures, including forced abortion. Since 1999, Burma has been designated by the U.S. government as a Country of Particular Concern for "systematic, ongoing, egregious" violations of religious freedom.

I understand that the State Department welcomed the release of the final report of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State on August 24, and also welcomed the Government of Burma's commitment to review and carry out the recommendations

as quickly as possible. The continuing violence underlines the importance and need to implement the report recommendations. The United States has offered its support to the government as it works to address the long-term challenges addressed in the Commission's report, including poverty, underdevelopment, shortcomings in government services, as well as the need for security sector reform and accountability to address human rights violations and abuses, and better treatment of local populations, including ensuring a credible, transparent citizenship process for all people in Rakhine and lifting restrictions on freedom of movement.

If confirmed, I intend to work to ensure that Burma's Government and military acts consistently with to their human rights commitments, to press for access for humanitarian organizations so that the survival and needs of those displaced by violence are being met, to hold Burma to its commitment that those who fled to Bangladesh are able to voluntarily and safely return, and to seek justice and accountability on behalf of the victims of these mass atrocities.

On Protection of the LGBT Community

Question 12. In many parts of the world, we continue to see widespread violence and discrimination against the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender—or LGBT—community. Unfortunately, some of the attacks against this population come from actors, both governmental and non-governmental, who cite religion as the basis for their abusive actions. At the same time, we see religious leaders who are positively engaged in pushing back against such mistreatment and who are exhibiting leadership in support of this marginalized population.

- How will you work to ensure that the LGBT individuals are as worthy of protection by religious communities, and how would you use your position to help foster positive movement forward?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue to cooperate and coordinate the United States efforts to protect the rights of persecuted groups and minorities. The office of International Religious Freedom has prioritized working with State Department partners to protect the rights of persecuted minorities, including the LGBT community. I have had several productive conversations with fellow Kansan Randy Berry, the former Special Envoy for Human rights of LGBTI Persons. I am confident in our ability to work cooperatively to foster positive international movement.

Question 13. After the June 2015 U.S. Supreme Court ruling making same-sex marriage legal in all 50 states, you issues a 'religious objection' executive order in July 2015 allowing taxpayer-funded social service organizations to deny services to LGBT citizens, and specifically exempting all religiously affiliated organizations from having to recognize legal same-sex marriages or accommodate them in any way. Your opposition was so extreme, a federal judge put the state on probation and Kansas is being monitored for every aspect of the state's implementation of same-sex marriage for the next three years.

- Do you believe that religious conviction allows individuals or governments to discriminate or deny rights to someone based on his sexual orientation? What is your view on Uganda's "Kill the Gays" law?

Answer. I will respect the fundamental right of people to hold whatever religious beliefs they hold; and that extends to those who hold no beliefs at all. But that respect cannot extend to condoning violence or persecution in the name of religion towards of any minority or group. Violence or persecution in the name of religion against members of the LGBT community is wrong, as is persecution or violence based on gender, race, faith, age, heritage, national origin, or disability.

Women's Health

Question 14. The Trump administration has stated that women's economic empowerment is a critical goal for our foreign aid programs. Access to health care, especially reproductive health care, is essential to ensuring women are able to participate and contribute to the growth of local economies.

- How will you work with colleagues in the office of Global Women's Issues and Bureau of Democracy, Rights, and Labor to combat religious traditions that discriminate against women and undermine their full human rights and economic empowerment?

Answer. As Secretary Tillerson said during his confirmation, investing in women produces a multiplier effect—women reinvest a large portion of their income in their families and communities, which also furthers economic growth and stability. Around the world, there are restrictions that prevent women from fully participating in the economy as workers, entrepreneurs, and consumers. Such barriers range from inheritance rights to early and forced marriage. If confirmed, I will work with colleagues in the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor and the of-

office of Global Women's Issues to ensure that women are able to fully exercise their religious freedom around the world.

Anti-Semitism on the Rise in Europe

Question 15. In the last several years, there has been a steady and disturbing increase in attacks and acts rooted in antisemitism in Europe, including Jews murdered in Paris and Copenhagen, synagogues attacked by mobs and firebombed, and increasing Jewish emigration attributed to fear of more attacks.

