

Statement by Claire Cronin
Nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to Ireland
Submitted to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee
September 29, 2021

Thank you, Senator Markey, for the kind introduction.

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member, Members of the Committee:

It is my honor to appear before you as President Biden's nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to Ireland. I am grateful to President Biden and Secretary Blinken for their trust and confidence. If confirmed by the Senate, I pledge to work closely with Congress and the Administration to advance United States priorities and reinforce our shared values in Ireland.

First, I would like to thank my husband, Ray, as well as our daughters, Kara and Kerry, for their love and support. I am also grateful to have the strong support of my brothers and sisters and extended family, in-laws, cousins, nieces, and nephews.

My career is rooted in public service and the law. My path was shaped by the examples set by my parents – my mother was a public school teacher and my father a Pearl Harbor survivor who served in the Pacific throughout World War II. He attended law school with the help of the GI Bill when he returned home.

I was honored to be elected to serve in the Massachusetts House of Representatives in 2012. While serving, I was grateful for the opportunity to serve as the first woman chair of the Judiciary Committee in the House, and today as the first woman House Majority Leader.

My experience as a mediator shaped my ability to work within the House in a constructive and bipartisan manner.

When my grandfather left Donegal for the promise that America held, I can't help but wonder what he would have thought if he knew his granddaughter would one day be testifying before this esteemed committee as a nominee to be the U.S. Ambassador to Ireland.

The Irish first arrived on our shores before the founding of our nation. Their significant contributions, sacrifice, and hard work helped define the American spirit and shape our success today. Over 30 million Americans claim Irish heritage. The historic, cultural, and economic ties between the United States and Ireland are undeniable and will forever unite our countries.

This strong relationship is demonstrated within my own family. We are blessed and forever enriched by the addition of my sister-in-law, Breffni, who was born and raised in Dublin.

If confirmed, the safety and security of Americans in Ireland will be my top priority.

If confirmed, I will also advance the shared values that are the bedrock of our enduring ties. These priorities include addressing global challenges together, increasing our shared prosperity, and strengthening our people-to-people ties.

Ireland has a strong commitment to multilateral institutions, which are central in promoting peace, prosperity and stability.

While maintaining a policy of military neutrality, Ireland continues to be a valuable partner in maintaining global security through sustained contributions to UN peacekeeping, dependable humanitarian assistance, and membership in the D-ISIS coalition.

If confirmed, I will work with Ireland to ensure that addressing global challenges and partnering in global security continue to be strong elements of our bilateral relationship.

Our economic relationship is a pillar of our strong ties. The United States is Ireland's strongest and largest trade and investment partner. More than 900 U.S. firms operate in Ireland and, Ireland is currently the ninth largest investor in the United States.

If confirmed, I will promote the United States as an investment and exchange destination for Irish companies, and advocate for increased two-way trade and investment to create jobs in the United States and Ireland.

The United States and Ireland remain committed to the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement, which has been the bedrock of peace, stability, and prosperity in Northern Ireland.

If confirmed, I will encourage the United Kingdom, the European Union, and Ireland, to engage in productive and cooperative dialogue to resolve differences over the Northern Ireland Protocol. The United States' relationship with Ireland is close and enduring – one that will continue to grow ever stronger as we work together on a range of shared issues.

If confirmed, I will advance our shared political priorities and values; expand our rich economic and commercial cooperation and strengthen our people-to-people ties.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and I look forward to answering your questions.