

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

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

**COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
UNITED STATES SENATE**

ONE HUNDRED FIFTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

—
JANUARY 3, 2017 TO JANUARY 3, 2018
—

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Relations



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NOMINATIONS

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2017

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:00 a.m. in Room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Rob Portman, presiding.

Present: Senators Portman [presiding], Gardner, Isakson, Shaheen, Coons, Murphy, Kaine, Markey, and Booker.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ROB PORTMAN, U.S. SENATOR FROM OHIO

Senator PORTMAN. This hearing is called to order.

We thank the nominees for being here, and before we turn to opening statements, I want to take just a moment to introduce these nominees, the witnesses who will be asked to fill really important roles at the State Department.

First, Steven Goldstein, the President's nominee to be Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. Steven comes to us from the private sector where he served as Senior Vice President of BP Global Solutions. He has been there since 2012. In addition to developing marketing communications, data science, and social media initiatives at a number of large companies, including Alliance Bernstein, Dow Jones & Company, Mr. Goldstein also served at the Department of the Interior and was a staffer in the House of Representatives.

Sean Lawler is the President's nominee to serve as Chief of Protocol. Mr. Lawler currently serves as Director for Visits, Planning, and Diplomatic Affairs at the National Security Council and prior to that had a distinguished career at the Department of Defense, including a tour as head of the Office of Visits and Protocol at U.S. Cyber Command.

Lisa Johnson is a career Foreign Service officer and the President's nominee to serve as Ambassador to the Peoples Republic Namibia. Currently charge at the U.S. Embassy in Nassau, Bahamas, Ms. Johnson has served at U.S. diplomatic posts around the world including two in Africa, as well as in important national security positions in Washington including the National Security Council.

Rebecca Gonzales, also a career Foreign Service officer, has been nominated to serve as Ambassador to the Kingdom of Lesotho. She too is a career Foreign Service officer with a distinguished background, currently Chief of Staff at the Bureau of Administration at

the State Department, and has also held a number of other senior roles that have developed her expertise on African issues.

Last but not least is James Randolph Evans, and I am going to ask my colleague from Georgia, who is always articulate and much better at the phone than I am.

Senator ISAKSON. What an entrance that is.

Senator PORTMAN. Yes. He is getting a phone call from the Secretary of State telling him what he should say in this introduction apparently.

Senator ISAKSON, the introduction is yours.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JOHNNY ISAKSON,
U.S. SENATOR FROM GEORGIA**

Senator ISAKSON. Chairman Portman and Ranking Member Coons, thank you very much. It is an honor to be here.

You know, I was asked one time when I was introduced as the senior Senator from Georgia what exactly does a senior Senator do. I said, well, when somebody important from your State comes to town and they are nominated for a position, you get to introduce them. So that is what a senior Senator does.

I have a real privilege today to introduce a Georgian who is a longtime friend of mine, a distinguished attorney from my State, a man who married way over his head in more ways than one, and is somebody I am proud today to recommend as President Trump's nominee to be Ambassador to Luxembourg.

Randy Evans is a senior partner in the firm of Dentons in their financial services and institutions practice. Dentons is the largest law firm in the world. There is no better qualification that you could ask for for somebody to go to a place like Luxembourg, which is the second largest domicile next to the United States of America, financial instruments and institutions. So it is an important country for our country in a lot of ways. And Randy is exactly the type of person you want to have in that country representing the United States of America.

I could tell you where he graduated from college. I could tell you all kinds of things about him, but I will tell you three things.

One, his wife Linda is a beautiful, talented person who is a dear friend of mine and has been for years. One of the true joys I have in public service is going to events that I have to go to because I get to go to and be around Randy, around Linda. They are a great couple.

Secondly, he has been a big help to me personally. In fact, he played the Democratic nominee for Governor, Zell Miller, when I ran for Governor of Georgia in 1990 and Zell Miller beat me, but he played Zell in the mock debates that we did. I was a real estate salesman, not a lawyer. So I was not used to taking the argumentative approach to debate. I was used to trying to always sell. But Randy taught me the tougher edge as well and made me a better man in that campaign and probably was ultimately responsible for me winning a few debates later on after I got my hat handed to me during that one. But I learned a lot from Randy and he taught me an awful lot.

But he is also a Georgia Bulldog, and I just have to say, Senator Booker, that on the day after the Georgia Bull Dogs were named

the number one football team in the country, it is important to be introducing a graduate from the University of Georgia, Randy Evans. [Laughter.]

Senator ISAKSON. So for many reasons, our football team, his talent, his gift to Georgia, his wonderful wife, and the service he gives to our State and our country, I am proud to introduce President Trump's nominee for the ambassadorship to Luxembourg, Randy Evans, distinguished attorney from the State of Georgia. Randy, welcome.

Senator PORTMAN. I thank my colleague from Georgia, as I predicted, an articulate and very personal introduction. So, again, welcome to you, Mr. Evans.

I would like to turn to my colleague, Senator Coons, for any opening remarks, after which we are going to hear briefly from our witnesses and have a chance to get into a dialogue. Senator Coons?

**STATEMENT OF HON. CHRISTOPHER A. COONS,
U.S. SENATOR FROM DELAWARE**

Senator COONS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to my dear, good friend, Senator Isakson, as well my colleague, Senator Booker.

Thank you to all of you and to your families for your willingness to step forward and serve our Nation. Some of you have been doing so for a career. Some of you have been doing it in other ways in your home States or communities.

I was first the chair of the Africa Subcommittee when I came 7 years ago, and so I am particularly interested in those who will serve or who may have the opportunity to serve in Namibia and in Lesotho. But all of you are stepping forward whether in Europe or in a critical position or in public diplomacy. And I just wanted to open by saying our diplomats around the world face challenging environments, face opportunities to move our values forward, and I am grateful for the chance to join Senator Portman here today and hearing your testimony and greeting and welcoming your families and thanking you for your willingness to serve.

Senator PORTMAN. Thank you, Senator Coons.

And to our witnesses, you have all submitted written copies of your statements. Those will be included in the record. So I ask you to try to keep your remarks to a couple of minutes, and then again we will have a chance to have a little dialogue back and forth about some of the issues in some of the roles that you will be playing if you are confirmed.

I would like to start with Mr. Goldstein, then Mr. Lawler, then Ms. Johnson, then Ms. Gonzales, then Mr. Evans. I am told that is the appropriate protocol. So Lawler will appreciate that. So with that, Mr. Goldstein.

**STATEMENT OF IRWIN STEVEN GOLDSTEIN, OF NEW YORK, TO
BE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY**

Mr. GOLDSTEIN. Chairman Portman, Ranking Member Coons, members of the committee, thank you for inviting me here today.

I am deeply grateful to President Trump and to Secretary Tillerson for placing their confidence in me. I have spent the bulk of my career helping senior leaders in government and the private

sector tell their stories. Now, to have the opportunity to help America tell its story to the world is the honor of a lifetime.

I am proud to say my spouse, Bill Popeleski, is here with me today, and I could not do this without his love and support.

Every day we see stories of Americans who endeavor to make the world a better place. Countless individuals across the globe benefit from our generosity and compassion. Yet, those who seek to undermine America do so by spreading misinformation about our people and our objectives. To tell the real story of America, we must speak with one voice to people where they listen. We must ensure that the State Department is harnessing the power of new technologies as they develop. We must also do everything we can to combat the radical ideologies that threaten Americans at home and abroad. I feel this deeply because I have seen firsthand the heartbreak that occurs when a malign force takes root and diplomacy fails to stop it.

In January 2002, when I led communications for Dow Jones, "Wall Street Journal" reporter, Daniel Pearl, was kidnapped in Pakistan. For weeks, we worked around the clock to bring Danny home. It fell to me to tell his parents how their son died. Danny's death was a stark example of the personal tragedy that lies in the wake of every terrorist act.

The Department's Global Engagement Center is working to win the war of ideas that underpin terrorism. That must include addressing the ecosystem of thought that justifies killing civilians for political ends, as well as engaging the technology companies to identify and intervene against those who are likely to commit violence.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with my colleagues around the world to enhance America's reputation and advance America's interests. Bringing diverse ideas and people together in common purpose has been a hallmark of America for nearly 230 years, and our example can inspire hope in others.

Thank you again for inviting me to speak with you today.

[Mr. Goldstein's prepared statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF IRWIN STEVEN GOLDSTEIN

Chairman Portman, Ranking Member Coons, members of the committee, thank you for inviting me here today.

I am deeply grateful to President Trump and to Secretary Tillerson for placing their confidence in me. I've spent the bulk of my career helping senior leaders in government and in the private sector tell their stories. Now, to have the opportunity to help America tell its story to the world is the honor of a lifetime.

My spouse, Bill Popeleski, is here with me today and I could not do this without his love and support. I am also grateful to my father, Bernard Goldstein, who set an example of civic engagement through his involvement in our hometown of Nashville; and my late mother, Sandra, who I'm sure is smiling down today.

I would also like to thank the men and women who have previously served as the State Department's Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. I hope to build on their successes to enhance the mission-critical work of the State Department's global public diplomacy team.

One of the benefits of a career in communications is the opportunity to speak with people from all walks of life. Every day on the news, we see stories of people who, in their own way, give back to their country and endeavor to make the world a better place. Those who seek to undermine America do so by spreading misinformation about our people and our objectives. We can fight these efforts by inspiring the world with our shared humanity and our great compassion.

Vast numbers of children are orphaned by disease and war. Their caregivers may feel a bond with Americans like Jody Thompson, a police officer in Poteau, Oklahoma, who adopted a malnourished boy named John, whom he rescued from an abusive home.

Where children with disabilities are treated as second-class citizens, their parents can find strength and hope in Americans like Sonja Robinson and Mikey Brannigan. A few years ago, Sonja, a well-respected coach, moved across the country to train Mikey, who has autism. Mikey, with Sonja's support, recently won two golds and a silver at the Para World Championships.

Sonja and Jody exemplify how we live out our ideals at home, and it's these same ideals that motivate us to be a source of hope around the world.

We need to tell this story.

We need to show how America is leading the fight against AIDS and malaria, in places where these diseases take their deadliest toll.

We need to show how America is bringing educational opportunity to girls and boys in nations where schooling is still seen as a privilege and not a right. From textbooks to scholarships to coding academies, America is empowering the world through education.

We need to show how America is often the first nation to provide aid when disaster strikes. Through government agencies such as USAID, through our robust private sector, and in our own capacity as individuals, Americans ease suffering and help rebuild lives in every corner of the globe every day.

To tell these stories, we must ensure that the State Department is using every tool available, and can harness the power of new technologies as they develop. Consistent with the President's budget and the Secretary's priorities, we should aspire to have a digital and technology profile that rivals the best companies in Silicon Valley. And in an era when people everywhere have access to vast information sources, we must speak to people where they listen.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Department's very talented career officials to ensure that we are speaking with one clear, consistent, and compelling voice. Where we see evidence of success, I want to build on it and scale it to other parts of our mission. With the right structures in place, we can respond more rapidly and with greater clarity to events anywhere they unfold.

I also want to ensure that we're doing everything we can to combat the radical ideologies that threaten Americans at home and abroad. I feel this deeply, because I have seen firsthand the heartbreak that occurs when a malign force takes root and diplomacy fails to stop it.

In January 2002, when I led communications for Dow Jones, Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl was kidnapped while on assignment in Pakistan. For weeks, we worked round-the-clock to bring Danny home. It fell to me to tell his parents how their son died. Danny's death was a stark example of the personal tragedy that lies in the wake of every terrorist act.

As our diplomats and servicemembers lead the battle against extremism on the political and military fronts, the State Department's public affairs team must engage on the information front.

The Global Engagement Center is working aggressively to win the war of ideas that underpin terrorism. That must include addressing the entire eco-system of thought that justifies and supports killing civilians for political ends, as well as intervening against those people who are likely to commit violence. We need to continue working with our inter-agency colleagues and the tech companies that produce the platforms where terrorists recruit and cultivate followers. We must also remain flexible and agile as trends change and as our enemies adapt.

The State Department has a broad remit. And in all of our efforts, I look forward to continued engagement with this committee and with your colleagues in the House of Representatives. The way we conduct our affairs is itself a demonstration of the power of our ideals. Bringing diverse ideas and people together in common purpose has been a hallmark of America for nearly 230 years. It is an example that can inspire hope in others.

Thank you again for inviting me to speak with you today.

Senator PORTMAN. Thank you, Mr. Goldstein.
Mr. Lawler?

**STATEMENT OF SEAN P. LAWLER, OF MARYLAND, TO BE
CHIEF OF PROTOCOL, AND TO HAVE THE RANK OF AMBAS-
SADOR DURING HIS TENURE OF SERVICE**

Mr. LAWLER. Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you very much for the opportunity to speak with you today. I am humbled beyond words to appear before this distinguished body as President Trump's nominee for Chief of Protocol of the United States. I have deep gratitude to the President, the First Lady, Secretary Tillerson for their trust and confidence in nominating me for this position.

Knowing any accomplishments I have are shared, I would like to acknowledge my wife Grace who is with me here today, and my son Conor, who was not available to be here. He is off at school. But I owe everything to both of them for their support and inspiration.

I was born and raised on the southwest side of Chicago. Shortly to my first enlistment, I lost both of my parents. The Navy quickly became my family, and throughout my 21 years of service, I married, started my own family, and worked as hard as I could to succeed.

My military service resulted in many life lessons but none more than service before self. Throughout my career, I was fortunate enough to work under phenomenal leaders and mentors who taught me, corrected me, and groomed me for continued growth. Following retirement, I spent several years as the Chief of Protocol at U.S. Cyber Command before assuming my current position on the National Security Council working closely with the State Department colleagues and coordinating foreign engagements for the President.

The Chief of Protocol advises, assists, and supports the President, the Vice President, the Secretary of State on official matters of national and international protocol, as well as serving at the President's representative to visiting foreign leaders and bilateral chiefs of mission in the United States. If confirmed, I look forward to contributing in a unique and meaningful way to advancing the principles of diplomacy and enhancing our relations with the diplomatic community by working with a team of exceptional professionals at the State Department and White House, whom I have had the pleasure of getting to work with since January. I have witnessed firsthand the selfless dedication and patriotism that is uncommon outside military service.

The Office of the Chief of Protocol is an integral and successful diplomacy and furthering the foreign policy goals of the administration.

I believe my experience for nearly 3 decades in government makes me a well qualified candidate for this position, and if confirmed, I look forward to serving our great Nation alongside the outstanding professionals at the White House and the Department of State to continue to build on the framework and foundation for fostering diplomacy.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear for your consideration.

[Mr. Lawler's prepared statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SEAN P. LAWLER

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you so very much for the opportunity to speak with you today. I am humbled beyond words to appear before this distinguished body as President Trump's nominee for Chief of Protocol of the United States. I have a deep gratitude to the President, the First Lady, and Secretary Tillerson for their trust and confidence in nominating me for this position. Knowing any accomplishments I have are shared, I would like to acknowledge my wife Grace, who is here with me, and my son Conor, who was not able to join. I owe everything to their support and inspiration.

Born and raised on the Southwest Side of Chicago, I enlisted in the Navy directly out of High School, and shortly into my first enlistment, I lost both my parents. My mother to breast cancer and my father a few short months later to a broken heart. The Navy quickly became my family. Throughout my 21 years of service, I married, started my own family, and worked as hard as I could to succeed—not only to better provide for my family, but with a desire to have a greater role in serving my country. My wife is an immigrant of Ireland, now a naturalized citizen, and my son is attending college and growing up entirely too fast, and I sit here as a proud and humble example of what is magnificent about this country of ours.

My military service resulted in many life lessons, but none more than service before self. Throughout my career, I was fortunate enough to work under phenomenal leaders and mentors who taught me, corrected me, and groomed me for continued growth,—and I did my best to train and lead our next generation of volunteer patriots and impart the same lessons. I learned valuable management and leadership skills as I climbed through the ranks. In my particular career field, I spent many years on the personal staffs of Flag & General Officers and senior members of our government. Among my responsibilities throughout several tours of duty were to manage administrative and personal details so they may devote a larger portion of their time to other important matters. Those duties included matters of protocol, etiquette and tradition in coordinating myriad events and ceremonies both ashore, underway and overseas. Following retirement, I spent five years as the Chief of Protocol in a dynamic and exciting sub-unified combatant command and then in my current position on the National Security Council where I currently work closely with my State Department colleagues in coordinating the foreign engagements for the President.

The Chief of Protocol advises, assists, and supports the President of the United States, the Vice President, and the Secretary of State on official matters of national and international protocol, as well as serving as the President's representative to visiting foreign leaders and bilateral chiefs of missions in the United States. If confirmed, I look forward to contributing in a unique and meaningful way to advancing the principals of diplomacy and enhancing our relations with the diplomatic community by working with a team of exceptional professionals at the State Department and White House whom I have had the pleasure of getting to work with since January. I have witnessed firsthand the selfless dedication and patriotism that is uncommon outside military service.

The many divisions of the Office of the Chief of Protocol are integral in successful diplomacy and furthering the foreign policy goals of the administration. The Protocol staff works regularly to build bridges of cooperation and goodwill domestically and across the globe. Blair House, which is an historical treasure, provides a world-class venue in accommodating Presidential foreign guests and events hosted by Cabinet-level officials. Ceremonials is responsible for supporting events hosted by the President and Vice President, planning and executing arrangements for official functions hosted by the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and the Chief of Protocol and organizing the participation of the diplomatic corps in official events. Diplomatic Affairs is responsible for the agreement process of new bilateral chiefs of mission, including presentation of credentials, coordination with the diplomatic corps and guidance, consultation and mediation of matters involving senior mission representatives and workers employed by foreign mission personnel. Diplomatic Partnerships provides outreach to the foreign diplomatic corps serving in Washington to promote greater insight and understanding of the United States and its economy, people and culture, its flagship program is Experience America. Gifts is responsible for the selection and purchase of all gifts given by the President, Vice President, Secretary, and their respective spouses to foreign leaders and processing all gifts from foreign governments given to the President, Vice President, Secretary, and other U.S. Government officials. Visits is responsible for planning and executing detailed programs for visiting chiefs of state, heads of government and other high-ranking officials hosted by the President, Vice President, and Secretary of State and supports overseas travel of the President and Vice President and their respective spouses and is also responsible

for planning and execution of foreign travel by U.S. presidential delegations as directed by the White House. And finally I would like to acknowledge the management team which administers human and financial resources and general services operations for the Office of the Chief of Protocol to accomplish all its vital and demanding work.

I believe my experience for nearly three decades in government service makes me a well-qualified candidate for this position, and if confirmed, I look forward to what I expect to be the highlight of my career-serving our great nation alongside the outstanding professionals at the White House and Department of State and liaising with the outstanding diplomatic corps here in Washington, D.C. to continue to build on the framework and foundation for fostering diplomacy.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear and for your consideration in continuing to serve my country.

Senator PORTMAN. Thank you, Mr. Lawler.

Ms. Johnson?

STATEMENT OF LISA A. JOHNSON, OF WASHINGTON, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

Ms. JOHNSON. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member COONS, and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you as President Trump's nominee to be Ambassador to the Republic of Namibia. I would like to express my gratitude to the President and Secretary Tillerson for the confidence they have placed in me. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with the committee and with the Congress to advance our Nation's interests in Namibia.

Please permit me to acknowledge my parents who are watching online from Florida today and my brother Mike. They have supported me proudly as I have represented the United States overseas during the past 25 years. Some close friends are present here today to offer their support.

If confirmed, it would be a privilege for me to return to a familiar region. I began my Foreign Service career in Angola and South Africa, and also spent time in Namibia where I once drafted the Embassy's human rights report.