- How will you address this disturbing trend and work within the inter-faith communities in Europe to help them tackle and reverse this trend and build a more secure and tolerant environment or all those who reside in these communities?

Answer. Combating anti-Semitism internationally is a priority for the Trump administration. If confirmed, I would denounce anti-Semitism and would urge governments in Europe and around the world to condemn anti-Semitism and to provide security for Jewish communities. I would work to encourage other governments and organizations to adopt a common working definition of anti-Semitism that covers contemporary as well as classical anti-Semitic acts and rhetoric. I understand that the Office of International Religious Freedom currently devotes significant resources to combatting anti-Semitism, and I am a strong supporter of such efforts. I would also work closely with other key officials, including the Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism to strengthen and advance our collective policy and programming initiatives in combatting anti-Semitism globally.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO HON. SAMUEL DALE BROWNBACK BY SENATOR CHRISTOPHER A. COONS

Question 1. LGBTQ people often face persecution in the same countries where religious minorities face persecution, so you will need to work colleagues in the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL) to create a comprehensive human rights agenda that takes all human rights concerns into account.

- How will you work with your DRL colleagues who focus on promoting the human rights of LGBTQ people abroad?

Answer. If confirmed, my role as Ambassador-at-Large will be to promote the rights enshrined in Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which broadly encompass the freedom to adopt a religion or belief of one's choosing, the freedom to change one's beliefs, to speak about one's beliefs, teach one's beliefs to one's children, and to worship, individually or in community with others, in public or in private.

As Secretary Tillerson said in June, the Department affirms its support for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of LGBTI persons. Dignity and equality are core American values underpinned by our Constitution. If confirmed as Ambassador-at-Large, I will stand up for the religious freedom of all persons, including LGBTI persons, and will work with other relevant officials throughout the Department of State to ensure protection for the human rights of all individuals, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

Question 2. LGBTQ people often face persecution in the same countries where religious minorities face persecution, so you will need to work colleagues in the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL) to create a comprehensive human rights agenda that takes all human rights concerns into account.

- Are you committed to working with your colleagues on promoting the human rights of all people, and not just religious minorities?

Answer. Yes. The protection of the human rights of all persons is a priority of the Trump administration. President Trump has stated that the United States looks forward to a day when, "people of all faiths, Christians and Muslims and Jewish and Hindu, can follow their hearts and worship according to their conscience." And Vice-President Pence has said, "Since the founding of our nation, America has stood for the proposition that the right to believe and the right to act on one's beliefs is the right of all peoples at all times. . . . Under President Trump, America will continue to stand for religious freedom of all people, of all faiths, across the world."

Freedom of religion or belief goes hand in hand with other universal human rights. If confirmed, as I work to promote freedom of religion and conscience throughout the world, I will welcome opportunities to work with my colleagues in support of the United States government's broader human rights agenda.

Question 3. LGBTQ people often face persecution in the same countries where religious minorities face persecution, so you will need to work colleagues in the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL) to create a comprehensive human rights agenda that takes all human rights concerns into account.

- How will you ensure that countries and development aid implementers do not use “religious freedom” as a cover for discriminating against LGBTQ people?

Answer. If confirmed, my role as Ambassador-at-Large will be to promote the rights enshrined in Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which broadly encompass the freedom to adopt a religion or belief of one’s choosing, the freedom to change one’s beliefs, to speak about one’s beliefs, teach one’s beliefs to one’s children, and to worship, individually or in community with others, in public or in private.

While my focus will be on religious freedom, if confirmed, I will work closely with my colleagues across the State Department to promote respect for fundamental freedoms, human rights and democratic governance, for all people, including LGBTI persons. As Secretary Tillerson said in June, the Department affirms its support for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of LGBTI persons. The State Department’s global policy is to oppose violence and discrimination targeting LGBTI persons, including from governments, and non-state actors such as some civil society organizations and some religious groups.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO HON. SAMUEL DALE BROWNBACK BY SENATOR EDWARD J. MARKEY

Chechnya LGBTQ

Question 1. The situation facing lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people in Russia can be extremely challenging. They often face violence and government crackdowns, with a strict “anti-propaganda” law that potentially criminalizes any discussion of homosexuality.

