

**Testimony of Donald S. Beyer Jr.**  
**Ambassador-Designate to Switzerland and Liechtenstein**  
**July 16, 2009**  
**Senate Foreign Relations Committee**

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee,

It is my privilege to appear before you to seek your confirmation to become the next United States Ambassador to Switzerland and Liechtenstein.

I am deeply honored to have been nominated by President Obama to serve as his personal representative, and I am grateful for the confidence of the President and Secretary Clinton.

To serve my country overseas is in my blood. My grandmother, Clara Beyer, was a United States federal civil servant for 50 years. From 1938 to 1953, she served as a U.S. Government Advisor to the annual International Labor Organization conference in Geneva. During her last 15 years, she worked with USAID, travelling to dozens of countries to consult on economic development. My grandfather, Otto Sternoff Beyer, served as Chair of the National Mediation Board for President Roosevelt. In 1948, he was appointed to represent the U.S. Government in securing the cooperation of employers and unions to stimulate production under the Marshall Plan

After graduating from West Point, my father served in Korea and then in Trieste, Italy, helping to keep the peace along the disputed Yugoslav-Italian border. This is where I was born in 1950. When I came home to the United States at age two, I spoke only Italian, a gift from my first overseas experience. Later at Williams College, I was mentored by professors devoted to the study of international economics.

I believe I have a personal responsibility to public service. In the eight years I served as Virginia's Lieutenant Governor, I used that platform to advance important policy initiatives on a wide range of issues. I chaired Virginia's first economic recovery commission. From welfare reform to

sexual assault issues, from child support enforcement to addressing the challenges of Virginians with disabilities, from high-speed rail to education infrastructure, I mastered the policy positions and fought for the best of these programs in Richmond's General Assembly.

If confirmed, I look forward to leveraging these skills to advance U.S. policy in Switzerland and Liechtenstein.

Moreover, I worked in business for 35 years, leading our family retail automobile business chain. These years gave me an extraordinarily broad perspective on business issues -- from the importance of serving every individual with integrity, respect, and excellence to the responsibility of managing large dollar daily cashflows with precision and foresight. As chairman of the American International Auto Dealers Association, I represented 10,000 independent businesses with the clear mission to expand free and fair trade throughout the world.

If confirmed, I look forward to leading the U.S. Embassy to Switzerland. The United States and Switzerland are linked by our shared history as federal republics, our reliance on market-based economic systems, and our strong commitment to human rights and democracy. U.S.-Swiss political relations are strong, covering a wide range of important areas of bilateral and multilateral cooperation, from human rights to regional stability. In 2006, we initiated a new bilateral framework for our senior-level political discussions that has regularized our dialogue in many areas and helped us to identify and act on the most promising areas of cooperation.

In recent years, our cooperation with the Swiss on promoting stability and democracy in the Balkans has been particularly strong, most recently in supporting the independence and continued democratic development of a multiethnic Kosovo. The Swiss Foreign Ministry manages the Swiss Protecting Power in Iran, which represents U.S. interests in Tehran. In Havana, Switzerland serves as the protecting power for the United States and the U.S. Interests Section operates under the auspices of the Swiss Embassy. The Swiss have played a helpful role in encouraging

negotiations, furthering efforts to normalize diplomatic relations between Turkey and Armenia.

As the largest and most important private banking center in the world, Switzerland has become a central partner with the United States to combat terrorist financing, money laundering, corruption, and the financing of weapons of mass destruction. That said, the U.S. government's current legal case regarding Swiss banking giant UBS, as well as the negotiation of an amended U.S.-Swiss tax information exchange agreement, remain important challenges in the bilateral relationship. Switzerland is a Tier 1 country in the State Department's 2009 Trafficking in Persons Report. With its long history of democracy, Switzerland also regularly provides asylum to thousands of refugees escaping tyranny and war.

Switzerland is among our largest trading partners, and the establishment of the U.S.-Switzerland Trade and Investment Cooperation Forum has been an important first step toward advancing our bilateral relations. The United States and Switzerland continue to maintain one of the broadest and deepest investment relationships between any two economic partners. Swiss investments in the United States provide jobs for more than 400,000 Americans, while U.S. firms and individuals employ roughly 75,000 persons in Switzerland. Despite the ongoing global recession, there is no sign that U.S.-Swiss investment flows are slowing down and in fact, if anything, they appear to be accelerating.

The United States also enjoys a long-standing friendship with Liechtenstein. The Principality is an important banking center, providing financial services to thousands of foreign clients. The numerous banks and holding companies located in Liechtenstein manage more than \$150 billion of client assets. We cooperate closely today on a range of financial issues from fighting terrorist financing and money laundering to banking reform. We recently signed the tax information exchange agreement to allow for the exchange of information on tax matters and will provide the United States with access to information to enforce U.S. tax laws. If confirmed, I look forward to enhancing our relationship with the Principality.

I believe my long history in government, in business, in politics, and in my community have helped me develop the leadership skills necessary for me to be an effective Chief of Mission. If confirmed, I will faithfully execute my responsibilities to represent and serve the President, the Congress, and our fellow Americans as the U.S. Ambassador to Switzerland and Liechtenstein.

Thank you, and I look forward to answering your questions.