

Statement of Aldona Zofia Wos
Nominee to be Ambassador to Canada
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
July 23, 2020

Chairman Risch and Ranking Member Menendez, I am honored to be with you today as President Trump's nominee to be the next U.S. Ambassador to Canada. I am grateful to President Trump, and Secretary Pompeo, for their trust and confidence in me to lead our engagement with our neighbor, and important ally, Canada.

I am appreciative of the time that Members of this Committee and staff have spent with me. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with you.

The U.S.-Canada relationship is one of enduring strength. It is built on broad and deep ties between our peoples, shared values, extensive trade, strategic global cooperation, robust defense partnerships, and good governance.

If confirmed as Ambassador, my priorities will be to actively support our national security, encourage economic growth and prosperity, and promote resilience at Mission Canada.

We share over 5,525 miles of the world's longest border, of which 40% is water, and hundreds of land and sea border crossings. Our partnership in the 1909 Boundary Waters Treaty is considered a model for cross-border cooperation on water issues. More than 14 million Americans visit Canada each year, relying on our Customs and Border Protection and the Canada Border Services Agency, which work tirelessly to safeguard our citizens, while ensuring the free flow of legitimate goods.

Canada is one of our most important partners and allies, as a member of NATO, the Organization of American States, the United Nations, and many other bilateral, regional, and global forums. If confirmed, I will encourage Canada to honor its NATO commitments. While serving as Ambassador to Estonia, I witnessed firsthand the significance and value of NATO.

The U.S. and Canada share continental security through the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), the only bi-national military command in the world. Together, we tackle many international priorities, including issues concerning China, Russia/Ukraine, Iran, Venezuela, counterterrorism, peacekeeping, and the Arctic. Canada is one of our closest intelligence partners, a member of the Five Eyes alliance. The United States and Canada are vigilant in protecting our cyber security. Serving in Estonia, I saw the importance of a robust cyber security system, and subsequently we all witnessed the devastating cyber-attacks Estonia suffered.

If I am confirmed, one of my priorities will be to build on our existing bilateral cooperation with Canada to join in countering China's malign activities and continuing to raise concern regarding authorization of Huawei's and other untrusted vendors' access to 5G networks. Additionally, I will make clear the U.S. Government's deep concern over China's retaliatory and arbitrary detention of two Canadian citizens, Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor.

The U.S.-Canada bilateral trade and investment relationship is one of the world's largest and most comprehensive, supporting millions of jobs. Each year, we exchange over \$700 billion in goods and services. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, almost 400,000 people and \$2 billion worth of goods and services crossed our borders daily. Canada is the largest market for export goods for 30 states, including my home state of North Carolina.

Our countries share highly integrated supply chains, electrical grids, and energy transmission. Canada is the United States' leading supplier of energy, including crude oil, electricity, and uranium. The ongoing COVID-19 crisis has shown us that, now more than ever, we must promote a transparent and reliable source of critical minerals and open and sustainable supply chains.

I am looking forward to the implementation and future successes of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement, which will drive growth and economic prosperity for all of North America. The modernizations of the USMCA will strengthen and expand our economies in the digital age. I am dedicated to ensuring the USMCA's success by working with partners across government.

If I am confirmed as Ambassador, in addition to strengthening our economic prosperity, I will work with our Canadian counterparts to continue to modernize NORAD. I will also work to improve information sharing between U.S. and Canadian law enforcement and border agencies. I appreciate the continued cooperation and collaboration with Canada on Arctic issues, such as health, search & rescue, energy, science, economic development, and security. If confirmed, I will work to build resilience and preparedness at Mission Canada.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, our governments have worked closely together at the highest levels. My experiences battling unknown emerging health threats such as HIV/AIDS while caring for patients as a doctor in NYC— and later, the Ebola virus threat in North Carolina as Secretary — have shown me the importance of collaboration and communication with all stakeholders in an ever-changing unknown environment. If confirmed as Ambassador, I will

continue the collective efforts to secure the welfare and safety of our citizens, while maintaining our open supply chains.

For me, Mission Canada is very personal. I was born under imposed Communist rule to parents who were slave labor and concentration camp survivors. We left everything behind in our native Poland, seeking political freedom. In 1961, we emigrated to the United States aboard the MS Batory and landed in Montreal, Canada. My father, Paul Wos, a Righteous Gentile, and mother, Wanda Wos, instilled in me the importance of freedom, democracy, and respect for others.

The United States, by way of Canada, gave me, and my family, freedom, dignity, and the opportunity to work towards a secure and prosperous future.

As a naturalized citizen, I have a deep respect for our fundamental American values—freedom, democracy, free enterprise and religious freedom—as they have guided my path in both the private sector and public service.

As a Medical Doctor practicing in NYC at the height of the AIDS epidemic; a former U.S. Ambassador to Estonia; and former Secretary of the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, responsible for 18,000 employees and a \$20 billion budget, I brought my bicultural background and diverse life skills to address many complex and impactful challenges, including advocating for and representing the interests of the United States and all its citizens.

If confirmed, I will continue my public service for our country and its citizens, which I love.

I would like to thank my family—my life partner and amazing husband, Louis DeJoy, and our twins, Ania and Andrew, for their unwavering love and support.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I look forward to answering any questions you may have.