The Trump administration’s response to these attacks on this vulnerable community has been weak. This could have dangerous implications for security and stability in the region. In my experience, raising this issue, in this committee, and with our Russian interlocutors sends an important signal that the United States is watching.

Senator Toomey and I have a resolution pending before this committee condemning the abuses in Chechnya, calling on the Russian Government to protect its citizens, calling on our Government to demand the release of individuals wrongfully detained, and also to hold perpetrators accountable through sanctions under the Magnitsky Act.

- How do you plan to raise human rights concerns with your Russian counterparts, and especially with regards to the LGBTQ community, particularly with respect to Chechnya?

Answer. If confirmed, my role as Ambassador-at-Large will be to promote the rights enshrined in Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which broadly encompass the freedom to adopt a religion or belief of one’s choosing, the freedom to change one’s beliefs, to speak about one’s beliefs, teach one’s beliefs to one’s children, and to worship, individually or in community with others, in public or in private.

The situation for religious freedom in Russia is of significant concern, particularly on account of authorities’ broad use of anti-extremism legislation to harass and target members of religious minorities, including the Government’s efforts to dissolve the Jehovah’s Witnesses community.

While my focus will be on religious freedom, if confirmed, I will work closely with my colleagues across the State Department to promote respect for fundamental freedoms, human rights and democratic governance, for all people, including LGBTI persons. As Secretary Tillerson said in June, the Department affirms its support for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of LGBTI persons. The State Department’s global policy is to oppose violence and discrimination targeting LGBTI persons, including from governments, and non-state actors such as some civil society organizations and some religious groups.

We continue to follow the human rights situation in Chechnya very closely, including the allegations of widespread extrajudicial detentions and torture, and in

some cases killings of LGBTI persons. In July, Secretary Tillerson sent a letter to Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov encouraging swift and independent investigations into these troubling allegations and urging that any perpetrators of violations be held accountable under Russian law. The letter from Secretary Tillerson followed multiple U.S. statements condemning the violence in Chechnya, including from U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Nikki Haley, the U.S. representative to the OSCE, and the State Department Spokesperson in Washington. We were also proud to sign on to a joint statement of the Equal Rights Coalition—the first such statement from this new, like-minded group of governments committed to equality and dignity for all—and that statement called for a stop to the violence in Chechnya and an immediate investigation.

Question 2. The situation facing lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people in Russia can be extremely challenging. They often face violence and government crackdowns, with a strict “anti-propaganda” law that potentially criminalizes any discussion of homosexuality.

The Trump administration’s response to these attacks on this vulnerable community has been weak. This could have dangerous implications for security and stability in the region. In my experience, raising this issue, in this committee, and with our Russian interlocutors sends an important signal that the United States is watching.

Senator Toomey and I have a resolution pending before this committee condemning the abuses in Chechnya, calling on the Russian Government to protect its citizens, calling on our Government to demand the release of individuals wrongfully detained, and also to hold perpetrators accountable through sanctions under the Magnitsky Act.

- If confirmed, will you commit to raising a comprehensive human rights agenda that includes the concerns of the LGBTQ community with your interlocutors in Russia and around the globe?

Answer. If confirmed, my role as Ambassador-at-Large will be to promote the rights enshrined in Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which broadly encompass the freedom to adopt a religion or belief of one’s choosing, the freedom to change one’s beliefs, to speak about one’s beliefs, teach one’s beliefs to one’s children, and to worship, individually or in community with others, in public or in private.

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Engaging with Muslim Communities

Question 3. As noted in a recent letter from Secretary Tillerson to Senator Corker, the Office of International Religious Freedom will assume the functions of the U.S. Special Representative to Muslim Communities. The Special Representative is responsible for driving the Secretary of State’s engagement with Muslim communities around the world.