Since independence, Namibia has stood out for its strong democratic traditions, success in combating HIV/AIDS, and modeled wildlife conservation efforts.

I would like to highlight for you three priorities that, if confirmed, I would work to advance as U.S. Ambassador.

First, both the United States and Namibia seek to strengthen bilateral trade and investment. Namibia's natural resources, stable economy, and strong governance make it an attractive prospect for U.S. business. If confirmed, one of my primary goals would be to promote American business and help our trade relationship reach its full potential.

Second, through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, or PEPFAR, the United States partners closely with Namibia to provide HIV/AIDS testing, education, and treatment. With our continued help, Namibia is on track to meet U.N. AIDS targets and achieve epidemic control. Importantly, the Namibian Government shoulders two-thirds of the costs, serving as an example as we seek to shift the burden away from U.S. assistance.

Finally, if confirmed, my foremost priority will be ensuring the safety and security of American citizens, be they residing, conducting business, vacationing, or serving in the Peace Corps in Namibia.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I thank you again and look forward to answering your questions.

[Ms. Johnson's prepared statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LISA A. JOHNSON

Chairman Portman, Ranking Member Coons, and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee to be Ambassador to the Republic of Namibia. I would like to express my gratitude to the President and to Secretary Tillerson for the confidence they have placed in me. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with the committee and others in Congress to advance our nation's interests in Namibia.

Please permit me to acknowledge my parents, watching online from Florida today, and my brother Mike, in Washington State. They have supported me proudly as I have represented the United States overseas during the past 25 years. A few close friends and colleagues also are present today to offer their support.

It is a privilege for me to return to a region that is familiar to me. I began my Foreign Service career in Angola and South Africa, and also spent time in Namibia, where I once drafted the Embassy's Human Rights Report.

Since independence in 1990, Namibia has stood out for its strong democratic traditions, its success in combatting HIV/AIDS, and its model wildlife conservation efforts. Namibia has a democratically elected president and parliament, an independent judiciary, and a free and open media. Though small in population, with just under 2.5 million people, Namibia offers promising trade and investment potential. The growing U.S. partnership with Namibia increases security and prosperity for both countries and serves as an example throughout the continent.

I would like to share with you three priorities that, if confirmed, I would work to advance as U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Namibia.

First, both the United States and Namibia seek to strengthen bilateral trade and build stronger and deeper economic bonds. Trade delegations to and from Namibia indicate growing opportunities for U.S. companies. Namibia's natural resources, combined with its stable economy and strong governance, make it an attractive prospect for U.S. business. If confirmed, one of my primary goals would be to promote American business opportunities and help our trade relationship reach its full potential.

Second, Namibia has struggled with one of the world's highest HIV/AIDS prevalence rates. Our partnership to combat the disease has brought us closer than ever to bringing it under control. Through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, or PEPFAR, the United States has partnered with Namibia to provide testing, education, care, support, and treatment to hundreds of thousands of people. Namibia is on track to meet UNAIDS targets to achieve epidemic control by 2020. Importantly, the Namibian Government is assuming funding and management responsibility for the fight against HIV/AIDS, shouldering two thirds of the financial burden. Namibia stands as a regional example as we seek to shift the burden away from U.S. assistance to host governments.

Finally, if confirmed, my foremost priority will be ensuring the safety and security of American citizens in Namibia, be they living there, conducting business, traveling on vacation, or serving in the Peace Corps.

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

Senator PORTMAN. Thank you, Ms. Johnson.
Ms. Gonzales?

STATEMENT OF REBECCA ELIZA GONZALES, OF TEXAS, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO

Ms. GONZALES. Good morning. Chairman Portman, Ranking Member Coons, and members of the committee, I am honored to be considered for the position of United States Ambassador to the Kingdom of Lesotho. I am grateful for the confidence President Trump and Secretary Tillerson have shown in me by this nomination. If confirmed, I look forward to working with this committee and Congress in advancing U.S. interests and supporting Lesotho in its efforts to strengthen democratic institutions and the rule of law, reverse its HIV/AIDS epidemic, and achieve sustainable, broad-based economic growth.

I would like to take a moment to thank my parents. My father, Colonel Jose Rene Gonzales, served in the Air Force for 26 years and was buried in 2013 with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery. My mother, Estella Gonzales, who is here with me today, has been a D.C. public school teacher for 30 years and is still teaching, and I must say yesterday was her birthday. So Happy Birthday, Mom.

My son, Imagine Alexander, started his studies at the University of California, so he was not able to join me today, but I am proud of him and he is in my heart.

And I would also like to thank my brother and sister-in-law, Jerome and Amanda Gonzales, who are here. And I appreciate the support of my friends and colleagues who are here as well today.

And I would also like to also say thank you to Ambassador Harrington, our Ambassador to Lesotho, and the country team who I believe is watching us as we speak here.

If confirmed, I will focus on further strengthening the relationship between our two countries. My priority will be to protect and advance U.S. interests, including ensuring the safety of Americans and advancing U.S. commercial interests in Lesotho.

I welcome the new government in Lesotho's efforts to lay the groundwork for a strong culture of accountability, rule of law, and much needed political reforms.

Lesotho is an AGOA success story. However, it will need to show continual progress on eligibility criteria. And if confirmed, I will advocate and lend my support to these efforts.

One of Lesotho's biggest challenges is that 25 percent of the adults have HIV/AIDS. This is the second highest prevalence in the world. If confirmed, I will promote continued efficient use of our health assistance dollars and ensuring our partnership and efforts continue to make a real difference. We are saving lives in Lesotho.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today, and I welcome any questions you may have.

[Ms. Gonzales's prepared statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF REBECCA GONZALES

Chairman Portman, Ranking Member Coons, and members of the committee:

I am honored to be considered for the position of United States Ambassador to the Kingdom of Lesotho. I am grateful for the confidence President Trump and Secretary Tillerson have shown in me by this nomination. If confirmed, I look forward to working with this committee and the Congress in advancing U.S. interests and supporting Lesotho in its efforts to strengthen democratic institutions and the rule of law, reverse its HIV/AIDS epidemic, and achieve sustainable, broad-based economic growth.

I would like to take a moment to recognize and thank my father, Jose Rene and my mother, Estella B Gonzales. My father, Colonel Jose Rene Gonzales, served in the United States Air Force for 26 years and was buried in 2013 with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery. My mother, Estella, has been a D.C. public school teacher for 30 years, and, indeed, I am fortunate to have her with me today. I would also like to recognize my son, Imagine Alexander, who just started his studies at the University of California and is unable to be here today. I would also like to thank my brother and sister-in-law Jerome and Amanda Gonzales. I appreciate the support of my friends and colleagues who are here with us today.

As a military family member I lived abroad, and this gave me a great appreciation for other cultures and a desire to serve my country by joining the Foreign Service. I have had the privilege of serving my country for 25 years as a Foreign Service Officer, serving in Africa, the Middle East and Latin America. It is this experience and a recognition that there is still much to learn that has prepared me, if confirmed, for the important task of advancing U.S. relations with Lesotho.

It will be an honor to continue to serve. If confirmed, I will focus on further strengthening the relationship between our two countries. My priority will be to protect and advance U.S. interests. This includes doing everything in my power to ensure the safety of Americans in Lesotho—those who will fall under Chief of Mission authority, the approximately 90 Peace Corps Volunteers serving in Lesotho, along with the approximately 600 Americans who are resident in Lesotho and those who visit the country every year.

It also includes advancing U.S. commercial interests. There are opportunities for U.S. companies to invest in Lesotho and to promote U.S. exports into Lesotho. Although Lesotho straddles the line between a lower-income and lower-middle income country, it is a largely untapped market for U.S. companies. U.S. commercial engagement can also be a powerful source of economic opportunity within Lesotho.

On the political front, we know that the steps needed in Lesotho to address the underlying causes of instability and challenges to the rule of law are difficult. Lesotho's neighbors, through the Southern African Development Community (SADC), have been actively engaged to help Lesotho move beyond its recent political difficulties. The recommendations made by a recent SADC Commission of Inquiry, if fully implemented, would lay the groundwork for a strong culture of accountability and rule of law, and much-needed political reforms. I welcome the new government's commitment to implement those recommendations and, if confirmed, I will advocate and lend my support to these regional efforts.

One of Lesotho's biggest challenges is that 25 percent of the adults in the country are living with HIV/AIDS. This is the second-highest prevalence in the world. While the pandemic has devastated Lesotho's social and economic fabric, our partnership with the Government of Lesotho on health is a strong one, that is having a substantial positive impact. If confirmed, I will promote continued efficient and accountable use of our health assistance dollars in ensuring our partnership and efforts continue to make a real difference.

Lesotho has benefitted greatly from the African Growth and Opportunity Act, or AGOA, which has spurred a vibrant textile and apparel industry in Lesotho. The textile industry is the nation's largest private-sector employer, with about 40,000 employees, mostly women. And, impressively, Lesotho is the second-largest supplier of textiles to the United States in sub-Saharan Africa. However, Lesotho will need to show continual progress on AGOA eligibility criteria, including those relating to rule of law and governance, to maintain its eligibility for AGOA trade preferences. If confirmed, I will encourage Lesotho's progress on the path of economic and political reform. Reform will foster economic growth, empower entrepreneurs, and attract foreign investment. I will continue to press for concrete actions that address concerns about impunity and the rule of law.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today. I welcome any questions you may have.

Senator PORTMAN. Thank you, Ms. Gonzales.
Mr. Evans?

**STATEMENT OF JAMES RANDOLPH EVANS, OF GEORGIA, TO
BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO LUXEMBOURG**

Mr. EVANS. Chairman Portman, Ranking Member Coons, and distinguished members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, including a special thank you to our own home senior Senator, Johnny Isakson, a friend of mine of 30 years. Little did I know that we would come together at a place like this on a day when the Georgia Bulldogs were once again ranked number one in the country. [Laughter.]

Mr. EVANS. I want to thank you for the opportunity to appear before you to speak with you and to answer any questions you might have. It is, indeed, an honor and a privilege to be here in our Nation's capital with you.

In addition, I thank President Trump and Secretary Tillerson for the opportunity serve our country, if I am confirmed, as the next Ambassador to the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. It is an amazing place with people who understand and appreciate freedom and democracy with many connections to us Americans.

My wife Linda, who could not be with us today, without whom I would not be here, knows well those connections. Her uncle, 1st Lieutenant Richard P. LaFrance, fought to free Luxembourg in World War II in the Battle of the Bulge and was later blinded in Germany just a month before V-E Day.

As you know, Luxembourg is a relatively small country, if measured by size or population, but it is a unique mixture of citizens who are proud of their heritage but embrace their connections to so many other countries and peoples from around the world. But what Luxembourg lacks in size, it makes up for in reach. Anyone experienced in international affairs knows that Luxembourg's influence as a thought leader extends throughout the world, especially in finance and technology and most recently in space.

The world is full of challenges, and Luxembourg will, undoubtedly, be at the center of solving many of those challenges as a leader in the European Union, a loyal member of NATO, and a reliable friend to the United States of America.

Open dialogue and communication, anchored in our shared values, will enable us to build even stronger bonds sufficient to address every challenge. This includes tackling hard questions, including the myriad of issues flowing from the United Kingdom's decision in Brexit.

In short, there is much to do. I am eager to get started. I hope you will allow me to put my skill sets to work for our country to the very best of my abilities as the next Ambassador to the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. Thank you.

[Mr. Evans's prepared statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF RANDY EVANS

Chairman Portman, Ranking Member Coons, and distinguished members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you, to speak with you, and to answer any questions you might have. It is indeed an honor and a privilege to be here in our nation's Capital with you. I would also like to express my thanks to President Trump and Secretary Tillerson for their confidence in me.

Last year, my mother passed away unexpectedly. It was one of those moments that forces you to stop and think about where you are and where you are going. Prior to that moment, I believed I had reach the pinnacle of my career. All that time, I had also served in a myriad of positions of public service from the bottom to the top while thinking I had done my part. Yet, at that moment, I knew then that it was time for me to do more. I did not know how or where, but I did know why.

Any doubt was erased when I received this handwritten note in the mail from my father. It said: "Randy, I thank you for your love. I appreciate the financial gift but more than the financial, I cherish our moments together more. Your mother and I spent a lot of time in prayer for you and your safety. God has blessed you with a beautiful gift. Use it wisely. God said through Paul in Romans, God through his gift is calling."

Calling? The only question then was how and where could I best answer that calling?

Against this backdrop, I am greatly thankful to President Trump and Secretary Tillerson for the opportunity to answer my calling and to serve our country, if I am confirmed, as the next Ambassador to the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. It is a beautiful place with people who understand and appreciate freedom and democracy and who have an unbelievable resiliency to overcome whatever history may throw at them.

As you know, Luxembourg is a relatively small country if measured by size or population. It is a unique mixture of citizens who are proud of their heritage but embrace their connections to so many other countries and peoples from around the world. In that way, they are much like us Americans or, in fairness, we are much like them—it really doesn't make a difference. The fact is we are both very much alike.

And, what Luxembourg lacks in size, it makes up for in punch. Anyone experienced in international affairs knows that Luxembourg is so much bigger than the number of its square miles or its citizens.

Luxembourg's influence and its leadership and its impact extends well beyond Europe to the entire world. It is a thought leader and economic engine capable of and doing great things—especially in technology and space.

It is also a country with the closest of ties to the United States, having been liberated twice from totalitarian occupation and standing steadfast with us as we together have liberated others from such unacceptable situations.

My wife—Linda, without whom I would not be here today, knows well those connections. Her uncle, First Lieutenant Richard P. LaFrance fought to free Luxembourg in World War II in the Battle of the Bulge and was later blinded in Germany a month before V-E Day.

And, next year will be the 100th anniversary of the end of World War I, and I know there will be many commemorations of the sacrifices made during the Great War. If confirmed, I hope to be part of them proudly representing the United States of America—not to tout our victories but instead to signal our continued commitment toward a future free from tyrannies and full of hope.

The world is full of challenges and Luxembourg will undoubtedly be at the center of solving many of those challenges as a leader in the European Union, a loyal member of NATO, and a friend of the United States. Certainly, there will be things we will want to move closer together on like contributions to NATO; addressing the growing refugee problem and the instabilities that follow; and, leveling the playing field for American companies doing business around the world.

Open dialogue and communication, beginning with our shared values, will enable us to build even stronger bonds sufficient to weather any distractions.

From my perspective, as Singapore is the doorway to Asia, Luxembourg is rapidly becoming, if it has not already become, the doorway to the European Union. We must take advantage of such a unique ally with such great influence to work toward solving rather than debating the problems confronting the 21st century world.

This includes tackling the hard questions such as those arising out of climate change, or containing the threat of global terrorism, or stabilizing the flow of capital to avoid financial crises. And, of course, there are myriad of issues flowing from the United Kingdom's decision in the Brexit vote to leave the European Union.

In short, there is much to do. I am eager to get started. I hope you will let me put my skillsets to work for our country to the very best of my abilities.

Thank you.

Senator PORTMAN. Thank you, Mr. Evans. With Ohio State being ranked number three in the country now, if the playoffs were tomorrow, we would be playing you. So I am trying to think of what

I should ask Johnny to provide me as an appropriate bet. I will think about that while I am hearing the questions from my colleagues.

I am going to wait and ask my questions. We have a good turnout here today, and a few have already had to leave and come. Everybody is busy. So I am going to turn to Senator Coons and then I will be coming back and asking questions of the nominees. Again, I appreciate your willingness to serve and your good testimony this morning. Senator Coons?

Senator COONS. Thank you, Senator Portman. I will defer to my colleague, Senator Kaine.

Senator Kaine. Thank you. I guess I could defer, but instead I will just go boldly forward. [Laughter.]

Senator Kaine. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you, Senator Coons, and thanks to all of you. Congratulations to each of you for your nominations and especially to those who are career. I just say being on this committee and having the chance to visit abroad has been amazing, and the staffs of our embassies abroad do such good work. I recognize what Mr. Lawler said. We have gotten pretty good. We can always be better at thanking our military for service, but we are not as good in thanking the U.S. civilians who are abroad, often in places that they get assigned to that were not their first choice, sometimes in places where they cannot bring family. We do not do as good of a job in thanking them as we should.

I will tell you one of the things that I will mention to those of you who will be ambassadors abroad is when I visit, I usually try to take first and second tour FSOs out for coffee without their ambassador to ask them, you know, you have achieved something really important because it is hard to get a job as a Foreign Service officer with the State Department. What will be the difference between staying and making a career out of it and leaving? And then they offer fascinating observations. I will tell you this. They never dis their boss, but they talk about things like paperwork and bureaucracy and things like that that are challenges. So especially if you are taking the post of ambassador for the first time, paying attention to the first and second tour FSO folks and their experiences is something that I think is good.

Let me just ask a couple of questions to you, Mr. Goldstein, about public diplomacy. I think the budget for international exchange is sort of small as a percentage of the big budget challenges we deal with, but I tend to think things like international exchanges or training foreign militaries on the defense side—I am on Armed Services too—which is also a small part of the DOD budget—these things really produce value.

There is a proposal to cut this part of the portfolio of the State Department pretty significantly in the President's proposed budget submission. You did not draft up that budget. I am not going to ask you to comment on it. But tell me about your view of the value of these international exchanges that are within the portfolio of your nomination.

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

Every person with whom I have spoken in this process has impressed upon me how important the exchange and cultural programs are. I share that view.

My goal, if confirmed, is to enhance the programs by continuing the education that participants receive, which I think is vitally important. It is not enough just to participate in the program. We need to follow up with individuals throughout their career as they move forward.

We also need to create agility so that we can ensure that we quickly develop country programs when needed, and we should enhance the programs that are doing well.

In addition, Senator, I want to look closely at the American Spaces program. Many are being moved to the Embassy for security reasons, and I want to do a study to determine whether that is impacting the number of people that are actually attending these particular programs. If so, we might need to work with the private sector to provide access to the right audience in the most appropriate location.

Senator Kaine. Thank you for that.

Ms. Johnson, I think Namibia is doing many things very, very well. One of the areas where I think as I look at their history there are some challenges to do better is in the area of human trafficking. They are a tier 2 nation right now in the TIP. What are some of the kinds of things that you think you might be able to do in your capacity as Ambassador to work with them and help them get even better at dealing with trafficking issues?

Ms. JOHNSON. Thank you very much for that question, Senator.

In the Bahamas where I am serving currently, Bahamas was tier 2 3 years ago. We helped take them to tier 1. They are the first tier 1 country in the Caribbean. The way we did that—it was a partnership through a very strong commitment on the part of the government, political will, and close and continued engagement with the United States. So taking that track record and looking at what some of the issues are in Namibia, I believe that, if confirmed, I could help them make progress. I think the political will is there.

Some of the issues, some of the areas where they need to strengthen, more resources for victims shelters. They need to complete comprehensive legislation and pass it and implement it, as well as their national action plan. Raising awareness throughout the country, not just in the capital but in the rural areas where you have child labor, for example, and trafficking. I think those are the principal areas. They also did not have any convictions last year. So we need to strengthen the justice system component. But I think in all of those areas, they are areas where we can make progress with continued engagement and commitment.

Senator Kaine. Great.

Mr. Chair, if I could ask one more question of Mr. Lawler.

We have instances over time. Right now, we are dealing with a tough one with Russia, also Cuba. During the Obama administration, we dealt with one with India where challenges lead to the recalling of personnel, and then there is a little bit of a retaliation. If you recall ours, we will recall yours. Talk a little bit about the diplomatic skills that you already have that you would bring to the table. Sometimes these are unavoidable. If a country does something that is wrong, there is going to be a consequence. Sometimes we almost I think stumble into them a little bit by accident. Talk

a little bit about how you would approach your position and try to minimize misunderstandings of this kind.

