

Statement of Leora Levy
Nominee to be Ambassador to Chile
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
July 23, 2020

Good morning, thank you Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Menendez, and distinguished members of the Committee. It is an honor to appear before this Committee seeking your confirmation to be the next United States Ambassador to the Republic of Chile. I am humbled and grateful to have the trust and confidence of President Trump and Secretary Pompeo. If confirmed, I will work every day to be a Champion of American Diplomacy.

I would like to recognize my family -- my husband Steve and sons David, Michael and Ben; and my parents, Zava and Tom Rosenberg, who brought me to America and instilled in me a fierce love for our country and our freedoms. Their love and support have enabled me to pursue this lifelong dream to serve my country.

I was born in Cuba and escaped Castro's Communist Revolution with my family in 1960. My family history also includes the perilous escape of my mother and grandparents from Lithuania to Cuba in 1940.

At Brown University, I majored in International Relations and passed the written Foreign Service Exam as a senior. But I took a different path and became one of the first women commodity traders on Wall Street as an international sugar trader, steel trader, and copper concentrates traffic executive, shipping hundreds of thousands of tons of copper concentrates from Chile to ports around the world.

As a patriot, civic leader, philanthropist, and businesswoman, my leadership experience and demonstrated ability to achieve results make me a strong candidate to represent the American people as a U.S. Ambassador. If confirmed, I would be proud to lead the U.S. Embassy in Santiago with representatives from seven Cabinet-level agencies, and outstanding locally employed staff, who make it possible to advance U.S. interests and values, delivering important results for the American people.

Chile is one of our strongest allies in the Hemisphere. The United States and Chile hold deeply shared values and commitments to democratic governance, regional security, human rights, rule of law, and free markets to create economic opportunity and prosperity for all. In a recent telephone call, President Trump thanked President Piñera for Chile's unwavering support for democracy and freedom in the region. As the United States, Chile and many countries around the world battle the COVID-19 pandemic, President Trump also offered U.S. assistance to help Chile provide critical care to its citizens. The President praised Chile's proactive and balanced approach to protecting the health and livelihoods of Chileans. If confirmed, I would strive to enhance this cooperation between our countries in the fight against COVID-19.

Having followed developments of the civil unrest in Chile since October 2019, it is encouraging to see that Chilean government, opposition parties, civil society, and groups who feel disenfranchised have made steady progress toward resolving outstanding issues through civil discourse, balanced legislation, and the rule of law grounded in strong democratic institutions, as they approach an October referendum on the question of whether to write a new Constitution.

Chile has been a regional model of the transformational possibilities of democratic governance and free markets to achieve stable economic growth and enduring prosperity. Both the United States and Chile support free, fair and reciprocal trade. Since our Free Trade Agreement went into effect in 2004, bilateral trade has tripled. Supporting U.S. businesses in Chile and Chilean businesses investing in the United States will further enhance economic opportunity and prosperity for both countries.

Chile is home to the oldest and largest Fulbright Program in the hemisphere. The 2,700 Chileans who study at U.S. colleges and universities contribute to our mutual understanding and provide substantial support to our higher education sector. Thousands of American travelers visit Chile to discover its rich culture and marvel at its natural beauty every year. Prior to the Pandemic, the number of Chileans visiting the U.S. increased more than four-fold in the last five years. When it is once again safe to travel, I would if confirmed work to encourage even more robust and wide-ranging trade, tourism, and people-to-people engagements between our countries.

From collaboration in science and technology to educational and cultural exchanges, investment in sustainable energy, support for entrepreneurship and small-and-medium enterprises, and the

promotion of democratic values, U.S.- Chile cooperation benefits both of our countries and reaffirms the United States as Chile's like-minded, reliable partner of choice.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Chilean government and the Chilean people to build upon our strong relationship and to promote shared values. I would also look forward to working with your Committee, your colleagues, staff, and all U.S. stakeholders to advance the interests of the United States and to deepen the bonds between our countries. If given the honor of serving as US Ambassador to Chile, my top priority will always be the safety and security of Embassy staff and all Americans in Chile.

Thank you, I look forward to your questions.