In 2012, as the Governor of Kansas, you supported so-called “anti-sharia” legislation prohibiting state courts and agencies from using foreign law. These laws are rooted in false and hateful conspiracy theories that sharia law will overtake U.S. law. They advance the divisive, distorted, and fear-based narrative that Islam is incompatible with American values, which serves to demonize Muslims.

- What message do you think this sends to Muslim communities around the world? What impact do you think your prior support of this legislation will have on your ability to engage these communities?

Answer. The American legal tradition rests on the idea that there is one law for everyone. It is just as important to recognize the autonomy of the law from any particular religious tradition as it is to recognize the freedom of religious organizations and religious people to conduct their lives according to their own beliefs, within the framework provided by our laws. I signed the Kansas bill with the goal of limiting the ability of decisions of foreign jurisdictions to restrict or undermine rights protected by the Kansas and United States constitutions.

Overall, I believe in the fundamental freedom to practice religion as one sees fit, whoever one is, whatever one’s belief. If confirmed, I will vigorously advocate for the

right to be able to exercise one's religious freedom without interference from the Government. I have a track record to support that commitment. While in the Senate, I supported sanctions against the Government of Burma to uphold the religious freedom of members of religious minority communities, including Muslims. The U.S. Department of State's International Religious Freedom report demonstrates the extent of persecution of Muslims around the world. I believe that persecution is wrong and should not take place, and I will stand up and fight for members of those communities in the future, as I have in the past.

I also believe that religious leaders, institutions, and communities—including the approximately 1.6 billion Muslims in the world—can be critical interlocutors on many issues central to U.S. foreign policy. There is the potential to engage with religious groups as powerful civil society actors, influencers, and catalysts for positive social change and as potential partners in key areas of mutual concern—including advancing international religious freedom or other policy objectives.

Question 4. As noted in a recent letter from Secretary Tillerson to Senator Corker, the Office of International Religious Freedom will assume the functions of the U.S. Special Representative to Muslim Communities. The Special Representative is responsible for driving the Secretary of State's engagement with Muslim communities around the world.

In 2012, as the Governor of Kansas, you supported so-called "anti-sharia" legislation prohibiting state courts and agencies from using foreign law. These laws are rooted in false and hateful conspiracy theories that sharia law will overtake U.S. law. They advance the divisive, distorted, and fear-based narrative that Islam is incompatible with American values, which serves to demonize Muslims.

- Given that the position of Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom is responsible for promoting freedom and respect for all religions as a fundamental human right, how will you build trust, respect, and acceptance across all faiths?

Answer. Religious freedom is a universal human right of every individual, regardless of creed, and should never be arbitrarily abridged by any government. If confirmed, I will pursue all means to engage governments and civil society leaders to promote every individual's right to freedom of religion or belief. I will directly consult with individuals of various religious communities, and those of no faith, to understand their experiences, the challenges they endure, and their policy concerns. I would rely on my own professional and personal contacts, in addition to those established by my colleagues, to reach out to these communities, continue to build and maintain strong and lasting relationships, and collectively work towards promoting and protecting religious freedom for all individuals, regardless of their faith or beliefs. Building trust and respect with members of vulnerable religious communities will be critical to my success as Ambassador-at-Large, and if confirmed, I will prioritize this responsibility.

Religious Freedom and Reproductive Rights

Question 5. As the Ambassador-at-Large for the State Department's Office of International Religious Freedom, you would be charged with safeguarding the ability for individuals to make their own decisions about religion and the role it plays in their lives. This includes reproductive choice. However, of the 95 votes you took during your time in Congress related to reproductive choice, you cast 94 against protecting a woman's right to make her own decisions about reproductive health care.

- Do you agree that religious freedom includes individual choices about reproductive health?

Answer. If confirmed, my role as Ambassador-at-Large will be to promote the rights enshrined in Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which broadly encompass the freedom to adopt a religion or belief of one's choosing, the freedom to change one's beliefs, to speak about one's beliefs, teach one's beliefs to one's children, and to worship, individually or in community with others, in public or in private.