Mr. LAWLER. Thank you, Senator.

The Office of the Chief of Protocol is responsible for dealing directly with the chiefs of mission, the deputy chiefs of mission for the embassies in Washington. We are the liaison for the diplomatic missions. If there are any problems brought to our attention, we deal with those. Obviously, we follow the Vienna Convention ensuring that our diplomats abroad are given the same rights as theirs. So we do not discount any rule breakers or anything like that, but we will deal with those as they come up. And if we have any issues, we will go back and obviously ensure that we either ask—if there are problems, we will go back to the host nation and ask for immunity to be withdrawn. If not, we will ask for the diplomat to depart the country.

Senator Kaine. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Senator PORTMAN. Senator Isakson?

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

Thanks to all of you and congratulations on your appointment.

I want to focus on our two ambassador nominees for Africa for just a second, if I can.

Senator Coons and I were both on the Africa Subcommittee together and traveled quite frequently to Africa over a couple of years. First of all, the biggest product in Georgia is chickens, and the biggest product in Delaware is chickens. We brought down the lock on the door in South Africa, and now there are 19,000 metric tons of Georgia and Delaware chicken going into South Africa every year. And that was in large measure because of what we did on AGOA, the African Growth and Opportunity Act.

Are you all familiar with that? And do you have any ideas of what you want to do in terms of promoting engagement with that? We will start with Ms. Gonzales.

Ms. GONZALES. Thank you for that question, Senator.

Lesotho has been an AGOA success story. Under this program, there have been 40,000 people who have been employed, most of them women. I have read this has had a ripple effect on 100,000 family members, as well as downstream businesses.

I think that Lesotho needs to continue its efforts to address rule of law and bring about good governance so that it will continue to be eligible under AGOA. And there are opportunities for diversification. In addition to that, there are opportunities for U.S. businesses in renewable energy, agriculture, water.

As you know, Lesotho is surrounded by South Africa. There are 600 U.S. companies operating there who could possibly expand businesses into Lesotho.

And so, if confirmed, I would work hard to identify business opportunities for U.S. companies, to ensure that they are treated fairly, and to make sure that the playing field is level, Senator.

Senator ISAKSON. Ms. Johnson?

Ms. JOHNSON. Thank you, Senator.

AGOA for Namibia—eligibility is not an issue, but use of the program is. Namibia has not taken full advantage of the benefits under AGOA. In large part, I would say it is a factor of the type of economy you have in Namibia. It is a very small market. AGOA

is a trade not aid program, and it is really private sector-driven. So companies are going to make business decisions, and they have to weigh things like the high cost of transportation, of electricity in deciding what type of business makes sense in Namibia.

There has been a lot of success in other countries, as my colleague said, in the textile industry. What makes more sense probably for Namibia is agribusiness. And in fact, just last year, the U.S. Department of Agriculture certified beef products from Namibia as the first African beef products to be eligible for export to the United States. So those would be eligible for AGOA benefits.

So, if confirmed, I will look to promote greater use of the AGOA program.

Senator ISAKSON. I appreciate both of your knowledge of that issue. That is an important program for the United States and important for Africa too. I have said in many a hearing that Africa is the continent of the 21st century for the United States of America. There are more mouths to feed, more opportunity, more votes in the U.N. in Africa than anywhere else in the world right now. And the better our friendships are, the better economic ties we have, the better off we are going to be.

Ms. Johnson, I want to commend you on the next-to-the-last paragraph of your printed remarks where you said, finally, "If confirmed, my foremost priority will be ensuring the safety and security of American citizens in Namibia, be they living there, conducting business there, traveling there, or serving in the Peace Corps." And for Senator Coons and I, "the serving in the Peace Corps" part is very important because we went together to Benin because of the loss of a Peace Corps volunteer, Kate Puzey, who had been murdered there. And the Kate Puzey Peace Corps Volunteer Protection Act is now part of the law in the United States because of that trip that we made and because of what we tried to do to improve security for Peace Corps volunteers overseas. And Africa is the home base for the Peace Corps in terms of numbers. There are a tremendous amount of Americans there volunteering their time and helping our country a lot.

So I appreciate your voluntary commitment to that in your statement, and I hope both of you will support the Peace Corps whenever they come and visit. And Senator Coons and I will try and come to visit you as soon as we can.

Good luck to both of you—to all five of you. I am sorry. I did not want to leave you out, Randy.

Senator PORTMAN. Senator Coons?

Senator COONS. Well, I would like to follow up on the questioning by my colleague, Senator Isakson, if I might.

First, just an issue that was raised by Senator Kaine to Mr. Goldstein. On international exchanges, I too am concerned that there is a proposed 50 percent cut in a number of these programs. And one that we have seen have a significant positive impact across the continent of Africa is the Young African Leaders Initiative, so-called YALI, or the Mandela Fellows. It brought, in the last year a thousand young Africans to the United States. And I have hosted a fellow in my office now several years as an intern, and they spread across our country and go to 20 different colleges and universities for a terrific 6-week program of training and engage-

ment with the United States and then gather back here in Washington and return home.

And on a visit to Liberia at the height of the Ebola crisis, I had a chance to meet our former YALI fellows convened by the ambassador and hear what they were doing in the face of this challenge and to be inspired by how many of them had engaged themselves in volunteer activity either launching nonprofits or serving as volunteers in the Liberian response to Ebola.

Is this a program you are at all familiar with, Mr. Goldstein? And do you have any sense of its value or impact?

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

It is a program that I am familiar with, and I hope, if I am lucky enough to be confirmed for this role, to have the opportunity to meet many of the people that you just described. I will commit to looking very closely at this to see what we can do to possibly enhance this program.

Senator COONS. Ms. Gonzales, Ms. Johnson, is this something you have had any exposure to, have heard of, any sense of what the potential is of the YALI program in the countries to which you may well be soon serving as Ambassador?

Ms. GONZALES. Thank you, Senator. I am familiar with YALI. I think it is an enormously successful program. There are over 3,000 Young African Leaders in Lesotho who participate in the network, over a hundred alumni. I think that the value that they bring by coming here and learning about us and then going back and taking what they have seen and implementing it in Lesotho is phenomenal. And I think that they are excited. They are great partners. They serve as local voices and conduits amplifying our programs and our values and priorities. And if I were confirmed, I would certainly continue to engage and support YALI.

And in addition to that, we have an American corner at the university in Lesotho, and my understanding is that it is enormously popular and people are very excited about our public diplomacy programs.

Senator COONS. Ms. Johnson?

Ms. JOHNSON. Thank you, Senator.

I am a big supporter of YALI. In Namibia, we have 59 alumni from the Mandela Fellows program, and what I understand from the Embassy is they are a real force multiplier for us. They are very accomplished in their respective fields, be it public sector management, nongovernmental, civil society, or entrepreneurship. And when they take what they have learned here and bring it back to Namibia, they are going to be the movers and shakers going forward. And it is really very important for the United States to partner with them and advance our shared interests. And we really rely on that alumni network quite strongly. I am very excited about engaging them.

Senator COONS. I will ask two quick follow-up questions about your respective nations. Then I will have additional questions in the next round, if I might.

I have been to Namibia. A number of us went there last February I believe. A very impressive country, making great progress in HIV/AIDS, terrific partner in wildlife trafficking. They could stand to make progress on their human trafficking standard.

I was concerned by some reports about relations between their military and North Korea. Can you speak to that a little bit and help me understand how we might make progress? Because I think it is emblematic of the challenge we face in a dozen countries around the world in making progress and restraining the reach of North Korea's military.

Ms. JOHNSON. Thank you, Senator. I am happy to talk about that.

North Korea is a global menace, and all states have a responsibility to abide by U.N. Security Council resolutions and help cut off funding to the North Korean regime.

I would say that Namibia is doing its part. Namibia does have a longstanding relationship with North Korea. It dates back to the liberation struggle prior to 1990. But countries at this stage are really forced to choose. You can either have a relationship with North Korea or you can abide by the U.N. Security Council resolutions. And Namibia has made its choice. Namibia came into being under a U.N. mandate. They have great respect for the U.N. and U.N. Security Council.

So what you have seen is not military cooperation with Namibia, but rather construction activities that have been carried out by state-owned firms, including building the ministry of defense, defense ministry buildings on other bases, as well as statues.

Namibia has taken some very important steps in the last 2 years. In 2015, they expelled the remaining North Korean diplomats from Windhoek. In June of 2016, they stated that they would end their commercial relationship with North Korea, and since that time, they have been implementing that commitment and have affirmed that they have ended contracts with North Korea and, most recently, that the last North Korean workers have departed Namibia. So I think Namibia has taken great strides to distance itself from North Korea and abide by the U.N. Security Council resolutions, and if confirmed, I would keep that issue very front burner on the agenda and encourage Namibia to continue to be very transparent with the U.N. Security Council on the matter.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Ms. Johnson.

I will have additional questions.

Senator PORTMAN. Let me just interject quickly here with regard to Korea because I was concerned about that as well. North Korea works in a number of different ways, and one is through some of their companies. The Korea Mining Development Trading Corporation is one. And my understanding is that there continues to be some relationship there perhaps through a front group in Namibia.

And so I understand you are saying, Ms. Johnson, there has been progress made and commitments made, but I would hope that you would focus on this issue and perhaps have Namibia be one of those countries that becomes a model already for Korean workers, it sounds like, North Korean workers having been sent home because those remittances are part of how North Korea continues to be able to survive economically and repress its own people and develop its nuclear weapons and missile technology program. So I would just hope that that specific issue—as I understand it, that continues to be a problem that will be a focus of yours.

Ms. JOHNSON. Yes, Senator. It definitely will be a focus. I think we also have to look at banks and ensure that financial flows are no longer going to North Korea. But it is my understanding that even front companies that have been designated by the UN—that relationships in Namibia have ended with those companies.

Senator PORTMAN. Senator Shaheen?

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Congratulations to all of you on your nominations, and I look forward to working with you once confirmed in the interest of the country.

I want to begin with you, Mr. Goldstein, and thank you for taking time to meet with me yesterday. One of the things that we discussed is the whole disinformation issue that is facing this country. The Italian Government recently announced a program with private sector partners to help build digital resilience among students to help them better identify disinformation. Can you talk about whether you think a similar kind of initiative would help in the United States to address this problem?

Mr. GOLDSTEIN. Thank you, Senator, for that question. And I did enjoy meeting with you yesterday.

I do believe such a program would help in the United States, but I believe we have to do more. There is no question that this disinformation campaign has been of concern to many. We need to work with the technology companies, which I believe currently is at an inflexion point, to determine how we can interdict and figure out how to stop this from occurring.

We also have to recognize, Senator, that social media accounts are just as important as financial accounts, and we have to take that seriously. We need to figure out how to disrupt and choke off the communications flows. But in addition to that, we need to work, as the State Department is doing, with Radio Free Europe, with Radio Liberty, with Current Time, with the Middle East network, and others to get our message out there. It is not just a defensive posture that we should take. We also need to be offensive as you noted they are doing in Italy in that particular program.

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, thank you. I appreciate that and totally agree that we do need to be not just defensive but look at outreach that we can do to address this problem.

As you know, one of the aspects of the Global Engagement Center, which is part of your portfolio, is a fund to bolster outside non-governmental groups. Will you pledge that after your confirmation, if you are confirmed, that you will work with Congress to make sure that that fund is adequately resourced and that the funds go toward organizations and initiatives that can help build that kind of resilience that we are talking about?

Mr. GOLDSTEIN. Absolutely, Senator.

While I grew up in Nashville, Tennessee, yesterday's terrorist attack in New York occurred very close to where I live. So I have seen firsthand, and I had a friend who actually watched that occur yesterday.

We have got to put extreme importance on the Global Engagement Center. We need to choke off the communications flow that extremists use to build their networks, and we also need to figure

out a way to stop the recruitment of people whose primary goal is to do harm to our citizens and the citizens of our allies.

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, thank you very much. And I know I speak for the whole committee in saying that we certainly offer our condolences to you and to everyone in New York on what they have suffered.

I am not going to ask you a question because I know you have addressed this, but I just wanted to weigh in, given our discussion yesterday, that I share the concerns that everybody has expressed about the importance of our educational and cultural exchanges. And I hope you will continue a robust program and that you will look at ways in which you can make sure the resources are there to support those programs. I certainly do not support the administration's proposal to get rid of many of those because I think they are so important as we look at other areas in which we can build relationships ongoing. You talked about Africa as one of those, and I certainly think that is an indication of how important those exchange programs are.

I want to ask both you and Mr. Lawler this question because we know that reorganization is going on within the State Department, and we have heard testimony before this committee about the reorganization. But so far, there has been very little information shared about exactly what is being done within the State Department and what the outcome of that might be.

So would you both agree that Senate-confirmed State Department officials should work closely with this committee on plans to reorganize the Department? Mr. Lawler?

Mr. LAWLER. Thank you, Senator.

Yes, that is quite important, and yes, I would agree to that.

Senator SHAHEEN. Mr. Goldstein?

Mr. GOLDSTEIN. Yes, Senator.

Senator SHAHEEN. And do you pledge to work with this committee and be responsive to any requests that we have pertaining to matters relevant to your areas of responsibility, if you are confirmed? Mr. Lawler?

Mr. LAWLER. Yes, ma'am.

Senator SHAHEEN. Mr. Goldstein?

Mr. GOLDSTEIN. Yes, Senator. I look forward to meeting with you as frequently as you would like.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you both very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator PORTMAN. Thank you.

I would like to follow up, if I could, on Senator Shaheen's questions with regard to disinformation. In your written remarks, Mr. Goldstein, you talk a little about the Global Engagement Center and focus on the important role it has in fighting back against Islamic extremism and providing a counter-narrative.

In the wake of what happened in New York yesterday, that tragedy once again, we realize that people are being radicalized even in this country, often online and often through a concerted effort to reach those most vulnerable to that information. So we need to redouble our efforts, and I appreciate your commitment to that.

And you mentioned again in your testimony the radicalization from Islamic extremism is one part of the Global Engagement Cen-

ter, but actually there is another part of it now. As you may be aware, Senator Murphy, who was here earlier, and I drafted legislation that essentially rewrote the Global Engagement Center's authorities and mandated it to include state-sponsored propaganda in addition to the counter-extremist messaging. So the issue of disinformation propaganda that we are facing not just from Russia but also other countries, China, Iran, and others, countries that make an aggressive use of propaganda and disinformation comes at the expense of us and often our allies. And I do believe they are trying to destabilize democratic countries not just ours but around the world.

I think this is one we are going to really need your help. From the cyber attacks we have seen, to the social media bots, to the Internet troll farms we now know more about, to state-sponsored media outlets, including here in Washington, D.C., they create sophisticated information campaigns essentially to sort of weaponize the modern information environment. And by the way, this did not start with the 2016 election, and it will not end there unless we are more aggressive in responding to it.

So I would ask today that you comment on that. As Under Secretary of State of Public Diplomacy, Public Affairs, you are going to play a key role in this. First, do you agree that countering this foreign disinformation and propaganda is a national security priority?

Mr. GOLDSTEIN. Yes, sir, I do agree.

Senator PORTMAN. Second, do you share Secretary Tillerson's public comments that support the Global Engagement Center and its mission to be able to counter this disinformation both from extremist groups like ISIS but also nation states, as required in the DOD authorization act last year?

Mr. GOLDSTEIN. Absolutely, Senator.

Senator PORTMAN. One of the issues we have had with the GEC is to get funding in there and to get the right people there. You mentioned Radio Free Europe earlier, and it is an important operation. So are others, but frankly for me, the focus should be more on the online communications, social media, and having the expertise to do that requires some funds both to attract the right people and to have the right technology.

I was pleased to see that Secretary Tillerson approved the GEC strategic plan, and he released some funds to execute it. They also submitted a request to DOD for \$40 million that we had provided for here in Congress to support the Global Engagement Center's efforts. We are still waiting, as I understand, for the final transfer of those funds, which are critical to GEC.

I would appreciate your commitment today, if you are willing to make it, that you will be persistent in pursuing that funding from DOD to State to be able to ensure that the Global Engagement Center has the resources it needs.

Mr. GOLDSTEIN. Yes, sir, Senator. I will be persistent in pursuing that funding.

I do believe we have to be very aggressive in our response. I also think we must speak to people where they listen. The world is getting younger. 50 percent of people in Africa are under 25 years old, from what I have recently been told. In Asia, the average age is

somewhere under 30. I saw a story recently that said even in the United States that there are more people 26 than any other age.

In addition, ISIS has very persuasive videos online that are directed to people who are disgruntled. We have got to make this a priority, and you have my commitment and the commitment of the people within the State Department that we will do so.

Senator PORTMAN. Will you commit today to sharing information and working closely with members of this committee to ensure that you do have the tools and resources to be able to carry out this critical mission we have talked about?

Mr. GOLDSTEIN. Yes, sir, I will.

Senator PORTMAN. I think that is a really important part of your job, and I appreciate your taking it seriously and reporting back to us on whether you think it is moving forward both with regard to the funding and resources and also the personnel.

With that, I will turn to my colleague, Senator Coons.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Senator Portman.

Let me turn to Mr. Evans and Mr. Lawler, if I might.

Mr. Evans, I am from the State of Delaware. We also have a strong financial services community. As we were discussing here before, one of our challenges globally in pursuing terrorism and those who might be our opponents such as North Korea is bank transparency and better understanding what is moving in terms of capital flows around the world.

If confirmed as the Ambassador to Luxembourg, what would you be doing to help make sure that we and our law enforcement and intelligence communities have as strong and appropriate a relationship as possible with Luxembourg's fairly vigorous financial services sector?

Mr. EVANS. Senator Coons, thank you for that question. It is a critically important question because Prime Minister Bettel started the process of increasing the transparency in the banking process in Luxembourg, and I would work with him and with anyone who would work with us to try to continue that momentum toward more and more transparency. As you no doubt know, having watched many of your other hearings, sanctions have no teeth if we cannot locate the money, if we cannot find the accounts. And so our ability to do that will depend greatly on the ability to get countries like Luxembourg to continue to improve their transparency in terms of banking transactions.

Senator COONS. I think our folks in OFAC in the Department of the Treasury do an excellent job, but we need our allies, in particular some of our European allies, to be more engaged and more forthcoming.

A colleague raised with me a concern that I am going to ask you about. You served on the Georgia State Election Board from 2003 to 2011, and in 2006, the State passed a voter ID law that required a photo ID. And as I understand it, two courts, both State and federal, enjoined that law finding it unconstitutional. But the State Election Board sent out information to voters implying that they were required to have a photo ID, and then further steps were taken to provide remedial information to voters. And it seems to me from the timeline, you were probably centrally involved in this.

Help me understand your role in this, how this played out. It is a concern I know for a number of my colleagues.

Mr. EVANS. Well, first of all, thank you for letting me have the opportunity to address it. I would rather address it up front.

And when the issue first came up, I went back to try to reconstruct what happened 11 years ago. Candidly there were a lot of things going on at that particular time. So here is what I know.

In 2006, the Georgia legislature passed and then-Governor Sonny Perdue, now Secretary Perdue, signed into law a second attempt at a voter identification law. Now, that law was upheld by all of the appellate courts and is still in effect today.

Once the United States Department of Justice cleared Georgia's new photo ID law, the State began to issue free identification cards to anyone that wanted or needed one. In addition, to address concerns raised in these various judicial proceedings, the State initiated an education effort regarding how to get a free ID card.

