

John V. Roos, Ambassador Designate to Japan

Senate Foreign Relations Committee

July 23, 2009

Mr. Chairman and Distinguished Members of the Committee,

I am deeply honored to appear before you today as President Obama's nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to the great nation of Japan. I would first like to express my deep gratitude to the President and Secretary of State Clinton for their faith in me and to Senators Kerry and Bradley for their warm and generous remarks. I also would like to thank and acknowledge my family—my wife, Susie; our children, Lauren and David; and my parents, Bettye and Jacques Roos—who made the trip to Washington from California with me for what we all consider a momentous occasion for our family. In addition, I would like to express my appreciation to two eminent American statesmen and former ambassadors to Japan, former Vice President Walter Mondale and former Speaker of the House Tom Foley, for being here with me today. I also am grateful to former Senator Howard Baker for his submission to this Committee on my behalf, and to former ambassadors Michael Armacost and Thomas Schieffer for their advice and support over the past several weeks.

Soon after taking office, President Obama received Japan's Prime Minister Aso in the White House, and Secretary Clinton made Tokyo the first stop on her first overseas trip as America's foremost diplomat. This early focus on relations with Japan emphasizes the special bond between our two countries—a bond that, if confirmed, I will devote myself to strengthening and expanding as we confront today's global challenges side by side. Although separated by many miles, our nations have innumerable interests in common, including promoting security and stability throughout Asia and, indeed, the rest of the world; fostering global economic recovery; and advancing democratic values and human rights. We also share a respect for the spirit of innovation and a passion for resourcefulness and problem solving.

I always have had tremendous admiration for Japan's people, government, and culture, and I believe that my background has prepared me well to serve as an effective representative of our nation to one of the most important and innovative countries in the world. Please allow me briefly to share with you something of my background and its relevance to the U.S.-Japan partnership.

My law firm, Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati, has played a pivotal role in helping to shape what has come to be known as Silicon Valley. I joined the firm in 1985 and have been privileged to serve in a number of senior leadership positions, including as CEO since 2005. During my tenure, the firm was intimately involved with the various waves of innovation sweeping the world, from the growth of software and communications to the Internet Age, from the emergence of biotechnology to the current focus on one of President Obama's top priorities, clean technology and renewable energy. Not surprisingly, these are top priorities for Japan as well.

During my career, I also benefited from being rooted in Silicon Valley, one of the most diverse communities in the world. Working in this dynamic, multicultural environment, flexibility, openness, and finding common ground is a way of life. As CEO, I have had the opportunity to develop vital management and leadership skills, including dealing effectively with crises and running the day-to-day operations of a large, complex organization—skills that, if confirmed, I will apply to enhancing the operational efficiency of Mission Japan. Perhaps most important, I have learned the value of listening carefully, keeping an open mind, and consulting with the experts before making major decisions.

President Obama in his recent speech in Cairo spoke of education and innovation being the currency of the 21st century. I can think of no greater honor than to put the experiences and skills I gained in the most innovative place on earth to work on behalf of this country. If confirmed, I will work diligently with you, the President, and Members of

Congress to further enhance the relationship between our two nations and advance our mutual goals and America's interests abroad.

In particular, I will strive to help strengthen the U.S.-Japan Security Alliance. Former Senate Majority Leader and U.S. Ambassador to Japan Mike Mansfield famously said, "The U.S.-Japan relationship is the most important bilateral relationship in the world, bar none." He also predicted during his tenure that the 21st century will be "the Century of the Pacific." Senator Mansfield, a veteran and a distinguished member of Congress, understood that U.S. foreign policy must reflect U.S. interests abroad. Then as now, our alliance with Japan is the cornerstone of security and stability in the East Asia-Pacific region. The 50th anniversary next year of our Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security is a chance to celebrate the many accomplishments of our alliance and consider opportunities to further expand our partnership in the years ahead.

If confirmed, I also pledge to work with Japan to address critical global challenges, including the security of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. I will continue close consultations on developments on the Korean Peninsula and work to foster good coordination in our relations with other Pacific powers, such as Australia, the Republic of Korea, China, and Russia.

While our bilateral relationship has stood the test of time, it must continue to evolve to meet contemporary challenges. There is growing recognition in Japan and the United States of the opportunity our alliance presents to tackle nontraditional and transnational security threats, such as climate change, energy security, and pandemic diseases.

If confirmed, I also will seek to strengthen bilateral cooperation on the global economic crisis. I will support efforts to increase investment and trade between the U.S. and Japan—a flow that supports more than 600,000 high-paying U.S. jobs. In addition, I will work to further our mutual goal of promoting democratic values and human rights throughout the world. I also look forward to advancing a number of other initiatives,

such as supporting educational and scientific exchanges between the U.S. and Japan and facilitating the use of the latest information technologies to enhance our dialogue with the tech-savvy younger generation. Last but certainly not least, I will do everything in my power to protect and enhance the well-being of the talented U.S. government employees stationed in Japan, as well as the many American citizens living in or visiting Japan.

In closing, while I have been privileged to contribute to the economic growth of this nation through my work in the private sector, ever since I served as an intern in the White House during law school, I have dreamed of one day re-entering public service and giving back to my country. If confirmed, I will be honored to represent the United States in one of the most vibrant parts of the world at a critical point in history, and I pledge to work closely with you to address the issues that lie ahead.

Thank you again, Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, for the opportunity to appear before you. I look forward to answering your questions.