My role as Ambassador-at-Large would not concern policies related reproductive health. If confirmed, I will work to ensure all individuals, including women, are able to fully exercise their religious freedom around the world.

Question 6. As the Ambassador-at-Large for the State Department's Office of International Religious Freedom, you would be charged with safeguarding the ability for individuals to make their own decisions about religion and the role it plays in their lives. This includes reproductive choice. However, of the 95 votes you took during your time in Congress related to reproductive choice, you cast 94 against protecting a woman's right to make her own decisions about reproductive health care.

- If confirmed, will you protect the rights of individuals to make personal decisions that you may not agree with?

Answer. If confirmed, my role as Ambassador-at-Large will be to promote the rights enshrined in Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which broadly encompass the freedom to adopt a religion or belief of one's choosing, the freedom to change one's beliefs, to speak about one's beliefs, teach one's beliefs to one's children, and to worship, individually or in community with others, in public or in private.

If confirmed, I will work to ensure all individuals are able to fully exercise their religious freedom around the world.

Question 7. As the Ambassador-at-Large for the State Department's Office of International Religious Freedom, you would be charged with safeguarding the ability for individuals to make their own decisions about religion and the role it plays in their lives. This includes reproductive choice. However, of the 95 votes you took during your time in Congress related to reproductive choice, you cast 94 against protecting a woman's right to make her own decisions about reproductive health care.

- If confirmed, will you protect the right of women to make their own choices about their reproductive health care, including protecting access to comprehensive reproductive health care services?

Answer. If confirmed, my role as Ambassador-at-Large will be to promote the rights enshrined in Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which broadly encompass the freedom to adopt a religion or belief of one's choosing, the freedom to change one's beliefs, to speak about one's beliefs, teach one's beliefs to one's children, and to worship, individually or in community with others, in public or in private. If confirmed, I will work to ensure all individuals, including women, are able to fully exercise their religious freedom around the world.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO HON. SAMUEL DALE BROWNBACK BY SENATOR JEFF MERKEY

Question 1. The State Department's Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom is charged with monitoring global cases of religious discrimination, recommending policies to protect religious minorities around the world, and developing and implementing programs that promote religious freedom for all. This should include a responsibility to protect individuals' right to make their own decisions about religion and the role it plays in their lives, including when making reproductive choices. Do you pledge to protect individual's rights to make reproductive choices in your role, should you be confirmed?

Answer. If confirmed, my role as Ambassador-at-Large will be to promote the rights enshrined in Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which broadly encompass the freedom to adopt a religion or belief of one's choosing, the freedom to change one's beliefs, to speak about one's beliefs, teach one's beliefs to one's children, and to worship, individually or in community with others, in public or in private. My role as Ambassador-at-Large would not concern policies related to abortion or other questions of reproductive health. If confirmed, I will work to ensure all individuals, including women, are able to fully exercise their religious freedom around the world.

Question 2. LGBTQ people often face persecution in the same countries where religious minorities face persecution, necessitating a comprehensive human rights agenda, one which takes all human rights concerns into account, not just religious freedom. As Secretary of State Tillerson has said, the United States supports "the fundamental freedoms of LGBTI persons to live with dignity and freedom."

- How will you work with your colleagues at the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL) who focus on promoting the human rights of LGBTQ people abroad?
- How will you ensure that countries and development aid implementers do not use "religious freedom" as a cover for discriminating against LGBTQ people?

Answer. If confirmed, my role as Ambassador-at-Large will be to promote the rights enshrined in Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which broadly encompass the freedom to adopt a religion or belief of one's choosing, the freedom

to change one's beliefs, to speak about one's beliefs, teach one's beliefs to one's children, and to worship, individually or in community with others, in public or in private.

While my focus will be on religious freedom, if confirmed, I will work closely with my colleagues across the State Department to promote respect for all other fundamental freedoms, human rights and democratic governance, for all persons, including LGBTI individuals. As Secretary Tillerson said in June, the Department affirms its support for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of LGBTI persons. The State Department's global policy is to oppose violence and discrimination targeting LGBTI persons, including from governments, and non-state actors such as civil society organizations and faith groups.