In early September 2006, the State Election Board unanimously voted with bipartisan support, including the designee of the Democratic Party of Georgia and the Democratic Secretary of State, to approve a mailing explaining how to get a free photo ID to approximately 300,000 Georgians who had been identified as potentially not having an ID.

While those letters were in the mailing process, opponents went to court and challenged the photo ID law and sought and obtained an injunction. Although many of the letters had already gone out, some of the letters were received after the court's ruling.

The State then sent a second letter making clear that photo IDs would not be required to vote in the election.

As for my part, immediately upon learning of the injunction, I asked for a board meeting, and although I knew the State was going to appeal, I insisted that the photo ID not be applied to that election because if they sought a stay of the injunction and it was granted, you would be flip-flopping back and forth within 60 days of the election, and I felt very strongly that would create too much confusion. When you look back, you will see a number of press reports about whether or not I was, quote/unquote, going soft. But the fact of the matter was at that moment, the appropriate course of action was to let the State appeal but not apply it in that election cycle until all of the dust had settled in the various judicial proceedings.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Mr. Evans. In the background I got on this, there is a complex series of filings, court proceedings, injunctions, letters, injunctions, letters, and it is unclear to me exactly how this all played out. But photo ID voting practices are of sort of pressing concern to many of us, particularly if part of the role of an ambassador is to represent the proper functioning of democracy.

I also just want to add to the previous conversation with Mr. Goldstein. In a visit to Eastern Europe I think a year ago in August to Estonia, to Ukraine, and to the Czech Republic where Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty are headquartered, it was strongly impressed on me just how important these programs are, just how important the programming and the outreach and the education is. And I urge you to work on that, and I think Senator Portman made

an important point about the combination of traditional media like radio and digital media are continuing to make sure that we are doing the best we can in being fairly cutting-edge.

Ms. Gonzales, if I might just quickly. Lesotho has benefited more from AGOA than almost any African country. Yet, they have got some significant unresolved human rights challenges and governance and security sector challenges. How do you see weighing those two going forward, and do you think there should be consequences for Lesotho in terms of their AGOA eligibility if they do not continue to make progress in human rights and in security sector reforms?

Ms. GONZALES. Thank you for that question, Senator Coons.

I think the United States—we have been very engaged with the Government of Lesotho concerning continued AGOA eligibility. As you noted, human rights is a problem in Lesotho. There is impunity, and there have been problematic soldiers. And so the security sector needs reform. Specifically there needs to be absolute civilian control of the military.

I think the United States has been very effective in engaging the Government of Lesotho with respect to continued AGOA eligibility, as well as consideration of a second MCC compact. We had our first MCC compact from 2008 to 2013. Lesotho was being considered for planning for a second MCC compact, and then that was put on hold. And we have made it very clear that for Lesotho to be eligible for a second MCC compact, it needs to have security sector, constitutional, and parliamentary reforms. And in addition to that, it needs to show that it will be able to sustain its first MCC compact. So I think that we have been very effective in leveraging our programs and pushing for democratic institutions and rule of law, and if I were confirmed, I would continue that message. Thank you.

Senator COONS. I believe in the power of MCC and, in particular, the desire of many countries to have a shot at a second compact. I have seen it work to motivate countries to make changes. So I look forward to hearing about your progress in that regard.

If I might, with the indulgence of the chair. Mr. Lawler, just help me understand what your admirable long service for the U.S. Navy and National Security Council will do to provide you with the skills and preparation necessary for a role that may at times be delicate and difficult and involves a lot of juggling and managing sometimes a very wide and disparate community here.

Mr. LAWLER. Thank you, Senator, for the question. It is very important.

Over my career of almost 30 years now, I have been working within the government, support to senior members of the military and our government. Most importantly, just working backwards during this administration since January, working with the President's schedule with foreign leaders—I am sorry. I am losing my train of thought.

Senator COONS. I am tempted to ask questions about the upcoming Asia trip, but I am not. [Laughter.]

Mr. LAWLER. You know, it is hard to articulate going back really almost 30 years of qualifications. Protocol has been my job, kind of my bread and butter. 5 years prior to this joining the administration on the National Security Council in January, I did protocol at

the U.S. Cyber Command, foreign engagements once or twice a week. I have lots of experience. I have lived abroad for 6 years, traveled the world, very few places I have not been.

And one of the things with protocol is obviously to do no harm. Going into this, one of my goals right off the bat is to just ensure that—put a good face and set the stage for diplomacy for the President.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Mr. Lawler.

Let me thank, if I might, Grace and Conor who I know is not here, but anyway, thank you.

And to Ms. Johnson, to your parents and brother.

To Mr. Evans, to Linda who I know is not with you but is supporting you.

To Estella, Happy Birthday, and thank you for 30 years of teaching and to your late father for his dedication and service to our Nation.

And, Mr. Goldstein, wonderful to have Bill with us, to have your husband present and the support of your family.

Thank you to all five of our nominees today. I really appreciate your testimony.

Senator PORTMAN. Senator Shaheen?

Senator SHAHEEN. I wanted to pick up, Mr. Evans, on the comments that Senator Coons made about voting because I was in Armenia in 2003 as part of an observer mission to their parliamentary elections. And I noticed some improprieties in the voting, and when I raised that with the moderator at the polling place, what his response to me was, well, you have no reason to raise this with us because you could not get your voting right in Florida in the 2000 presidential election.

So I think it is very important that we model good democratic procedures in our voting, that we denounce voter suppression efforts, and that we show the rest of the world a good model for voting. So I would just echo his comments about how important that is.

I do want to ask you about your views on both NATO and the EU because having been in Europe a number of times since the new administration began, there is great consternation in parts of Europe about what our views continue to be on the transatlantic relationship, on the importance of NATO, on the EU, and how important it is to that transatlantic relationship.

So can you tell me what your views are on the EU and NATO?

Mr. EVANS. Let me take them, if I can, one at a time.

I do not think NATO has ever been more important in the history of the NATO to be candid. I think Russia poses a greater threat today than it has at any time probably since the Cuban missile crisis. Its techniques and methods are much more aggressive, much more cyber-oriented, much more technologically oriented, but it means that it is all the more important the NATO nations all come together and have a united defense because if there is a crack, that is where they penetrate. And so as far as NATO goes and, as you know, Luxembourg is a valued member of NATO.

Now, in fairness, we have to work a little bit on their contribution. They do not meet the Wales commitment of 2 percent. They are down at .48 or .46 percent with a commitment to go to .6 per-

cent by 2024. But I have made a pretty decent living out of getting more money out of people than they wanted to give. So I am hoping that I can put those skill sets to work to get not only Luxembourg but other countries up to their commitment and the Wales commitment.

As far as the European Union, I think it is right now in a state of transformation as far as what we can tell. Our firm has 25 offices in 17 European nations. We come together once a year, and we can get firsthand reports on what is happening in the EU. Obviously, Brexit was a major blow or impact to the EU. There are other countries that have some movement about whether or not the EU is sustainable long-term. But I think as a valued trading partner, it is enormously beneficial to the United States. It is much easier to have a bilateral treaty with the EU as a single unit than it is to have bilateral agreements with each of the different European nations in the EU.

But at the end of the day, in fairness I think the member nations of the EU are going to have to decide their future. I think they are grappling with some serious questions even now as they adapt to Great Britain's departure. It appears to me most experts agree it will take about 2 to 3 years before we see those sorted out.

Senator SHAHEEN. Brexit certainly seems to be creating as many problems for Britain as it does for the EU at this point.

But given what you said and the fragility of the EU and the challenges that they are facing, how important is it for us to reaffirm our commitment to the importance of the security of Europe and the EU?

Mr. EVANS. Absolutely critically important because it makes them vulnerable. Our enemies take advantage when we are divided. That is the most vulnerable point that we have. And so unity is most important whenever you are facing such aggressive adversaries, overt aggression, making no secret of their plans. That is the moment where we have to come together because if we do not, we just render ourselves vulnerable to an enemy who is intent on defeating us.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you.

Ms. Johnson, Senator Coons and Ms. Gonzales just talked about the Millennium Challenge Corporation and how important it has been. It concluded in Namibia in 2014. Can you talk about some of the successes that resulted in Namibia from its participation in MCC?

Ms. JOHNSON. Thank you, Senator, and certainly.

The compact was very successful in Namibia, in fact, so successful they worked themselves out of a job and were not eligible for a second compact because they reached upper middle income status. There were a lot of successes in the areas of tourism, infrastructure, and agriculture.

But Namibia does still face economic challenges. They have a very high unemployment rate, 34 percent, probably 50 percent for people under 35. And you have got a population that is very young. 57 percent are under the age of 25. A huge income disparity. My understanding is that the government of Namibia is working very hard on some of those problems and that they are really trying to foster inclusive growth looking at how to incentivize manufac-

turing, entrepreneurship, improve the business climate further to attract trade and investment. So while it is true that the international assistance to Namibia is going down, it is now the Government of Namibia's responsibility to continue their economic growth.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator PORTMAN. Thank you, Senator Shaheen.

So, first, I appreciate the testimony today and all of you have had a chance to answer questions. Mr. Lawler was left out earlier. I am glad that Senator Coons asked him a little bit about his background and what he is going to do. I will say, Mr. Lawler, you get high marks from the professional career folks I have talked to at NSC and at the White House, but also the political people for your professionalism and your integrity. You are going to need it. This is a really important job.

And one aspect of your job that we have not talked about today I would like your comments on is how you deal with the diplomatic missions here in this country. And my understanding is, having known some of your predecessors, that that is an important part of your job is to be mindful of the other diplomatic missions. And we have had some huge issues just in the last year, expelling Cuban diplomats most recently, expelling Russian diplomats. Some of these diplomats we believed were engaged in inappropriate activities. Some of it was in response, as I understand it, to broader geopolitical problems.

But my question to you would be, when tensions with the United States and these foreign countries develop and prompt us to do these expulsions or close diplomatic facilities, what role does your office have in that, and how do you feel about that?

Mr. LAWLER. Thank you, Senator. That is obviously a very important issue not just for the State Department, but also for the Nation.

Again, if confirmed, my main role in this is to be the President's liaison with the diplomatic corps in Washington, D.C. So I will deal directly with the chiefs of mission, the deputy chiefs of mission with any issues that they have that arise or any allegations that arise.

But really I would just like to put maybe a little bit of a positive spin on this question. I very much look forward to this aspect of the job. Dealing with the President and accompanying him and introducing him is a great honor.

But another big, large portion of this job is actually meeting with these ambassadors as they arrive, as they get credentialed, taking them to the White House and building relationships with them. There are programs right now in the State Department. One of them is Experience America, which when I first read about it, I was a little suspicious at the cost, but it is a wonderful, wonderful program where we take the diplomatic corps in Washington, spread them out into the United States, get them out of the Washington, D.C. bubble, meet constituents, and build exchanges.

So I think to answer your question, really it is the relationship building on the front end and meeting with all of these ambassadors and building relationships so when there are troubles, they can be candid and we will have a better relationship.

Senator PORTMAN. Well, again, thank you for your willingness to take on this new role. And I think it is a logical evolution given your background in protocol in your 30-year career in the U.S. Navy.

Ms. Johnson, Namibia. Senator Kaine asked you about human trafficking and how to get Namibia up to a tier 1 country. It is an issue that I have strong interest in but, more importantly, so does this entire Senate and this committee. And so we want to encourage you to work with them, again, to provide more of a model. The MCC program and the contract I think was effective, but we still have not made the progress we need to make on human trafficking.

But on wildlife trafficking, we also have an issue in Namibia, and it is not only in Namibia. It is, unfortunately, pervasive in many countries in Africa. It not only has devastating impacts on wildlife and ecotourism in particular but also helps to fund terrorist activities. And that link has been confirmed more probably in the last decade than prior to that and it continues to be a problem.

I guess my question is, do you have a commitment to this conservation program that Namibia has attempted to implement? There is legislation that Senator Coons actually drafted. He is the author of the End Wildlife Trafficking Act. I was one of his cosponsors, and it encourages you to provide support, particularly with community conservation efforts. So can you talk a little about that?

Senator Isakson's question about economic development was focused on AGOA, and you talked about the importance of beef exports and that is important. But I would assume—and you tell us—that ecotourism is even a bigger part of the economy in Namibia and that wildlife conservation is key to keeping that ecotourism healthy.

Ms. JOHNSON. Thank you, Senator.

I actually have a very strong commitment to conservation, environmental protection coming from Washington State. It is very close to my heart.

The Namibians actually brag about having enshrined environmental protection in their constitution. And they have been a model for sub-Saharan Africa in their communal conservancies. They have over 80 of them now, and that is a strong partnership between the Government of Namibia, local communities, NGOs, and the United States Government that actually provides some income for local communities from ecotourism and sport hunting.

But Namibia does still have challenges. There was a spike in rhino poaching last year. Two-thirds of the world's black rhinos are located in Namibia. I think there were 60 poached last year. It is down to 27 so far this year. They also have trouble with illicit wildlife trafficking networks, which are becoming increasingly sophisticated, as you alluded to.

So that is why we do continue to put some resources into grants with international NGOs. We are working with the Namibian Government on their draft national strategy to combat wildlife trafficking and also providing some training and technical assistance for ministry of environment and tourism park wardens and for customs officials. And we are also going to be working with them on the judicial side to ensure successful prosecutions.

I think one of the really good signs is a single animal is poached in Namibia and it is front-page news. The Namibians know how important it is for them to protect this resource.

So I definitely commitment to you that, if confirmed, I will continue to implement the intent of the End Wildlife Trafficking Act, which has really helped us, to strengthen our international partnerships and cooperation with countries to combat wildlife trafficking and poaching.

Senator PORTMAN. Well, I thank you for that answer, and I appreciate your commitment.

Let me ask you about a specific program. As you know, Namibia is engaged in a regional effort as well with other countries, Botswana, Angola, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and some conservation organizations to conserve the Okavango River delta, which is such a critical habitat for endangered species and apparently an amazingly beautiful area and critical to ecotourism in the region.

We have now invested as the U.S. Government, as I understand it, \$40 million to help conserve that delta through watershed management programs and resource management programs.

I assume you are aware of that program, and if confirmed, will you commit to working with Namibia to engage deeply in this Okavango River Basin project?

Ms. JOHNSON. Absolutely, Senator. I actually had the fortune to visit the Okavango Delta when I served in South Africa. It is a beautiful area, and you have my full commitment to that effort.

Senator PORTMAN. Well, again, thank you all for being here. We appreciate all five of you being willing to serve. A few of you have done this for a long time in your career in the Foreign Service and in the military and a couple of you are coming out of the private sector. I had the opportunity at one point to serve as U.S. Trade Representative, and people asked me what was it like. I said just an amazing honor to represent our great country around the world and that is what each of you will be doing in your own ways.

We will have differences here in this committee on policy issues, but we have no differences in terms of thanking you for your willingness to serve. And once you are confirmed—and I believe you will be based on the answers you gave today—we want to be able to support you and your colleagues to best represent the United States of America throughout the world. Thank you.

This hearing is now adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:15 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

Additional Material Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO IRWIN STEVEN GOLDSTEIN BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

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

Answer. As a communications professional, I have worked consistently to promote the values of transparency and openness reflected in the First Amendment, which is fundamental to our democracy. Working at Dow Jones, the publisher of The Wall Street Journal, I was a strong advocate for press freedom in the United States and

around the world. I was deeply involved in efforts to free reporter Daniel Pearl, who was kidnapped and subsequently murdered in Pakistan, and worked with colleagues in Pakistan and the Middle East to press for the protection of Mr. Pearl's rights both as an individual and as a journalist.

I believe that all people are entitled to human rights and, throughout my career, have worked to ensure that everyone is treated equally. I put my commitment to equality into practice, and it is core to how I do my job.

Question 2. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. As an executive and manager, I have always sought to create a diverse workplace and provide opportunities for all staff members to take on additional responsibilities and advance their careers. I have tried to set an example by being open, fair, and encouraging, so others would feel they were being supported. I pledge to continue leading in this manner at the Department of State, should I be confirmed.

Question 3. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors who you oversee as Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. The Secretary of State has called for more diversity within the Department of State's ranks, and I fully support this drive and pledge to sustain and promote it. I expect any supervisor reporting to me to create an environment that is fair and equal to people of diverse backgrounds and perspectives. If confirmed, I look forward to affirming my commitment to diversity and how we, as a team, live these values in how we manage. I will make clear by my own actions and conduct that fostering a diverse and inclusive work environment must be a top priority for supervisors and staff alike at all levels of the Department.

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 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 concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

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

Answer. No.

Question 7. Do you acknowledge that the Russian Government carried out an influence and disinformation campaign aimed at the 2016 U.S. presidential election? Do you acknowledge that the Russian Government subsequently has carried out similar efforts to influence elections in Western Europe?

Answer. Yes. U.S. intelligence community assessments make clear that the Russian Government undertook an influence and disinformation campaign aimed at the 2016 U.S. presidential election. Russia uses similar tactics to attempt to influence elections worldwide.

Question 8. If confirmed, do you commit to working to address Russian influence and disinformation campaigns through the full exercise of the authorities of the Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, including the work of the Global Engagement Center (GEC), International Information Programs (IIP), and Bureau of Public Affairs (PA)?

Answer. Yes. Russia is engaged in a campaign to undermine core Western institutions and weaken faith in the democratic and free-market system. This campaign is aggressive and coordinated. If confirmed, countering these disinformation activities would be a priority for me, leveraging all of the capabilities under my authority, including the Global Engagement Center, the Bureau of International Information Programs, and the Bureau of Public Affairs.

Question 9. The mandate for the Global Engagement Center was altered by statute last year to also include efforts to counter foreign state propaganda against the United States.

- If confirmed, do you commit to fully implement congressional intent reflected in legislation related to the Global Engagement Center?

Answer. Yes.

Question 10. If confirmed, what specific steps will you take to ensure that the GEC fulfill its statutory mandate and which countries will you prioritize as part of that effort?

Answer. If confirmed, I would work with colleagues at the Department of State and the interagency community so that the GEC can fulfill its mandate through the use of technology and an ever-growing network of on-the-ground, counter-messaging partners to conduct its counterterrorism mission. Priority nations for this effort include Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea.

Question 11. If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that the GEC full responds to the challenges posed by Russian disinformation and influence campaigns?

Answer. If confirmed, I would work with the GEC and colleagues elsewhere to counter Russian disinformation by, in part, strengthening coordination of U.S. Government efforts in specific sub-regions; enhancing the capacity of local actors to build resiliency to disinformation in their communities; and convening anti-disinformation practitioners, journalists, and other influencers to exchange best practices, build networks, and generate support for U.S. efforts against disinformation.

Question 12. If confirmed, how do you plan on using the GEC and our Embassies to reach a larger and/or targeted audience abroad that includes cultural, religious, and country-specific considerations in achieving our CT/CVE goals?

Answer. If confirmed, I would promote the adoption by the Department of private-sector best practices in the use of information technology. This would include active and targeted use of the full range of social media platforms, including country- and region-specific platforms and advertising where appropriate, as well as online data analytics tools to measure how content is received by certain audiences, to help ensure the effectiveness of U.S. messaging abroad. Our Embassies are and will continue be a valuable part of our efforts to stay on top of how local and regional audiences obtain and consume information.

Question 13. If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that the State Department accepts the full amount of funding transfers from the Defense Department for the Global Engagement Center to conduct activities to address Russian disinformation?

Answer. I understand that the Department very much appreciates the importance Congress places on combatting disinformation. Further, I understand that Secretary Tillerson has requested \$40 million in funding from the Department of Defense to counter state-sponsored disinformation from Russia and other nations, commensurate with the threat each poses. If confirmed, I will carefully evaluate GEC activities to ensure the funds are being used effectively.

