

**Statement of Kip Tom**  
**Nominee to be the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations**  
**Agencies for Food and Agriculture in Rome**  
**Senate Committee on Foreign Relations**  
**August 23, 2018**

Chairman Young, Ranking Member Merkley, distinguished Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today as the nominee to represent the United States of America as Ambassador to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture in Rome. I am grateful to be given the opportunity to outline my qualifications and discuss my vision with you today.

I would like to take the opportunity to recognize this Committee's leadership on Global Food Security. Not only is the US the largest provider of food aid in the world, but you have led a whole of government effort to address the root causes of global poverty and hunger by giving farmers the tools and knowledge to help them feed themselves. This approach will provide economic growth and stability at a time when the world needs it most. I cannot imagine a better honor than to serve in this leadership capacity and be a small part in advancing US global food security efforts to create a more stable, food secure world.

I have been privileged to visit humanitarian response efforts in Afghanistan, Iraq, Kenya and Tanzania where food security continues to be a challenge. Most of these people are farmers, and I witnessed the challenges they face in growing enough food to feed their children. As a farmer and a father, to see these people struggle in this way is heartbreaking. While the world will always see crises, I know we can do better to lift people out of poverty.

My story is an American story. I was born in Leesburg, Indiana, one of five children in a sixth generation farming family. We were raised on a modest 200 acre farm that our family settled in back in 1837. We may not have had much, but my parents gave us what they could, instilling strong family values and leadership skills through organizations like 4-H, FFA, and the church where we belonged. It was because of those experiences that we quickly understood the freedoms and the opportunities this country offers. Our family's experience is unique. But it is also familiar to many Americans across rural and throughout our country's history.

It was on this same farm where I raised my own family of five children and grew it into a large family farming business that is recognized globally.

The UN agencies in Rome are the three principal organizations at the UN dedicated to food and agriculture. As a successful farmer, I know what it takes to grow agriculture, create jobs and empower youth, and I have sought to share my knowledge and support agriculture and food security all over the world.

During those 43 years of farming I have been part of numerous agriculture technology startup companies in Silicon Valley and Agri-business firms to develop and advance new technologies that have driven global agricultural productivity.

From 2005-2015, I was honored to serve with Governor Daniels and then Governor Pence on the Indiana Economic Development Corporation Board. During my time serving on the board we saw high levels of job growth while attracting record levels of capital investment in the Hoosier State. Today, Indiana is rated as one of the top States for businesses to call home.

As a business leader, whether I am working with government officials, start-ups, or established multinationals, I believe that there is nothing more important to a leader's success than his or her ability to unite those with different backgrounds, viewpoints, and objectives behind a common purpose.

Although I will always call my Hoosier State home and will always call myself a farmer, I look forward to begin this new chapter, if confirmed. I am eager to represent my country, build consensus amongst organizations, and forge new relationships to advance US interests.

The US is the largest donor to the UN Agencies in Rome, providing more than \$2 billion a year in funding for humanitarian response efforts alone. If confirmed, I intend to bring a private sector perspective to the governance oversight roles of the U.S. Mission to help enhance the effectiveness of our investments abroad.

Mr. Chairman, my goal in serving as the Ambassador to the UN Agencies for Food and Agriculture will be to improve our Missions outcomes to better serves the interests of the American people. If you confirm me, I will bring all my knowledge, work ethic, and skills to bear to ensure that this becomes a reality.

I will do it in ways that I hope bring honor to our country, our values, and our national interests. Thank you very much for your time.