

Statement of Carla Sands
Nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Denmark
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
October 5, 2017

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Murphy, distinguished Members of the Committee.

It is an honor to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to the Kingdom of Denmark. I am humbled that the President has charged me with this opportunity to work with the White House, Secretary Tillerson, and our gifted and hard-working officers at the State Department and Mission Denmark to lead our engagement with such a longtime and trustworthy ally.

I also want to take a moment to thank my family – my daughter Allie Sands, my sisters who are with me today, Dr. Rhonda Carver and Deborah Sicchitano, and my parents. Their love and support has sustained me through the many phases of my life and the diverse hats I have worn in both the public and the private sector. I take this journey knowing I have their enthusiastic support.

Though now a resident of California, I am a native of Pennsylvania and come from a long line of patriots and supporters of the United States. My ancestors fought in the Revolutionary War, Civil War, World War II and more recently have served in the Air Force, Marine Corps and U.S. Navy. It is with their legacy in mind that I approach my own government service. And, if confirmed, I can assure you that I will carry this history with me to Denmark as well.

If confirmed, I will bring to the job of Chief of Mission experience in the business sector and the nonprofit world as I have practiced as a Doctor of Chiropractic, raised funds for abused and neglected children, the arts, the police and homeless rehabilitation and many other deserving causes. In my younger years, I was a working actress and since my husband's death in 2015 I have been the Chairman of Vintage Capital Group. If I am confirmed, these varied leadership roles will serve me well in the different facets of Chief of Mission in Denmark and I could not be more excited about the opportunity to lead this team.

The Trump Administration has made it clear in words and actions the high-priority it places on our alliance, partnership and friendship with Denmark. The President hosted Prime Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen at the White House just two months after his inauguration. His early engagement with Denmark underscores the strength and importance of our security alliance and overall bilateral relationship.

Denmark is a key ally, contributing troops and equipment to international operations including the Coalition to Defeat ISIS, UN operations in the Middle East, Africa, and South Korea, and enhancing NATO's presence in the Baltic. Our Embassy in Copenhagen supports one of our nation's closest and most mutually supportive relationships, and I could not be more excited about the opportunity to lead this team, if confirmed. Our relationship is supported by many men and women right here in Washington, whether it is our Denmark desk at the State Department or

the many departments and agencies that work with their counterparts at Mission Denmark every day.

This is an important time for Europe and Denmark. The aftershocks of Brexit combined with the threats of terrorism and Russia's aggressive actions make clear that we must work with our allies like Denmark to face these challenges together in a united way.

Of course, there may be issues on which our two countries do not totally agree. However, our shared appreciation for freedom, security, and opportunity give us a mutual destination guiding us in our relationship moving forward.

If confirmed, my first priority will always be the welfare and security of U.S. citizens and our Mission staff. Beyond that, I will work with the outstanding leadership at Mission Denmark to fulfill three primary goals:

First, I will endeavor to promote bilateral trade and economic prosperity. There are more than 700 subsidiaries of Danish companies in the United States employing over 70,000 people. The United States is Denmark's largest trading partner outside of Europe and I believe we can increase our sales of military aircraft and equipment, machinery, medical and technical equipment and other outstanding American products.

Second, Denmark is a trusted and dependable ally in an increasingly unstable and unpredictable world. It is the only Nordic country that is both a member of the EU and NATO and our alliance with Denmark is crucial for peace and stability in the Nordic, Baltic, and Arctic regions. If confirmed, I will work with the regional commander to further our close military alliance with Denmark to deter aggressors in the region and promote stability worldwide.

Third, and if confirmed, my goal for our public diplomacy is to engage with as many of the almost six million Danes as I can, including citizens in the Kingdom's self-governing areas of Greenland and the Faroe Islands. I hope to promote the people to people partnerships between Danes and Americans, through study abroad and exchange programs, cultural programming, and community outreach. I plan to do so by blending classical engagement with new and innovative ways to reach all, especially young people, to continue to foster a close and deep mutual respect and appreciation between our two countries.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Murphy and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. If confirmed, I will do my very best on behalf of our nation and I welcome any questions you may have.