Question 14. The Secretary of State belatedly accepted \$40 Million in DOD funds that was authorized for transfer to the use of the GEC. If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure the effective use of these funds to advance the GEC's activities? Are there activities that could have been undertaken, but won't be, given that the Secretary accepted less than the full amount of DOD funds that was authorized for transfer?

Answer. I understand that the Department of State is working with the Department of Defense (DoD) to transfer funds for the GEC's mission, as authorized by the FY 2017 National Defense Authorization Act. Secretary Tillerson's request of \$40 million in DoD funds came after a review process designed to ensure the funding would be used as effectively as possible. Through that process, the Department determined that the GEC could reasonably obligate, monitor, and evaluate \$40 million in counter-disinformation programming this fiscal year. If confirmed, I will carefully evaluate GEC activities to ensure the funds are being used effectively.

Question 15. If confirmed, do you commit to brief this committee 60 days after taking office on the administration's strategy to address Russian disinformation in Europe and around the globe?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I would welcome the opportunity to brief your committee on the Department of State's efforts to address Russian disinformation in Europe and around the globe.

Question 16. What do you think the biggest challenge to countering disinformation from foreign state actors is in the United States?

Answer. I believe the biggest challenge is determining clearly and without doubt the origination of the disinformation, and in responding, we must be careful not to sacrifice our own democratic values. The United States should always present an accurate portrayal of America, its citizens, and our role in the world. We improve the prospects for success in countering disinformation when we pursue solutions that enhance our own credibility.

Question 17. You testified about the importance of working with technology companies to counter disinformation, particularly on social media. Based on what we currently know about how state actors used social media to try to influence public opinion and sow discord, if confirmed, how will you engage internet and social media companies to address the Russian Government's use of their platforms for disinformation and influence campaigns? What specific steps would you recommend that the technology companies take to prevent further attempts by the Russian Government to inappropriately influence the American electorate? What steps that technology companies have taken thus far do you applaud, and what else do you think they should do?

Answer. If confirmed, I would meet with key technology companies as soon as possible to increase their collaboration with the Department. Engaging with the technology sector, particularly internet and social media companies, is critical to addressing disinformation campaigns directed by foreign nations. While I applaud the willingness of technology companies to appear before Congress and increase their transparency with respect to election-related advertising and communications, no doubt more needs to be done. I look forward, if confirmed, to consulting with colleagues at the Department, with Congress, and others to better ensure foreign government disinformation efforts, including those aimed at the American electorate, are effectively countered. Solving this is a priority.

Question 18. As you know, five American soldiers have been killed in Africa this year in countries battling terrorism and violent extremism. The Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs leads America's public diplomacy outreach, which includes messaging to counter terrorism and violent extremism. If confirmed, what specific messaging strategy would you seek to advance for Somalia and Niger to counter terrorism and violent extremism? What steps would you take to strengthen such messaging?

Answer. I understand that the Department of State already engages in some regional counterterrorism messaging in Africa, including in the Somali language. If confirmed, I would consult with colleagues at the Department to understand better what is currently being done and to identify other opportunities to use messaging to counter violent extremism in Somalia and Niger.

Question 19. Part of the mission of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs is expanding and strengthening the relationship between the people and Government of the United States and citizens of the rest of the world. How will you strengthen the relationship between Africa and the United States in the face of the administration's proposal to slash funding for one of America's signature programs for Africa-PEPFAR-which has heretofore enjoyed bipartisan support?

Answer. The relationship between Africa and the United States is of vital importance. If confirmed, I will help lead the U.S. Government's efforts to strengthen ties between the United States and foreign publics in Africa and around the world. I am a strong proponent of medical, cultural, and education diplomacy, such as the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) and PEPFAR, and I plan to build on what is currently being done, within the resources that are allocated by Congress. Public Diplomacy tools are a valuable means of expanding relationships, and I commit to looking into the effectiveness of these tools and to supporting those that demonstrate success.

Question 20. What role should the State Department play through its public communications and public diplomacy initiatives to promote democratic values and human rights?

Answer. Our core American values are Freedom, Democracy, and Equality. We need to support and encourage a free press, freedom of religion, and the right to dissent. We aspire to be an example to the world. Our role, as we tell America's stories, is to inspire other countries to follow our lead. American values are the principles that have enabled us to be a beacon to the world, and Public Diplomacy is one of the best tools our government has for communicating those values directly to people overseas.

Question 21. Under previous Republican and Democratic administrations, the State Department spokesperson held a daily press briefing, a practice that has been

discontinued in 2017. How often do you think the State Department spokesperson should hold press briefings?

Answer. I am a firm believer in more, rather than less, communication. For many years, the Department of State's press briefing has been an important tool for explaining U.S. foreign policy and national security interests to American citizens and foreign audiences. If confirmed, I plan to conduct a review of the Department's media practices, including press briefings, and provide recommendations on a way forward to the Secretary.

Question 22. The public—both in the United States and across the globe—look to the spokespeople for the State Department to lay out diplomatic priorities, foreign policy goals, and explain the rationale for the actions the United States takes. How important do you think it is for an agency like the State Department, whose critical work affects people around the world, to be transparent and forthcoming in explaining U.S. foreign policy and diplomacy? How will you seek to ensure that the Department remains committed to transparency in explaining its actions to the American public and the world?

Answer. It is important for the Department of State to be transparent and forthcoming in explaining U.S. foreign policy and our diplomatic efforts. If confirmed, I will strive to be as transparent as possible in carrying out my duties. The importance we place on transparency and freedom of expression—core American values—can serve as a model for the world, and our own communications should reflect that.

Question 23. If confirmed, how will you work to broaden State Department public affairs efforts to ensure that they reach foreign audiences on the platforms where they most frequently consume news and information?

Answer. We need to speak to people using the platforms on which they listen, and that includes heavy use of social media. The majority of people in Asia and Africa are under the age of 30, and young people consume news far differently than previous generations did. The State Department already uses a wide range of analytical tools to evaluate audience preferences and more effectively deliver U.S. messaging. If confirmed, I will seek out opportunities to broaden these efforts.

Question 24. In your testimony, you talked about the importance of capitalizing on social media platforms to communicate to a broad audience. You have significant corporate communication experience; however, the audience the State Department seeks to reach is comprised of a multitude of very diverse audiences across the globe. What specific experience do you have in developing and launching digital and social media campaigns that have effectively targeted and reached a broad audience?

Answer. When I led communications at TIAA-CREF, we were industry leaders in using social media to attract new customers and respond to the needs of a diverse base of existing customers. Because the financial services industry is highly regulated, we had to calibrate carefully our social media messaging. I understand how important it is to ensure that messages are communicated in ways that resonate with diverse audiences. I also have worked with a start-up technology company that enabled me to expand my understanding of communications technology and algorithms. If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about the unique audience considerations at the Department of State and how I, as Under Secretary, can help the career Public Diplomacy practitioners better reach these groups.

Question 25. What more can the State Department do to improve its image, and public perception of the U.S. abroad, especially in countries where public opinion of the United States or U.S. foreign policy has declined in the past year?

Answer. The United States has a great story to tell. We do more to promote international security and economic development than any other country in the world. There is a demand for U.S. technology, education, entertainment, and tourism. This presents an opportunity for the Department of State to increase support abroad for U.S. policy priorities.

If confirmed, I would identify those countries where we need to enhance public perception of the United States and determine what we can do to improve public opinion. Strategies to consider include strengthening Department messaging on the scope of U.S. development and security support, increasing promotion of high-demand programs like U.S. education, and ensuring our diplomats abroad have timely, accurate, and compelling policy guidance for use with local audiences. We need to gain trust and respect with foreign publics by reaching people where they listen using clear language that they can understand.

Question 26. As the Department continues to engage in a reorganization effort, many senior leadership posts remain vacant, and embassies are unable to fill posts

while the hiring freeze remains in effect. This has caused some of our foreign partners to question our commitment to diplomacy and to continue to serve as a leader on the global stage. For instance, at the U.N. General Assembly earlier this year, the significant reduction of State Department senior officials in attendance adversely affected our ability to fully engage with our counterparts. If confirmed, what can you do, and what will you commit to doing to ensure that our foreign allies retain their confidence in our commitment to building relationships and remaining engaged in foreign diplomacy?

Answer. Secretary Tillerson has made it clear that the Department of State is committed to retaining America's leadership role in the world, while pursuing greater operational efficiencies. He has confidence, as do I, that the highly skilled and knowledgeable people of the Department can deliver the value that the American people deserve. They will get the job done, and the United States will continue to lead. The redesign effort aims to help accomplish this goal.

Public Diplomacy has an important role to play in building relationships and engaging foreign publics. If confirmed, I commit to fully supporting the efforts of the Department's Public Diplomacy practitioners around the world and to strengthening and enhancing the tools at their disposal.

Question 27. Government corruption and human rights abuses are drivers of radicalization and bolster the message of violent extremists. How will you use the resources of your Under Secretariat to address corrupt and abusive governments to counter violent extremism?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work closely with the bureaus under my authority, with other bureaus in the Department of State, and across the interagency to ensure that the tools of Public Diplomacy are fully leveraged to help address the causes of violent extremism, including government corruption and human rights abuses.

Question 28. Greater outreach to youth audiences is something that you shared as a priority in your hearing. If confirmed, how do you plan on using both our Public Diplomacy resources in Washington and in our Embassies to reach these audiences and to ensure that these activities and outreach consider gender equities to reach an equal number of women and girls?

Answer. I believe that all Public Diplomacy programs should consider gender equity and take steps to help women and girls overcome the barriers they face in accessing information in certain areas of the world. For example, the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs seeks to provide educational opportunity through a wide range of education programs to both girls and boys in nations where schooling is still seen as a privilege, not a right.

Question 29. If confirmed, how will you leverage flagship public diplomacy tools such as the International Visitor Leadership Program, and academic programs such as Fulbright to advance U.S. values and goals abroad and ensure these programs continue to be funded to support our global priorities?

Answer. I believe that international exchange programs are a vital part of Public Diplomacy efforts to advance U.S. values and goals abroad. If confirmed, I intend to review carefully the effectiveness and impact of the Department of State's exchange programs and ensure appropriate funding is assigned to those that provide the greatest value in support of global U.S. policy objectives.

Question 30. It was reported in a recent Wall Street Journal article that several State Department managed J-1 visa exchange programs—including Summer Work Travel, Au Pair, Intern, Trainee, and Camp Counselor—are under review by the Department and White House as part of the President's Buy American, Hire American Executive Order.

- If confirmed, your job would be to oversee the Department of State's regulatory agenda and ensure the proper process is followed. As you may be aware, the Senate Appropriations Committee just approved a provision in the FY18 bill that requires, if the administration is considering any changes to the J-1 program, the full notice and comment of the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) and consulting with the committees of jurisdiction, including this committee, is followed. Do you commit to carrying out the full APA notice and comment process, as well as to consulting with relevant congressional committees?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I commit to adhering fully to APA requirements and consulting with the relevant congressional committees regarding any proposed regulatory changes to J-1 exchange programs. My understanding is that the Department of State is not currently proposing reductions in the number of participants in private sector-managed J-1 programs—including Summer Work Travel, Au Pair, In-

tern, Trainee, and Camp Counselor—and that any rulemaking affecting these programs already goes through a process that involves a notice in the Federal Register and an opportunity for public comment. I also understand that the Department follows regular Congressional notification procedures regarding how any proposed regulatory modifications to J-1 exchange programs would affect the Public Diplomacy goals of, and the estimated economic impact on, the United States.

Question 31. The State Department recently put forward a set of policy priorities, which include asserting U.S. leadership and influence, bolstering U.S. national security, and fostering economic growth for the American people. The State Department's diverse set of international exchange programs directly support all three of these goals. If confirmed, what steps will you take to expand and strengthen our international exchange programs? If confirmed, will you commit to continuing to support State Department exchange programs as key elements of America's diplomatic engagement with the world?

Answer. I agree that international exchange programs are a vital part of U.S. Public Diplomacy efforts, and if confirmed, I commit to helping ensure that the Department of State continues to prioritize its engagement with emerging world leaders through these programs. I believe academic, cultural, and professional exchange programs should remain significant and effective tools for achieving foreign policy goals, building ties, and establishing networks among current, and future, American and foreign leaders and policymakers.

Question 32. What impact would the funding cuts proposed by the administration have on the effectiveness and impact of State Department international exchange programs? Can you explain the rationale to cut and curtail our engagement with emerging leaders from around the world via exchange programs?

Answer. I have not yet had the opportunity to review the budget for international exchange programs, but will do so if confirmed. Further, if confirmed I look forward to participating in the full FY 2019 budget process.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO IRWIN STEVEN GOLDSTEIN BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question 1. The Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy is not the spokesperson or face of the department, but in charge of critical tools for promoting American values and interests to foreign audiences. The United States has always formulated and promoted policies rooted in our values as a democratic, free, and pluralistic society, inspiring people all over the world. How would you define American values? Do you believe it is in our interest to promote those values through Public Diplomacy initiatives?

Answer. Our core American values are Freedom, Democracy, and Equality. We need to support and encourage a free press, freedom of religion, and the right to dissent. We aspire to be an example to the world. We will not impose our values on others, but our role, as we tell America's stories, is to inspire other countries to follow our lead. American values are the principles that have enabled us to be a beacon to the world, and Public Diplomacy is one of the best tools our government has for communicating those values directly to people overseas.

Question 2. What Public Diplomacy programs that would be coming under your purview do you believe are the most successful? How do you define the success of Public Diplomacy programs?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to leading a comprehensive analysis of all our Public Diplomacy programs. In my conversations with Members of Congress and their staffs, it was impressed upon me how valuable programs such as the Young African Leaders Initiative are because they encourage entrepreneurship, good governance, and other American values among future leaders. The American Spaces program also appears to be successful and, if confirmed, I intend to examine the impact of security arrangements on attendance levels and ways to work with the private sector to increase access to the right audiences. In addition, the Fulbright and other academic exchange programs serve an important purpose.

The success of Public Diplomacy programs should be based on their ability to advance key American interests, and adapt to the needs of foreign audiences in a constantly changing geopolitical landscape.

Question 3. Do you believe exchange programs and information programs further our foreign policy objectives?

Answer. Yes. Exchange programs send Americans abroad to study and conduct research, which expands our ability to compete in the global economy by developing the foreign-language, cross-cultural, and leadership skills U.S. employers seek. Educational exchange programs promote U.S. higher education as a favored destination of exceptional foreign students, who in turn contribute nearly \$36 billion annually to our economy. International Visitor Leadership Programs connect future leaders with their U.S. counterparts, fostering long-term relationships that bolster effective diplomacy. These and other exchange and information programs seek to promote American values, enhance America's image, and strengthen support for U.S. policies, which increases our nation's ability to achieve its foreign policy goals.

Question 4. Do you believe you will have the resources necessary to fully execute your responsibilities and programs?

Answer. I do believe the administration's proposed budget provides the resources necessary to carry out the Public Diplomacy programs and activities most important to our nation's interests. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that our Public Diplomacy responsibilities are carried out effectively and efficiently.

Question 5. As you pointed out during your hearing, the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) plays an important role in fighting disinformation and promoting U.S. interests overseas, but the FY 2018 budget request represents a \$63.1 million decrease or 8.4 percent reduction from the prior year. How do you believe this will impact our ability to advance our security interests, including countering Russian misinformation and violent extremism?

Answer. While the administration's FY 2018 budget request includes a reduction in BBG's funding compared to FY 2017 enacted levels, the request envisions only small adjustments in funding for efforts to counter Russian misinformation and violent extremism. For instance, funding would continue for Current Time, BBG's 24/7 channel launched this year in Russian that broadcasts to former Soviet states and Russian-speaking populations. The Middle East Broadcasting Network (MBN), responsible for a wide range of programming in Arabic to counter violent extremism, is slated for a relatively modest reduction (\$5.3 million) from the FY 2017 level. I do not expect the request would substantially degrade the BBG's ability to combat Russian disinformation and violent extremism.

As the administration works with Congress to establish final FY 2018 funding levels for the BBG, I would certainly be mindful of the BBG's critical mission in advancing American security interests, including countering Russian misinformation and violent extremism.

Question 6. How do you define your role and responsibilities in relation to the BBG?

Answer. The Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs represents the Secretary of State on the Broadcasting Board of Governors and provides foreign policy guidance to help the BBG prioritize its activities and language services and to allocate resources accordingly. The Under Secretary also coordinates with the BBG to develop a comprehensive and coherent strategy—and long-term, measurable objectives—for the use of Public Diplomacy resources.

I would note that neither the Under Secretary nor the Board are involved in making editorial decisions for the BBG networks. There is a "firewall" established by the U.S. International Broadcasting Act that prohibits interference with the objective, independent reporting of news by BBG journalists, thereby safeguarding the ability of BBG journalists to develop content that reflects the highest professional standards of journalism. The Under Secretary does, however, work with the BBG to develop appropriately identified editorials that accurately present the views of the U.S. Government.

Question 7. The BBG budget also funds the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB), which has been instrumental in combatting the repressive Castro regime, but the FY 2018 OCB request is \$4.5 million below last year. How will this reduction affect our signature programming through Radio and TV Martí? As Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, how will you ensure that we continue to offer the people of Cuba uncensored information and support despite these reductions?

Answer. I appreciate your interest in the role that the Office of Cuba Broadcasting has played vis-a-vis the Cuban regime. I share your view that the goals of Radio and TV Martí should continue to provide uncensored information to a country lacking in the free-flow of information. As the Secretary of State's representative on the Broadcasting Board of Governors, if confirmed, I would evaluate potential budget reductions and trade-offs in light of this goal.

Question 8. I was pleased to hear you state in your hearing that the State Department has finally started to allocate funding for the Global Engagement Center and

requested a transfer from the Pentagon for the remaining funds. How will you ensure that this center funded by Congress to counter Russian disinformation and violent extremism is adequately resourced and supported?

Answer. My understanding is that the Department of State is pleased to be working with the Department of Defense (DoD) to effect a transfer of funds to the Global Engagement Center (GEC), as authorized by the FY 2017 National Defense Authorization Act. Proposed activities to be funded by the transfer include coordinating U.S. Government efforts in specific sub-regions; enhancing the capacity of local actors to build resilience against disinformation; and convening anti-disinformation practitioners, journalists, and other influencers to exchange best practices, build networks, and generate support for U.S. efforts against disinformation. Additionally, I understand that the GEC also leverages staff detailed from across the inter-agency—including from the intelligence community, DoD, the U.S. Agency for International Development, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Broadcasting Board of Governors, as well as from within the Department of State—to coordinate U.S. Government messaging efforts to counter disinformation and ensure they are streamlined and not duplicative. If confirmed, I would work closely with leadership within the Department of State, the interagency, and the administration to ensure the GEC has the human, budgetary, and technological resources needed to accomplish its mission effectively and efficiently.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO IRWIN STEVEN GOLDSTEIN BY SENATOR CHRISTOPHER A. COONS

Question 1. I understand that the administration is reviewing the J-1 visa category in relation to implementing the President's Executive Order on Buy American, Hire American. What role would you play in reviewing draft regulations or policy guidance that could alter J-1 programs?

Answer. I intend to review carefully any suggested changes to J-visa regulations and policy guidance, which currently facilitate Public Diplomacy engagement with approximately 300,000 participants from 200 countries and territories annually. J visas are for educational and cultural exchange programs, not work programs. Additionally, private sector-managed exchange programs are funded primarily through fees paid by participants, at virtually no cost to the U.S. Government. My understanding is that existing regulations prohibit J-visa programs with a work component from displacing American workers and that the Department of State is not currently proposing reductions in the number of participants in these programs.

