

**Statement of Jack Markell**  
**Representative of the United States to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and**  
**Development, with rank of Ambassador**  
**Senate Foreign Relations Committee**  
**September 28, 2021**

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and Members of the Committee, it is an honor to appear as the nominee to be the U.S. Representative to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. I am grateful to President Biden and Secretary Blinken for their confidence.

I am indebted to my family for the love and support which have played an important role in my being here – my wife, Carla, our kids, Molly and Michael, as well as my mom and sister and her family. I am grateful to my father and brother who are no longer with us, as well as to my brother's family.

We are at an inflection point in human history, with democratic norms receding in many parts of the world and the global economic system under strain from COVID-19. The OECD has long been a forum to advance our common values and demonstrate what democracies can deliver.

But the United States and our allies must continue to demonstrate that democracy, human rights, free markets, and capitalism better deliver growth and innovation and a better quality of life for all our citizens. And as Secretary Blinken has said, “The more we and all democracies can show the world that we can deliver – for our people, for each other – the more we can refute the lie that authoritarian countries love to tell.” That’s why the OECD is so important – it provides the policy rationale that underlies our economic system and magnifies our voice and our partners’ on the many issues where we share common values.

As President Biden has said, “We are in competition with China and other countries to win the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. We have to do more than just build back better... We have to compete more strenuously.”

Chairman Menendez and Ranking Member Risch: You deserve enormous credit for your bipartisan work on the Strategic Competition Act, which strengthens the U.S. response and abilities to confront the threat of the PRC

The world’s authoritarian regimes – like the PRC and the Russian Federation – are trying to show the world their autocratic system of single party rule and state-driven economics is more efficient and delivers better results for their people.

The OECD is more important now than ever before given the democratic community’s ongoing competition with the world’s authoritarian regimes. That’s why I am so honored about the opportunity to serve.

I believe I come to the Committee with the right package of knowledge, skills, and experiences to effectively advocate on behalf of the United States with other Ambassadors to the OECD as well as with the OECD itself.

After graduating from Brown University, I earned an MBA from the University of Chicago. My private sector career was primarily focused on telecommunications. I helped lead the wireless revolution as the 13<sup>th</sup> employee and Senior Vice President at Nextel.

I had long been interested in a career in public service. I always believed that my home state and my country had given me enormous opportunities, and I wanted to play a role in ensuring that similar opportunities are available to future generations.

As Governor of Delaware, I was concerned about the impacts of globalization and automation on the people of my state. I knew the states and countries that out-educate today will out-compete tomorrow. That's why I worked hard to ensure that our children had opportunities to thrive in school. For those who wanted to go to college, my team worked to secure opportunities for them to do so, even when they couldn't afford it. And we also recognized that many of our young people wanted to go directly to work so we created terrific new programs to help them do exactly that, with the skills needed for good-paying jobs.

I believe strongly that good jobs are the best way to help solve social problems.

I was honored to serve as chair of the bi-partisan National Governors Association. I learned so much from my colleagues of both parties. I imagine that Ranking Member Risch along with Senators Kaine, Romney, Rounds and Shaheen also had the chance to learn from and share with their colleagues when they served as Governors.

Although Governors compete with each other to deliver the best economic climate and quality of life for our constituents, we realize that our states do better when the United States does better. That's one reason OECD is so important.

I will close on a personal note.

Both of my parents were first generation Americans. My dad signed up to fight in the Army during World War II at the earliest opportunity and he served proudly in Europe.

My grandparents left Belarus, Latvia, and Lithuania at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century seeking a better life in the United States.

It would have been beyond my grandparents' imagination when they left Eastern Europe that their grandson would have the opportunity to serve Delaware as Governor and then, potentially, our country, as the U.S. Representative to a multilateral institution that fosters prosperity for all. They came to the United States in the first place seeking exactly that. It would be an extraordinary honor to play a small part in shaping policies that provide those same benefits for future generations.