Question 2. I led an amendment to the Senate's FY 2018 State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations bill that would require any changes to the Exchange Visitor Program to go through consultation with Congress and a formal rulemaking process. If confirmed, do you commit to adhering to a transparent process that includes meaningful input from the stakeholder community if modifications to the Exchange Visitor Program are considered?

Answer. Yes. I want meaningful input from the stakeholder community and will make any decisions on the Exchange Visitor Program in a fully transparent manner.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO IRWIN STEVEN GOLDSTEIN BY SENATOR EDWARD J. MARKEY

Question 1. What is your response to calls for U.S. Public Diplomacy to adopt more propagandistic approaches to communicating with foreign publics, in order to more effectively combat disinformation about the United States and its policies?

Answer. I do not support a propagandistic approach to communicating with foreign publics. The United States needs to present an accurate portrayal of America, its citizens, and our role in the world using the diverse array of Public Diplomacy tools, including social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter. By focusing on American values such as transparency, accountability through elections, and rule of law, we increase our credibility and improve prospects for success in countering disinformation.

Question 2. How can U.S. Public Diplomacy effectively reach publics deluged by a "firehose" of opposing views and disinformation from a multitude of sources?

Answer. To reach publics deluged by opposing views and disinformation effectively, U.S. Public Diplomacy must speak with one voice where people listen. This effort should use all forms of communication including, but not limited to, social media, BBG networks and programs such as Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty and Current Time, and any other vehicle that allows America to accurately show that its core values of democracy, equality, and freedom underpin all that it does. We also need to help enhance the capacity of local actors and other credible voices to expose false narratives and inoculate communities against disinformation.

Question 3. Does U.S. Public Diplomacy risk becoming too reactive, trapped in a perpetual cycle of defensive explanation?

Answer. Yes, I do believe that U.S. Public Diplomacy risks becoming too reactive. With the stakes as high as they are, we cannot afford to be playing defense all the time. We must have a strategy to actively communicate our message and anticipate future challenges, so that the ground is well seeded with the truth before our opponents attempt to spread their misinformation.

Question 4. How can U.S. Public Diplomacy best capture the attention and trust of foreign publics in a way that durably diminishes their susceptibility to untruthful propaganda?

Answer. U.S. Public Diplomacy practitioners around the globe actively work to counter disinformation, debunk myths, and reassure allies. There is an emphasis on improving media literacy, expanding civil society capacity, and digital diplomacy outreach, but there is much more that can be done. I plan to look at all available research, meet frequently with tech companies, and develop clear and concise messages designed to diminish susceptibility to untruthful propaganda. The average age in many countries is under 30. We must reach them where they listen, and that is what I plan to do if confirmed.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO IRWIN STEVEN GOLDSTEIN BY SENATOR CORY BOOKER

Question 1. Do you believe that our partners have the will and the capability to counter efforts by ISIS, its sympathizers, or any follow-on organization that relies on spreading its extremist messages?

Answer. My understanding is that the Department of State is expanding its counter-terrorism messaging efforts through a growing network of foreign government and non-governmental partners, as people and groups closest to the battlefield of narratives are often the most credible voices in countering terrorist propaganda. Many of these groups already have the ability to counter terrorist propaganda, but other groups need more capacity.

The Department's Global Engagement Center (GEC) currently works with messaging centers in the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, and Djibouti, among other locations. These messaging centers harness the creativity, expertise, and unique credibility of local actors to generate positive content that effectively challenges the falsehoods of ISIS and other international terrorist organizations. The GEC helps develop the capacity of these and other credible voices to reach the right audiences by sharing best practices from the private sector, including online audience analysis.

Within the next twelve to eighteen months, the GEC intends to map, assess, and coordinate U.S. training and support for foreign national and international messaging centers in East Asia, Africa, and the Middle East to better enhance their abilities and strengthen the network among the centers and the United States.

Question 2. Mr. Goldstein, in my travels to Saudi Arabia, the West Bank, Jordan, and other areas, I have been consistently told that international exchanges are one of our diplomats' best tools. People to people exchanges I believe are one of the most effective ways to build long-term relationships and mutual understanding between U.S. and emerging foreign youth and leaders.

In the President's FY 2018 budget for State Department programs, however, exchanges funding received a proposed cut of over 50 percent from FY 2017 levels.

- Do you agree with the argument that exchanges funding should be cut? Are there certain exchange programs that should be expanded?

Answer. I agree that person-to-person exchanges are a vital part of America's Public Diplomacy effort, both short term and long term. If confirmed, I intend to review carefully the effectiveness and impact of the Department of State's exchange

programs and the funding assigned to each. Programs that provide great value may warrant expansion.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO SEAN P. LAWLER 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. Throughout my 21 years in uniform, there were many occasions where I was personally involved in promoting human rights and democracy. A few specific examples would include: non-combatant rescue operations in Tirana, Albania in which I was awarded the Humanitarian Service Medal; I served in Operation SUPPORT HOPE to provide refugee support during the Rwandan genocide; received a personal award for support operations in Kosovo and Bosnia Herzegovina following hostilities. Finally, I was deployed at sea in Operations IRAQI FREEDOM and ENDURING FREEDOM. Preserving our American rights and supporting freedoms around the world has been the focal point of my career.

Question 2. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups?

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

Answer. Throughout the course of my military career, I witnessed first-hand the importance of a diverse working environment that promotes teamwork and mutual respect. If confirmed, I look forward to leading the Office of the Chief of Protocol by example in the promotion of an atmosphere where discrimination has no place.

Establishing a workplace culture that promotes, encourages and is supportive of inclusion, equality and diversity is vital for growth and personal development. If confirmed, I will work together with supervisors to develop mission critical strategies for increased awareness and develop best practices to promote a culture that is built on inclusion through understanding, open dialogue, training, team exercises and mentoring opportunities.

Question 3. 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 4. 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 5. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in any country abroad?

Answer. Neither I nor my immediate family have financial interests in any country abroad.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO LISA A. JOHNSON 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. Throughout my Foreign Service career, I have promoted human rights and democracy around the globe in meaningful ways.

Most recently, in The Bahamas, my team and I worked closely with the Bahamian Government and its Inter-Ministerial Task Force to combat Trafficking in Persons. By undertaking extensive awareness and training campaigns, improving victim identification and care, and arresting and prosecuting traffickers, The Bahamas in

2015 became the first Tier One country in the Caribbean. With our support and close engagement, The Bahamas since has maintained its Tier One ranking.

The Bahamas has the highest incidence of rape in the Caribbean. I speak publicly about sexual and gender-based violence, and the Embassy funded an NGO grant for a training and awareness program that was implemented throughout the islands.

Corruption is a major problem in The Bahamas. At the same time, civil society is relatively weak. I convened NGOs advocating for transparency and accountability, supported participation in U.S.-funded exchange programs and a grant-writing workshop, and helped local Bahamians begin establishing a Transparency International (TI) local chapter. For the May 2017 General Elections in The Bahamas, I developed and implemented a U.S. Embassy International Observers Mission. We fielded over 30 observers and coordinated closely with OAS and Commonwealth observer missions in evaluating conduct of the election.

My greatest and most-wide ranging impact on human rights and democracy was as Office Director for Africa and the Middle East in the State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL). Effective rule of law is a necessary component of any democratic system. In the wake of the Arab Spring, my team initiated a program in Tunisia to reform the Ministry of Interior and security forces, re-orienting them toward serving the Tunisian people, including through community policing programs. In Morocco, we built the capacity of an independent anti-corruption commission and assisted an NGO in creating a cell phone "app" to allow citizens to report corruption. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, we worked with NGOs to deliver justice to rural victims of rape through an innovative mobile courts system. Our INL programs in over 30 countries in Africa and the Middle East, from professionalizing police forces to increasing court efficiency to improving prison conditions, all had at their core a strong human rights and democracy component.

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

Answer. Namibia is a stable multiparty democracy with regular, free, and fair elections. It has an independent judiciary and free and open media.

The State Department's human rights report notes that the most significant human rights problems in Namibia include the slow pace of judicial proceedings and resulting lengthy pretrial detention, sometimes under poor conditions, and violence and discrimination against women and children. If confirmed, I would work with the Government of Namibia and civil society to address these problems while also highlighting Namibian successes so that they can serve as an example to the region.

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

Answer. Namibia is approximately twice the size of California, with a population of just under 2.5 million. Physical travel to locations and to meet with key human rights partners throughout the country can be challenging, but if confirmed, I would place a strong focus on engagement outside of Windhoek.

Also, in order to fully engage on these issues, it is imperative that U.S.-Namibian relations continue to strengthen. Outreach and public diplomacy programs can provide Namibians with accurate information regarding U.S. efforts in the country and dispel any lingering mistrust toward U.S. intentions and foreign policy objectives. If confirmed, I will continue to work through our mission to invest in the next generation of Namibian leaders, including through programs like the Young African Leaders Initiative.

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

Answer. I am committed to meeting with human rights, civil society, and other non-governmental organizations. If confirmed, I will also ensure that my staff fully implements and complies with the Leahy Law and similar efforts.

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

Answer. The Human Rights Report indicates that there were no reports of political prisoners or detainees in Namibia last year. If confirmed, I would engage with Namibia to address such cases should they arise.

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

Answer. If confirmed, I would work with the Government of Namibia on matters of human rights, civil rights, and governance, while also highlighting Namibian successes as an example for the region.

Question 7. 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 8. 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 9. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in Namibia?

Answer. No.

Question 10. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. As a leader and manager in several diplomatic posts, I know that diversity enriches our work, as it does the United States as a whole. If confirmed, I will tap the diversity of my staff to benefit all at the Mission. I also pledge to promote a range of backgrounds and perspectives in the individuals whom I review for future positions.

Question 11. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy is fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. If confirmed, I will ensure that everyone on my team is treated professionally, that their rights are respected, that they are safe, and that they have the tools they need to perform their jobs. We are all one team working to advance U.S.-Namibia relations and the interests of the United States and the American people.

Question 12. Namibia ranked 53rd of 176 on Transparency International's Corruption Index.

- In what sectors is most official corruption found in Namibia?
- If confirmed, what tools do you have at your disposal to help address corruption and what actions will you take as Ambassador to advocate for improved transparency and good governance with relevant Namibian stakeholders?

Answer. The State Department's Human Rights Report notes that Namibian law provides criminal penalties for corruption by officials; however, the Government did not implement the law effectively, and officials sometimes engaged in corrupt practices with impunity. There were isolated reports of corruption by individuals in government.

If confirmed, I will use the full resources of our Mission to strengthen U.S. efforts to work with the Government of Namibia, as well as with non-governmental organizations, to increase transparency and promote good governance.

Question 13. The State Department has ranked Namibia "Tier 2" on trafficking in persons.

- If confirmed, what types of U.S. diplomatic efforts and assistance, if any, would you pursue to help Namibia better tackle this problem?
- In what ways might such efforts be incorporated into existing U.S. programs that aim to help strengthen Namibia's security sector and the rule of law?

Answer. Our annual trafficking in persons report designates Namibia as a "Tier Two" country. This means that, while the Government of Namibia does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking, it is making significant efforts to do so.

The Government of Namibia's efforts include identifying and referring to care, more trafficking victims, drafting a national mechanism to refer victims to care, and strengthening inter-ministerial coordination on trafficking cases.

The Government did not meet minimum standards, according to the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, in several key areas. While the Government did not conduct TIP awareness activities or convict any traffickers in the last reporting period, it did conduct a major awareness event in July of this year. The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of International Relations and Cooperation as well as the Minister of Gender Equality and Child Welfare hosted the high-level event to mark the World Day against Trafficking in Persons.

If confirmed, I would continue the productive dialogue with the Namibian Government on this issue and include it in my engagement across the Government. For example, I would look for opportunities to provide Namibian officials with TIP-specific training, and use public diplomacy resources to amplify our messaging regarding this problem.

Question 14. Namibia is named in the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) Strategy for Accelerating HIV/AIDS Epidemic Control (2017–2020) as one of 13 high-burdened countries prioritized for investment during the life of the strategy to achieve the 90-90-90 targets by 2020, whereby 90 percent of people living with HIV know their status, 90 percent of people who know their status are accessing treatment and 90 percent of people on treatment are virally suppressed.

- What are the main challenges facing the country in achieving their 90-90-90 goal?
- If confirmed, what will you do to support Namibia and its communities in achieving that goal?

Answer. Approximately one in seven Namibians is HIV positive. This represents a profound and continuing challenge, but the country has made substantial progress in dealing with HIV/AIDS, and our partnership under PEPFAR has been integral to that success.

Last year, fewer than 8,000 Namibians were newly infected with HIV, less than 5 percent of babies born to HIV-positive mothers became infected, and fewer than 3,200 patients died from HIV/AIDS. Most striking, an estimated 100,000 Namibian lives—nearly 5 percent of the country's total population—have been saved.

Currently, 88 percent of Namibians with HIV know their status. Free antiretroviral (ARV) treatment is widely available across the country; 77 percent of infected adults and 90 percent of infected children are on ARVs. Namibia is extremely close to being among the first African nations to achieve the 90-90-90 goals, but significant challenges remain, including high rates of infection among youth, and, disproportionately, young women. In the years to come, it will be necessary for the United States and Namibia to continue to fund specific efforts to target at-risk populations.

The United States has played an integral role in these achievements, which have required a major investment. Of the roughly \$2 billion in foreign assistance the U.S. Government has invested in Namibia since 2003, about \$1.5 billion has been dedicated to the fight against HIV/AIDS. Namibia's Government directly funds two-thirds of the national HIV response. In the years to come, it will be important to continue transitioning to greater Namibian ownership of the HIV/AIDS response.

If confirmed, I will continue to partner with the Government of Namibia on this critical policy and humanitarian priority.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO LISA A. JOHNSON BY SENATOR EDWARD J. MARKEY

Question 1. The reported commercial and military ties between Namibia and North Korea are concerning. In 2017, U.N. sanctions monitoring experts twice reported on their investigations into the activities in Namibia of the Mansudae Overseas Project Group, a North Korean construction firm that has violated U.N. sanctions, and the Korea Mining Development Trading Corporation (KOMID), a U.N.-sanctioned North Korean entity that has engaged in prohibited financial transactions. In early 2017, the U.N. experts reported that the Namibian Government had admitted that KOMID and Mansudae had been active in building and supplying a national munitions factory between 2010 and 2015; that Mansudae had provided laborers for the project; and that Mansudae had been involved in the construction of monuments and government buildings in Namibia. Namibia has reported that it

ended its relations with the two firms, in compliance with U.N. Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 2270 (2016), but such activities may have continued.

- What is the extent of reported Namibian military and commercial ties to North Korea?
- What has been the U.S. response to Namibia's ties to North Korea? Has Namibia responded adequately to U.S. outreach regarding Namibia serving as a continued source of funding for North Korea's illicit activities?
- Will you commit to pressuring the Government of Namibia to ending its commercial and military relationship with North Korea?

Answer. North Korea's stated intention to put a nuclear warhead on an ICBM poses a grave threat to the entire world. North Korea is a global menace, and in response, we need to see action from all countries to increase pressure on the DPRK to compel the regime to abandon its U.N.-proscribed nuclear and missile programs.

In response to engagement from the United States and the international community, Namibia has taken positive steps to address the threat posed by North Korea. In February 2015, the Namibian Government expelled the last of the official North Korean diplomats present in Namibia. In June 2016, the Namibian Government publicly announced an end to its commercial relationship with North Korea. Since then, Namibia has implemented that statement and affirmed that it is abiding fully by all U.N. Security Council Resolutions related to North Korea, including by ending contracts with UN-designated companies. The Namibian Government has further stated that all North Korean nationals have departed the country. Namibia has made great strides in distancing itself from North Korea and eliminating sources of foreign funding for the Kim regime's ballistic missile and nuclear weapons programs.

While we have been pleased with Namibia's recent cooperation, the United States will not hesitate to act unilaterally to address individuals and entities supporting the North Korean regime. On August 22, the Treasury Department designated Qingdao Construction (Namibia), a Namibian-based subsidiary of a Chinese company, for connections to the DPRK. Treasury also sanctioned a Namibia-based North Korean official linked to the Mansudae Overseas Projects, a DPRK firm also subject to U.S. sanctions. Through this action, we made clear that we will go wherever the evidence leads to cut off funding that supports Pyongyang's unlawful activities.

If confirmed, I will make engagement on North Korea a priority and continue to work with Namibia to meet its pledge to comply with all U.N. Security Council resolutions and to further curtail any relations with the North Korea.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO REBECCA GONZALEZ 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. Throughout my personal and professional life I have championed human dignity, respect, inclusion, and opportunity. These guiding principles inform all my interactions. I make a proactive and concerted effort to promote human rights, equality, and democracy in my leadership, diplomatic engagement, and interactions in the work environment. As the Acting Labor Attache in Panama, I worked on workers' rights, engaging the Government of Panama on labor conditions, formation of new unions, fair hiring practices, and collective bargaining agreements. I met regularly with a range of labor leaders, and advocated for workers' rights with an often reluctant and unresponsive Labor Ministry. As a result of my efforts and contribution, I was able to advance our efforts in promoting workers' rights with the Government of Panama and improve working conditions for workers.

As a career Foreign Service Officer with a focus on management, much of my personal effort to promote human rights and democratic principles has occurred within our Embassies and the Department. Over the course of my career, I recruited and led diverse teams and advocated and advanced issues of fairness, equity, and inclusiveness within the workplace.

For example, when serving in India I worked closely with and mentored a multi-ethnic staff, promoting a culture of respect and inclusion so that regardless of gender, religion, or background, women and men alike felt comfortable and valued. In my daily management of the team, I provided opportunities for personal and professional growth and ensured we made reasonable accommodations for our employees

with disabilities. I am proud that those I hired and mentored continue to thrive and are important partners contributing to our foreign policy goals in India. While serving in Saudi Arabia, there were instances when certain employees lectured and admonished third-country female employees for not being "good Muslims"—i.e. modest and wearing the abaya/veil. I engaged with all employees, spoke to the targeted females, and took corrective action to ensure these incidents stopped immediately. In both India and Saudi Arabia, I believe that my actions resulted in a positive, safe, professional environment that valued and respected the uniqueness and differences of individuals.

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

Answer. The most pressing human rights issue in Lesotho is the control and conduct of the Lesotho Defense Force, which has been at the center of most incidents of political instability in Lesotho for 40 years. It must be transformed into a professional force fully subject to civilian authority if Lesotho is to move beyond recurrent patterns of political instability and grow into a more mature democracy. In addition, allegations of police abuse are common. Gender-based violence is also a major challenge. If confirmed, I would continue to press our concerns about these issues, use the full range of public diplomacy tools to shine a spotlight on them, and engage the Government of Lesotho to address them.

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

Answer. Impunity and insufficient civilian control of the security sector remain the strongest obstacles and challenges to improving the human rights situation in Lesotho. Security sector reform is essential, a view endorsed by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Commission of Inquiry, which in 2015 investigated unrest in Lesotho and provided specific recommendations. As a regional body to which Lesotho belongs, SADC will play a significant role in supporting Lesotho in this effort. I look forward to working with the Government of Lesotho and with SADC to continue to target U.S. assistance in ways that will advance reforms. I will also continue to seek out supportive voices in civil society, the business sector, the local diplomatic community, and the Government itself. If confirmed as Ambassador, I will work with the Government of Lesotho, civil society, and human rights activists to increase accountability of those responsible for human rights abuses and other illegal acts.

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 Lesotho? 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. Most definitely, if confirmed as Ambassador, I will place importance on meeting with people from the full spectrum of society in Lesotho, particularly representatives of civil society and NGOs. If confirmed, I commit to meeting with U.S. and local human rights NGOs and ensuring that embassy personnel take the necessary steps for all security assistance and security cooperation activities to receive Leahy and other vetting to reinforce human rights concerns.

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

Answer. If confirmed, I will ensure my team actively engages with the Government of Lesotho to address allegations of abuse or unfair treatment. I will ensure that we continue to advocate with the Government of Lesotho to respect the rule of law and due process for all citizens in Lesotho.

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

Answer. If confirmed as Ambassador, I will engage with Lesotho on matters of human rights, civil rights, and governance. Like my predecessor, I will continue to engage actively in pressing Lesotho to improve respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, both in regular interactions with the most senior government officials, and by using the full range of public diplomacy tools and available funding for democracy and governance programming.

Question 7. 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 might have through appropriate channels.

Question 8. 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 might have through appropriate channels.

Question 9. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in Lesotho?

Answer. No.

Question 10. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. I am the person I am today because people mentored, helped, and gave me opportunities. If confirmed as Ambassador, one of my top priorities will be to mentor staff, recruit with an eye toward diversity, foster appreciation and respect for differences, and provide opportunities for employees' professional and personal growth. The support I give will not be limited solely to employees; my support would extend to our community as a whole and involve ensuring that family members are doing well, are given professional opportunities for employment when available, and feel part of the embassy community.

I will work hard to create an environment that is respectful and inclusive of different backgrounds, experiences, ideas, and perspectives. This commitment to diversity has been evident throughout my career. I have consistently gone out of my way to provide opportunities to everyone, encourage individuals from underrepresented groups, and promote a culture of trust and inclusion. I will actively engage and support relevant State Department organizations that support and advocate for employees of various backgrounds.

Question 11. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy is fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. If confirmed as Ambassador, I will set an example for those under my authority and direct them to maintain inclusive environments in their sections and agencies, and will counsel accordingly when I learn of problems.

Question 12. Have there have been any material changes to your financial assets, income, or any other information requested by the OGE financial disclosure form since the date you signed it? If so, please list and explain below, and whether you have raised them with OGE.

Answer. No, there have been no material changes.

Corruption

Question 13. Lesotho is ranked 83rd of 176 on Transparency International's Corruption Index.

- In what sectors is most official corruption found in Lesotho?
- If confirmed, what tools do you have at your disposal to help address corruption and what actions will you take as Ambassador to advocate for improved transparency and good governance with relevant Basotho stakeholders?

Answer. Corruption impacts multiple sectors in Lesotho; however, it is most pervasive in the public sector. This limits the country's ability to grow and produce wealth for its people. While the Government of Lesotho has shown an intention to combat corruption, steps to date have not been adequate. Anti-corruption institutions, principally the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offenses (DCEO), lack adequate capacity to address all reported cases of corruption in the country. Anti-corruption policies and accountability mechanisms are generally weak, and the public's access to information about the Government's action is limited. The general public believes the army and the police fail to hold officers accountable for various abuses, including corruption.

If confirmed as Ambassador, I would press the Government of Lesotho to take concrete steps to reduce corruption and improve transparency and good governance.

I would work with the Government of Lesotho to strengthen its efforts to address corruption through implementation of national anti-corruption laws, such as requiring public officials to disclose their assets. I would strengthen U.S. efforts to work with the Government of Lesotho, as well as with non-governmental organizations, to increase transparency and promote good governance to better combat corruption and impunity. I would ensure our Embassy provides training and exchange opportunities for government and civil society to promote transparency and good governance.

Trafficking in Persons

Question 14. The State Department has ranked Lesotho “Tier 2” on trafficking in persons.

- If confirmed, what types of U.S. diplomatic efforts and assistance, if any, would you pursue to help Lesotho better tackle this problem?
- In what ways might such efforts be incorporated into existing U.S. programs that aim to help strengthen Lesotho’s security sector and the rule of law?

Answer. In the Department’s most recent Trafficking in Persons report, Lesotho was listed as a Tier 2 country. This means that the Government of Lesotho does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking; however, it is making significant efforts to do so by increasing efforts compared to previous years. While Lesotho has laws against human trafficking, prosecution and enforcement efforts remain uneven. Specifically, prosecutions have been delayed due to lack of clarity over court jurisdiction. If confirmed, I will urge the Government of Lesotho to continue its efforts to address these issues. I would look to raise the public’s awareness of human trafficking and encourage training of law enforcement and judicial officials to investigate and prosecute these crimes.

We currently have limited military cooperation and security sector activities with Lesotho, due to documented human rights concerns related to the military. Leahy vetting standards preclude assistance to a number of key units in the Lesotho Defense Force. We will be unable to resume general assistance to the military until soldiers implicated in human rights abuses are held accountable, and until there is serious reform of the security sector.

We are engaging with the Government of Lesotho on programs that provide shelter and assistance for victims of Trafficking in Persons. Various local NGOs receive supplemental funding from the Government to implement these vital services. The Government of Lesotho has also established a multi-sectorial committee that is responsible for liaison with the Child and Gender Protection Unit (CGPU). Working together, these government entities can continue to improve enforcement of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act. If confirmed, I would partner with the Government and civil society in Lesotho to increase the effectiveness of Lesotho’s rule of law institutions and push for additional programs to help strengthen the country’s judicial capacity to investigate and prosecute these heinous crimes.

HIV/AIDS

Question 15. Lesotho is named in the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) Strategy for Accelerating HIV/AIDS Epidemic Control (2017–2020) as one of 13 high-burdened countries prioritized for investment during the life of the strategy to achieve the 90-90-90 targets by 2020, whereby 90 percent of people living with HIV know their status, 90 percent of people who know their status are accessing treatment, and 90 percent of people on treatment are virally suppressed.

- What are the main challenges facing the country in achieving their 90-90-90 goal?
- If confirmed, what will you do to support Lesotho and its communities in achieving that goal?

Answer. In partnership with PEPFAR, Lesotho has made impressive progress in fighting HIV/AIDS and is on the path to reaching the 90-90-90 targets by 2020. Recent figures from Lesotho’s Population-based HIV Impact Assessment (LePHIA) survey, which were released at the U.N. General Assembly in New York, showed that 77 percent of HIV-positive Basotho know their status; 90 percent of those who know their status are on treatment; and 88 percent of those who are on treatment are virally-suppressed.

Using this data, we know that we need to continue to identify those who do not know their status. This means we will need to continue to optimize HIV testing and counseling through expanded patient-initiated testing and counseling and targeted community testing. The Government of Lesotho’s decisive move last year to launch a national test and treat policy, meaning those who test positive are immediately able to start treatment, can be expected to promote further progress in controlling

the epidemic. If confirmed, I will continue to work in partnership with the Government of Lesotho to fight the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Lesotho, and build on the success achieved thus far, and find ways to maximize efficient use of our resources under PEPFAR.

Security Sector Reform

Question 16. According to the State Department's 2016 human right report, major human rights problems in Lesotho include "torture and cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment and punishment by LDF members, police torture, and societal abuse of women and children." The report also observed that "officials who committed abuses, whether in the security services or elsewhere in the Government" were not prosecuted, "although the army reportedly surrendered two soldiers implicated in a murder without political implications to police. Impunity remained a significant problem."

- How can the United States most effectively help to support security sector reform, particularly regarding military justice and civilian control over the military?
- What is the status of former military chief Tlali Kamoli? And, what is being done to address the murder of his successor, Lieutenant-General Khoantle Motsomotso, in early September 2017?

Answer. The United States has been engaging and should continue to engage with the Government of Lesotho to press for security sector reform to ensure accountability in the security sector and adherence to the rule of law, as the Southern African Development Community's (SADC) Commission of Inquiry recommended. The killing of Commander Motsomotso further emphasizes the need for security sector reform. The recently elected government has taken steps toward full implementation of SADC's recommendations and, if confirmed as Ambassador, I would continue to urge the Government to take concrete steps to implement SADC's recommendations fully. I would continue to reiterate that the United States takes this issue seriously and encourage the Government of Lesotho to undertake these much-needed reforms in a transparent and inclusive manner.

A national dialogue has recently begun in Lesotho, which includes the involvement of the current government, the opposition, and civil society organizations, with the intention of developing concrete and long-lasting reforms. The United States does not currently provide training to Lesotho's army due to Leahy Law concerns. However, the Embassy continues to monitor recent government steps to hold army officers accountable for past crimes. Such actions could eventually allow for the resumption of U.S. training and direct contributions to needed security sector reform.

Former Lesotho Defense Forces (LDF) Commander Kamoli is currently in police detention. He is awaiting a bail hearing and is facing 14 charges of attempted murder related to bombings in January 2014 and one charge of murder for the killing of a police official. Two senior officers implicated in former LDF Commander Mahao's 2015 murder allegedly killed General Motsomotso. Motsomotso's bodyguards subsequently killed these suspects in a confrontation. On September 14, the police also charged a third soldier in connection with the Motsomotso murder.

Following the killing of Commander Motsomotso, the Government of Lesotho requested that SADC deploy troops to Lesotho to support the Government as it moves to hold soldiers accountable for wrongdoing and in its efforts to undertake security sector reforms. A SADC force is expected to arrive in Lesotho in the coming weeks.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO JAMES RANDOLPH EVANS BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Human Rights

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

Answer. I have always believed that making a difference in one's community is a fundamental tool for defending human rights. At the beginning of my career, I was active in the Boy Scouts of America, serving as Member Chairman (1985–86), District Chairman (1986–1988), and receiving the National Quality District Award in 1987 & 1988. I have been continuously active in my churches, serving now on the Board of the Church of the Apostles. In addition, my wife Linda and I have supported financially and in a leadership position, with me serving as General Counsel, "Leading the Way"—a worldwide program that seeks to promote greater respect for

human rights—including freedom from torture, freedom of expression, women's rights, children's rights, and the protection of minorities around the globe.

Recently, through *Leading the Way*, we personally funded anti-rejection medicines for a kidney transplant refugee for almost two years until he and his family were able to emigrate from northern Iraq to Australia. Similarly, in 2004, we facilitated funds and donations in Memory of Airman 1st Class Antoine Holt, USAF through the Marine Corps—Law Enforcement Foundation to purchase a \$20,000 maturity value scholastic Patriot Bond for Airman Holt's daughter Carmen. Airman Holt was a soldier from our county killed in the Iraq war.

The Georgia Bar has twice asked me to step in to help with pressing issues, including chairing the Suicide Prevention and Awareness Committee (2012–2014) and chairing the Task Force for Indigent Services (where we developed funding mechanisms for providing free legal assistance to the indigent). We also support the Salvation Army, Zoo Atlanta, various military related charities, and currently sponsor through Children's Hope Chest three children in Uganda—Agnes Asio; Benjamin Opolot; and Simon Peter Ebeuu. We have previously sponsored other children through World Vision.

The impact of our collective service has been to improve the lives of others in our community, our State, and around the world in direct and personal ways for them, our country, and our world. From general support to personal involvement, we have been committed to and continue to promote human rights and democracy with both macro and individual impact on the lives of others.

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

Answer. The Grand Duchy of Luxembourg enjoys a democratic government with free and fair elections, the rule of law, and guarantees of basic rights and liberties. According to the 2016 State Department Human Rights Report, there were no reports of egregious human rights abuses in Luxembourg. In 2016, the United States downgraded Luxembourg in its annual Trafficking in Persons (TIP) to Tier Two. After the report came out in June 2016, the Government of Luxembourg modified its Criminal Code to facilitate the fight against TIP and developed a National Action Plan, among other steps. Due to these efforts, Luxembourg was upgraded to Tier 1 in the 2017 report. To ensure sustained progress in addressing human trafficking, if confirmed, I will ensure the Embassy continues to closely monitor Luxembourg's anti-trafficking efforts and seek ways for our governments to work together and share best practices to continue to make progress against trafficking in persons.

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

Answer. Luxembourg not only upholds human rights at home, but it is a leader in promoting human rights around the world. It is one of the most generous countries in the world, devoting more than one percent of its gross national income to development aid. In his 2015 speech to the U.N. General Assembly, Prime Minister Bettel said that development must be human-rights-based, and must include issues of governance, justice, peace, security, environmental protection, sustainable consumption and production patterns, as well as sustained economic growth. If confirmed, I will seek opportunities for the United States and Luxembourg to continue to work together to promote and advance human rights around the globe.

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 Luxembourg?

Answer. The Embassy routinely meets with NGOs in Luxembourg on issues from TIP, to religious freedom, to human rights. If confirmed, I will ensure that engagement continues. Additionally, I would be open to meeting with any NGOs in the U.S. that wished to discuss human rights, civil society, or other issues in Luxembourg.

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

Answer. I am not aware of any cases of political prisoners in Luxembourg.

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

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

Answer. Yes. I am committed to ensuring our Mission remains engaged on these issues. Luxembourg shares our commitment to universal values such as human rights, and the Government of Luxembourg holds itself to the highest standards with regards to protecting the rights and liberties of its people. If confirmed, I will ensure that engagement on human rights and good governance remains an integral component of our mission.

Diversity

Question 8. 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 U.S. Embassy in Luxembourg are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?"

Answer. One of the foundational ideals of this country is the idea that all of us are created equal. If confirmed, I will dedicate myself to ensuring that each and every member of my team is given the opportunities and tools needed to succeed, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, national origin or age.

If confirmed, not only will I lead by example, demonstrating my own commitment to diversity and inclusiveness, but I will also work with the Deputy Chief of Mission and Country Team to ensure that all Embassy Luxembourg supervisors uphold equal employment opportunity principles. I will also direct our Mission managers responsible for hiring and recruitment to ensure that Embassy Luxembourg remains a diverse and inclusive workplace where all team members have an equal opportunity to achieve success.

Conflicts of Interest

Question 9. 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 10. 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 11. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in Luxembourg?

Answer. If confirmed, upon taking post, no. Currently, my law firm has an office there. If confirmed, upon taking office, I will sever all ties with my current law firm.

Voting Rights

Question 12. Have you ever supported or advanced policies that made it more difficult for eligible American citizens to exercise their right to vote?

Answer. On election issues, I have consistently supported early voting, no-excuse absentee voting, and provisional ballots. As an appointed member of the Georgia State Election Board, I worked with my fellow board members whenever possible in a bipartisan way in the implementation of the 2006 Georgia law passed that year by the Georgia legislature and signed by the Governor requiring state officials to issue, free of charge, a photo identification card to any registered voter and requiring every voter who casts a ballot in person to produce an identification card with a photograph.

The United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit upheld the constitutionality of the law when it affirmed the United States District Court for the North-

ern District of Georgia's same determination after a trial on the merits finding that any burden imposed was not undue or significant. The full opinion by the Eleventh Circuit can be found at *Common Cause/Georgia v. Billups*, 554 F.3d 1340 (2009). The United States Supreme Court unanimously denied certiorari in *NAACP v. Billups*, 129 S.Ct. 2770, 174 L. Ed. 271 (2009).

Similarly, the Georgia Supreme Court itself determined that the 2006 Georgia law was constitutional under Georgia's Constitution in *Democratic Party of Georgia, Inc. v. Perdue*, 288 Ga. 720 (2011) stating that: "the photo ID requirement for in-person voting is authorized by Art. II, Sec. I, Par. I [of the Georgia Constitution], as a reasonable procedure for verifying that the individual appearing to vote in person is actually the same person who registered to vote." *Id.* at 725-26. The Court stated: "As did virtually every other court that considered this issue, we find the photo ID requirement as implemented in the 2006 Act to be a minimal, reasonable, and non-discriminatory restriction which is warranted by the important regulatory interests of preventing voter fraud." *Id.* at 730.

Question 13. In your testimony, you stated that opponents challenged Georgia's photo ID law while the State Election Board was in the process of mailing "educational" letters to approximately 300,000 voters. However, the 2006 Photo ID Act had been challenged in both federal and state court well before the letters were mailed in September of 2006. Can you clarify whether or not opponents had challenged the law before the Election Board began the process of mailing the letters?

Answer. Multiple election specific challenges were filed to the law in 2006. Yet, it was contemplated that Georgia's educational efforts would continue. The Georgia Supreme Court in *Democratic Party of Georgia, Inc. v. Perdue*, 288 Ga. 720, 721-22 (2011), described the federal injunction and the educational efforts in *Common Cause/Georgia v. Billups*, 439 F. Supp. 2d 1294, 1351 (N.D. Ga. 2006), as follows:

The district court preliminarily enjoined enforcement of the 2006 Act, but limited the injunction to the July 18, 2006 primary elections and corresponding primary run-off and declined to extend the injunction to future elections. [Cite omitted.] The court so ruled after finding that efforts to educate voters concerning the statutory photo ID requirements had been insufficient in the time available prior to the 2006 primary elections and thus posed an undue burden on certain voters. [Cite omitted.] The district court noted, however:

In issuing this Order, the Court **does not intend to imply that all Photo ID requirements would be invalid or overly burdensome on voters.** Certainly, the Court can conceive of ways that the State could impose and implement a Photo ID requirement without running afoul of the requirements of the Constitution. Indeed, **if the State allows sufficient time for its education efforts with respect to the 2006 Photo ID Act and if the State undertakes to inform voters of the 2006 Photo ID Act's requirements before future elections, the statute might well survive a challenge for such future.**

Emphasis added.

Similarly, as noted by the District Court in *Common Cause/Georgia*, there was "a temporary restraining order issued by the Superior Court of Fulton County, Georgia, on July 7, 2006, enjoining the defendants in that case from enforcing the 2006 Photo ID Act during the July 18, 2006, primary election or any resulting run-off election." 504 F. Supp. 2d at 1340 (citing *Lake v. Perdue*, Civil Action File No. 2006CV119207, slip op. at 3-4 (Fulton County Super. Ct. July 7, 2006)).

Similar actions were taken in connection with the Special Elections in 2006. Notwithstanding multiple challenges in multiple jurisdictions to specific elections, no injunction existed on the date the State Election began acting in accordance with directions from the federal court for the State to conduct an education effort as referenced above.

To comply with the directions regarding educational efforts, all members of the State Election Board (including the Democratic Designee to the State Election Board and the Secretary of State, a Democrat) approved unanimously at the beginning of September 2006 a letter explaining to voters how to get a free photo ID. As noted in the District Court's timeline in its opinion, these efforts and opponents concerns were discussed with the federal court on September 5, 2006. See *Common Cause/Georgia*, 504 F. Supp. 2d at 1340, 1364. But, no injunction or other directive to stop the education efforts were issued. *Id.*

The bottom line was that challenges to specific elections (primary, run-off, and special elections) had been made; the injunctions were limited to those specific elections; and the federal district court was specifically made aware of opponents' concerns and did not enjoin them; the federal court eventually determined that the

overall educational efforts eliminated some of the potential bases for challenging the 2006 Photo ID law.

Question 14. The 2006 Photo ID Act was enjoined by a federal court on September 14, 2006, and it was declared unconstitutional by a Georgia state court on September 19, 2006. According to a filing by former Governor Roy Barnes, approximately 80,000 letters were sent on September 20, 2006, and approximately 116,000 letters were sent on September 25, 2006.

- In your testimony, you stated that “although many of the letters had already gone out, some of the letters were received after the court’s ruling.” Given the timeline above, approximately 200,000 letters were sent, not just received, after the injunction was issued. Can you clarify whether or not letters were sent after the injunction was issued?

Answer. The actual timeline is as follows. The letter was unanimously approved around the first of September, 2006. Opponents of the State’s educational effort, which included the letter, raised their concerns with the federal court on September 5, 2017. In paragraph 32, the Court stated:

On September 5, 2006, the Court held a telephone conference with the parties to address Plaintiffs’ concerns with respect to the educational efforts and the application of the 2006 Photo ID Act to the September special elections.—*Common Cause/Georgia*, 504 F. Supp. 2d at 1340–41.

Then, on September 6, 2006, the plaintiffs filed their motion for a preliminary injunction as to the September 2006 special elections. The Court chronicled this filing in paragraph 33 when the Court stated as follows:

On September 6, 2006, Plaintiffs filed their Motion for Hearing on Plaintiffs’ Second Motion for Preliminary Injunction in Advance of the September 2006 special elections.—*Common Cause/Georgia*, 504 F. Supp. 2d at 1340–41.

Two paragraphs of the Court’s actual order make the point clear. In paragraph 33, the Court stated as follows:

On September 6, 2006, Plaintiffs filed their Motion for Hearing on Plaintiffs’ Second Motion for Preliminary Injunction in Advance of the September 2006 special elections.—*Common Cause/Georgia*, 504 F. Supp. 2d at 1340–41.

Notably, this was five (5) days after the State Election Board had unanimously approved with bipartisan support the September 1, 2006 letter at issue regarding how to get a free photo ID. It also followed the September 5, 2006 telephone conference with the federal court with respect to educational efforts.

Then, on September 14, 2006, the federal court enjoined the 2006 Photo ID Act, but only with respect to the special elections. No injunction was issued notwithstanding Plaintiffs’ expressed concerns to the Court regarding the State’s educational efforts which were in process. In paragraph 34, the Court specifically stated as follows:

On September 14, 2006, the Court held its third preliminary injunction hearing in this case. At the conclusion of the September 14, 2006 hearing, the Court verbally granted Plaintiffs’ request for a preliminary injunction with respect to the September 2006 special elections.—*Common Cause/Georgia*, 504 F. Supp. 2d at 1341 (internal citations omitted).

Hence, the bipartisan educational letter was sent pursuant to the federal court’s comments urging an educational effort which was followed by a telephone conference with the federal court to hear opponents’ concerns. There was no injunction as to the law generally or the general election, and the federal court had been involved regarding the educational efforts to hear opponents’ concerns.

The federal court’s entire timeline and notations can be found at *Common Cause/Georgia v. Billups*, 504 F. Supp. 1333 (N.D. Ga. 2007). On appeal, the Eleventh Circuit described the District Court’s position on the educational efforts in this way:

The district court stated that, pending education efforts initiated by the State, the requirement of photo identification might no longer be unduly burdensome in later elections, and it declined to extend the injunction to future elections. The district court also concluded that the organizations and voters did not have a likelihood of success on the merits of their complaint that the statute imposed an unconstitutional poll tax or violated the Civil Rights Act or the Voting Rights Act.—*Common Cause/Georgia v. Billups*, 554 F.3d 1340, 1347 (11th Cir. 2009).

Separately, there was a state court action. In *Lake v. Perdue*, Civil Action File No. 2006CV119207, slip op. at 3–4 (Fulton County Super. Ct. September 19, 2006),

the state court of Fulton Court entered an order permanently enjoining the enforcement of the 2006 Act. The Georgia Supreme Court eventually vacated that Order and remanded "with the direction that it be dismissed." *Perdue v. Lake*, 282 Ga. 348, 350 (2007). This procedural history was also summarized by the Georgia Supreme Court in *Democratic Party of Georgia, Inc. v. Perdue*, 288 Ga. 720, 722 (Ga. 2011).

The State Election Board then immediately suspended its education efforts. Notably, the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals stated in its opinion the following as it relates to the State's education efforts once the injunction in *Perdue v. Lake* was issued:

During the pendency of this litigation, a state court permanently enjoined the enforcement of the new statute as violative of the Georgia Constitution. See *Perdue v. Lake*, 282 Ga. 348, 647 S.E. 2d 6 (2007). The Supreme Court of Georgia later vacated the injunction and dismissed the action ... **While the injunction by the state court was extant, Georgia suspended all educational efforts about the requirement of photo identification.**—*Common Cause/Georgia*, 554 F. 3d at 1347. (Emphasis added).

In fact, upon learning of the state court injunction in the *Lake matter*, I urged and the State Election Board agreed that the State would NOT seek a stay of the state court injunction (although the State would appeal and the Georgia Supreme Court would vacate the Order and remand the case with instructions that it be dismissed); would NOT apply the 2006 Photo ID law to the remaining 2006 elections because if the State prevailed, the rules "will have changed midstream"; would "suspend all educational efforts about the requirement of photo identification"; and would send a second letter making very clear that the photo ID would not be required in the upcoming general election. 9/23/06 AP Alert—GA 07:31:47—Westlaw

Since I was not involved in the actual administrative process of mailing letters approved on September 1, 2006, I was not involved enough to know whether the letters in process could have been stopped. But, I do know I advised immediately and then led the effort on the Board to suspend the application of the 2006 Photo ID law to the remaining 2006 elections, to suspend all educational efforts, and to insist on a second letter making clear that a photo ID would not be required.

It is why the Eleventh Circuit determined that: **"While the injunction by the state court was extant, Georgia suspended all educational efforts about the requirement of photo identification."** *Common Cause/Georgia*, 554 F. 3d at 1347. (Emphasis added). Notably, the mailing itself had been approved unanimously by both the Democratic and Republican members of the State Election Board, including the Democratic Secretary of State well in advance of the injunction.

It was also consistent with how the State had dealt with injunctions as to specific elections before. In *Common Cause/Georgia v. Billups*, 504 F. Supp. 2d 1333, 1340 (N.D. Ga. 2007), paragraph 31, the District Court stated as follows:

After the Court's July 14, 2006 Order, and after the Georgia Supreme Court's refusal to stay the temporary restraining order issued in the *Lake* case, the State Defendants stopped all of their attempts to educate voters concerning the 2006 Photo ID Act. In early September 2006, the State Election Board voted to resume those educational efforts.

Question 15. Given the timeline above, couldn't the State Election Board have prevented those letters from being mailed?

Answer. The letters were unanimously approved well in advance of the injunction in accordance with directions to the State to engage in an education effort and a federal court, having heard opponents' concerns, took no action and did not issue an injunction to stop them.

Additionally, since I was not involved in the administrative mechanics of the actual mailing process, I do not know whether it could have been halted midstream. I do know that immediately upon learning of the injunction, I opposed applying the photo ID in the November 2006 election, supported suspending all educational efforts (which the Courts acknowledged), and supported sending a second letter making clear photo IDs would not be required in the upcoming election. It is why the federal court determined that the Board suspended all efforts once the state court injunction was issued.—*Common Cause/Georgia*, 554 F. 3d at 1347.

Question 16. Could this letter have misled Georgia voters?

Answer. Not from my perspective. Given the statements, actions, and non-application of the 2006 Photo ID requirement in the 2006 elections, together with the provisional ballot rule that voters could vote and return to address any issues, it is clear that every voter was encouraged to vote in the 2006 election. In fact, given the letter's unanimous adoption by the Democratic Secretary of State, the Democratic ap-

pointee to the State Election Board, and the remainder of the Board as well as the federal district court's decision not to stop it after hearing opponents' concerns, it appeared that the unanimously adopted letter as drafted and adopted addressed any valid concerns about it—whether by Democrats, Republicans, and the federal court.

Although not specifically addressing the September 2006 letter, in footnote 7 of the District Court decision, addressing the State's overall educational efforts, the Court in fact rejected the argument "that the voter education materials provided by the State were misleading or did not provide sufficient information."⁸—*Common Cause/Georgia*, 504 F. Supp. 2d at 1378 n.7.

Of course, this letter was approved unanimously by both Democrats and Republicans on the State Election Board including the Democratic Secretary of State and the Democratic Party of Georgia's designee. The federal district court heard the concerns but took no action to stop the education effort and issued no injunction. No one thought the letter was misleading.

Question 17. Once you learned that the 2006 Photo ID Act had been enjoined, what specific steps did you take to prevent the education letter from being sent to any additional voters?

Answer. Immediately, I advised that I would oppose a stay of the injunction. I would oppose application of the photo ID law in the upcoming election, I would support a second letter to make clear that photo IDs would not be required, and I voiced to voters that the elections would go forward in accordance with the Court's ruling.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO JAMES RANDOLPH EVANS BY SENATOR CORY BOOKER

Question 1. Mr. Evans, you served on Georgia's State Election Board and while you were a member, it sent 300,000 letters to voters just weeks before Election Day that suggested that a photo ID would be required to cast a ballot. Approximately 200,000 of those letters were sent after a judge struck down a state law requiring a photo ID to vote. While the letters were drafted prior to the judge's ruling, those letters still went out. It was well known that the law was being challenged while the letter was being prepared.

As someone who is very concerned about voter suppression efforts and who has introduced legislation to combat this administration's efforts to suppress the vote, this is a concerning incident. For decades poor people of color have been discriminated against at the ballot box and discriminatory laws, like strict voter ID laws, have kept African Americans from voting.

- If this was not an effort to suppress the voter as I am sure you contend, how do you explain this large-scale administrative foul up?

Answer. In 2006, the Georgia Legislature passed and Governor (now Secretary) Perdue signed into law Georgia's second attempt at a voter identification law. Once the United States Department of Justice cleared Georgia's new voter ID law, the State began to issue free identification cards to anyone who wanted or needed one.

Unlike other similar legislation, this legislation was upheld as Constitutional under both the United States Constitution and the Georgia Constitution. The United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit upheld the Constitutionality of the law when it affirmed the United States District Court for the Northern District of Georgia's same determination after a trial on the merits. The full opinion by the Eleventh Circuit can be found at *Common Cause/Georgia v. Billups*, 554 F.3d 1340 (2009). The United States Supreme Court unanimously denied certiorari in *NAACP v. Billups*, 129 S.Ct. 2770, 174 L. Ed. 271 (2009).

Similarly, the Georgia Supreme Court itself determined that the 2006 Georgia law was constitutional under Georgia's Constitution in *Democratic Party of Georgia, Inc. v. Perdue*, 288 Ga. 720 (2011) stating that: "the photo ID requirement for in-person voting is authorized by Art. II, Sec. I, Par. I [of the Georgia Constitution], as a reasonable procedure for verifying that the individual appearing to vote in person is actually the same person who registered to vote." *Id.* at 725–26.

The Court went on to state: "As did virtually every other court that considered this issue, we find the photo ID requirement as implemented in the 2006 Act to be a minimal, reasonable, and nondiscriminatory restriction which is warranted by the important regulatory interests of preventing voter fraud." *Id.* at 730 with emphasis added.

Prior to the final resolution of the Constitutional issues, multiple election specific challenges were filed to the law in 2006. For example, the Georgia Supreme Court

in *Democratic Party of Georgia, Inc. v. Perdue*, 288 Ga. 720, 721–22 (2011), described the initial federal injunction in *Common Cause/Georgia v. Billups*, 439 F. Supp. 2d 1294, 1351 (N.D. Ga. 2006), as follows:

The district court preliminarily enjoined enforcement of the 2006 Act, but limited the injunction to the July 18, 2006 primary elections and corresponding primary run-off and **declined to extend the injunction to future elections.** [Cite omitted.] The court so ruled after finding that **efforts to educate voters concerning the statutory photo ID requirements had been insufficient in the time available prior to the 2006 primary elections and thus posed an undue burden on certain voters.** [Cite omitted.] The district court noted, however:

In issuing this Order, the Court does not intend to imply that all Photo ID requirements would be invalid or overly burdensome on voters. Certainly, the Court can conceive of ways that the State could impose and implement a Photo ID requirement without running afoul of the requirements of the Constitution. Indeed, **if the State allows sufficient time for its education efforts with respect to the 2006 Photo ID Act and if the State undertakes to inform voters of the 2006 Photo ID Act's requirements before future elections, the statute might well survive a challenge for such future.** Emphasis added.

Similarly, as noted by the District Court in *Common Cause/Georgia*, there was "a temporary restraining order issued by the Superior Court of Fulton County, Georgia, on July 7, 2006, enjoining the defendants in that case from enforcing the 2006 Photo ID Act **during the July 18, 2006, primary election or any resulting run-off election.**" 504 F. Supp. 2d at 1340 (citing *Lake v. Perdue*, Civil Action File No. 2006CV119207, slip op. at 3–4 (Fulton County Super. Ct. July 7, 2006)) with emphasis added.

Similar legal actions were filed in connection with the Special Elections in 2006. Notwithstanding multiple challenges in multiple jurisdictions to specific elections, no injunction existed on the date the State Election Board began acting in compliance with directions from the federal court for the State to conduct an educational effort as referenced above.

Instead, to comply with the directions regarding educational efforts, all members of the State Election Board (including the Democratic Designee to the State Election Board and the Secretary of State, a Democrat) approved unanimously at the beginning of September 2006 a letter explaining to voters how to get a free photo ID. As noted in the District Court's timeline in its opinion, these efforts and concerns about them were discussed with the federal court on September 5, 2006. See *Common Cause/Georgia*, 504 F. Supp. 2d at 1340, 1364. But, the federal court did not enjoin or direct the State to stop the educational efforts underway. *Id.*

The actual timeline is as follows. The letter was unanimously approved around the first of September, 2006. Opponents of the State's educational effort, which included the letter, raised their concerns with the federal court on September 5, 2006. In paragraph 32, the Court stated:

On September 5, 2006, the Court held a telephone conference with the parties to address Plaintiffs' concerns with respect to the educational efforts and the application of the 2006 Photo ID Act to the September special elections.—*Common Cause/Georgia*, 504 F. Supp. 2d at 1340–41.

Then, on September 6, 2006, the plaintiffs filed their motion for a preliminary injunction as to the September 2006 special elections. The Court chronicled this filing in paragraph 33 when the Court stated as follows:

On September 6, 2006, Plaintiffs filed their Motion for Hearing on Plaintiffs' Second Motion for Preliminary Injunction in Advance of the September 2006 special elections.—*Common Cause/Georgia*, 504 F. Supp. 2d at 1340–41.

Notably, this was five (5) days after the State Election Board had unanimously approved with bipartisan support the September 1, 2006 letter at issue regarding how to get a free photo ID. It also followed the September 5, 2006 telephone conference with the federal court with respect to concerns regarding educational efforts.

Then, on September 14, 2006, the federal court enjoined the 2006 Photo ID Act, but only with respect to the special elections. No injunction of the educational efforts including the letter was issued notwithstanding opponents' expressed concerns to the Court regarding the State's educational efforts which were in process.

In paragraph 34, the Court specifically stated as follows:

On September 14, 2006, the Court held its third preliminary injunction hearing in this case. At the conclusion of the September 14, 2006 hearing,

the Court verbally granted Plaintiffs' request for a preliminary injunction with respect to the September 2006 special elections.—*Common Cause/Georgia*, 504 F. Supp. 2d at 1341 (internal citations omitted). Again, there was no injunction to the educational effort.

The bottom line was that challenges to specific elections (primary, run-off, and special elections) had been made. The injunctions were limited to those specific elections. The federal district court was specifically made aware of opponents' concerns, but did not direct that they be stopped and did not enjoin the educational efforts including the letter. The federal court did eventually determine that the overall educational efforts were not misleading and did in fact eliminate some of the bases for challenging the law.

Hence, the process began for mailing the bipartisan unanimously approved educational letter—after the federal court's comments urging an educational effort and after a telephone conference with the federal court about concerns with the educational efforts. There was no injunction as to the law generally or the general election, and the federal court had been involved regarding the educational efforts prior to the injunction. The federal court's entire timeline and notations can be found at *Common Cause/Georgia v. Billups*, 504 F. Supp. 1333 (N.D. Ga. 2007).

On appeal, the Eleventh Circuit described the District Court's position on the educational efforts in this way:

The district court stated that, pending education efforts initiated by the State, the requirement of photo identification might no longer be unduly burdensome in later elections, and it declined to extend the injunction to future elections. The district court also concluded that the organizations and voters did not have a likelihood of success on the merits of their complaint that the statute imposed an unconstitutional poll tax or violated the Civil Rights Act or the Voting Rights Act.—*Common Cause/Georgia v. Billups*, 554 F.3d 1340, 1347 (11th Cir. 2009).

Separately, there was a state court action. In *Lake v. Perdue*, Civil Action File No. 2006CV119207, slip op. at 3–4 (Fulton County Super. Ct. September 19, 2006), the state court of Fulton County entered an order permanently enjoining the enforcement of the 2006 Act. The Georgia Supreme Court eventually vacated that Order and remanded "with the direction that it be dismissed." *Perdue v. Lake*, 282 Ga. 348, 350 (2007). This procedural history was also summarized by the Georgia Supreme Court in *Democratic Party of Georgia, Inc. v. Perdue*, 288 Ga. 720, 722 (Ga. 2011).

Notably, as to the actions of the State Election Board upon the issuance of the state court injunction, the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals stated as follows:

During the pendency of this litigation, a state court permanently enjoined the enforcement of the new statute as violative of the Georgia Constitution. See *Perdue v. Lake*, 282 Ga. 348, 647 S.E. 2d 6 (2007). The Supreme Court of Georgia later vacated the injunction and dismissed the action ... **While the injunction by the state court was extant, Georgia suspended all educational efforts about the requirement of photo identification.**—*Common Cause/Georgia*, 554 F. 3d at 1347.

In fact, upon learning of the state court injunction in the *Lake* matter, I urged and the State Election Board agreed that the State would NOT seek a stay of the state court injunction (although the State did appeal and the injunction was vacated and the action ordered dismissed). The State would NOT apply the 2006 Photo ID law to the 2006 general election because if the State pursued a stay and prevailed, the rules "will have changed midstream." The State would "suspend all educational efforts about the requirement of photo identification." And, the State would send a second letter making clear that the photo ID would not be required in the upcoming general election. 9/23/06 AP Alert—GA 07:31:47—Westlaw.

Since I was not involved in the actual administrative process of mailing letters approved around September 1, 2006, I was not involved enough to know whether the mailing in progress could have been stopped. But, I do know the Board immediately suspended the application of the 2006 Photo ID law to the remaining 2006 elections, suspended all educational efforts, and took additional actions to make sure voters were accurately informed including sending a second letter making clear that a photo ID would not be required for the 2006 elections.

It is why the Eleventh Circuit determined that: **"While the injunction by the state court was extant, Georgia suspended all educational efforts about the requirement of photo identification."** It was also consistent with how the State had dealt with injunctions as to specific elections before. In *Common Cause/Georgia*

v. *Billups*, 504 F. Supp. 2d 1333, 1340 (N.D. Ga. 2007), paragraph 31, the District Court stated as follows:

After the Court's July 14, 2006 Order, and after the Georgia Supreme Court's refusal to stay the temporary restraining order issued in the *Lake* case, the State Defendants stopped all of their attempts to educate voters concerning the 2006 Photo ID Act. In early September 2006, the State Election Board voted to resume those educational efforts.

As it turned out, there were no specific allegations of any voter being misled either by the letter or the educational effort. In fact, in addressing the overall education effort, in footnote 7 of the District Court decision, addressing the State's overall educational efforts, the Court rejected the argument "that the voter education materials provided by the State were misleading or did not provide sufficient information." *Common Cause/Georgia v. Billups*, 504 F. Supp. 2d at 1378 n.7.

Question 2. The United States is a beacon of democracy for so many nations around the globe and you are about to represent this country in Luxembourg.

- If asked about President Trump's so-called Election Integrity Commission by government officials in Luxembourg and President's Trump's claims that millions of people voted illegally in the United States, what would you say?

Answer. Until any report is issued, I will note that the claims are the subject of various investigations including the Election Integrity Commission. Upon the issuance of a report, I will defer to the report as well as any related government materials that may be generated by the Congress, states, or other government entities investigating the claims.
