

Martha L. Campbell

Ambassador-Designate to the Republic of the Marshall Islands

Statement Before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee

July 23, 2009

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, I am honored to appear before you today as President Obama's nominee to be the Ambassador to the Republic of the Marshall Islands. I am deeply honored by my nomination and am thankful to the President and Secretary Clinton for the trust and confidence they have shown in me. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Committee and the larger Congress to advance U.S. interests in the Marshall Islands.

I would also like to introduce to the Committee and express my thanks to my husband, Arnold Campbell, a retired Foreign Service Officer, who is a tremendous partner, an inspiring role model, and is my most enthusiastic supporter. I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the support of family and friends, some of whom are here today, and many of whom have visited us in far-flung postings.

Currently, I am a Dean at the Foreign Service Institute where we prepare Department of State and other agency employees for foreign affairs assignments.

In my 29 years in the Foreign Service, I have served at large and small posts ranging from Suriname to European embassies. I also had the honor and privilege of opening our first diplomatic post in the Marshall Islands. Following the entry into force of the Compact of Free Association between the United States and the Republic of the Marshall Islands in 1986, I faced the challenge of developing the infrastructure for our first mission in Majuro—creating a chancery, securing housing, establishing communications, and recruiting local staff among other tasks. Majuro remains my favorite posting—it was both professionally fulfilling and personally delightful. I thoroughly enjoyed working and living with the people of the Marshall Islands. If confirmed, it would be a great honor to return as Ambassador, engaging with the Marshallese on the new challenges related to our unique bilateral relationship.

The United States and the Marshall Islands have a close and special relationship dating back to shortly after the end of the Second World War, when the Marshall Islands became part of the U.N. Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands under the administration of the United States. In 1986, the Marshall Islands gained full independence and entered into a Compact of Free Association with the United States. The Compact provides the framework for much of our bilateral relations,

and its provisions ensure the security of the Marshall Islands and contribute to the security of the United States.

The Marshall Islands has been a close friend and supporter of the United States for decades. Its government has an excellent voting affinity with the United States in the United Nations and shares our positions on other important international issues, including recently, the recognition of Kosovo. Many Marshallese citizens have served bravely in American military units conducting operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere. If confirmed, I will work closely with the host government and the Marshallese people to ensure the mutual benefits of our close relationship are widely recognized.

The Marshall Islands is host to some 2,000 Americans who work along with about 900 Marshallese at the strategically important U.S. Army Ronald Reagan Ballistic Missile Defense Test Site at Kwajalein Atoll. Known as USAKA, the base is the second largest employer in the Marshall Islands. The combination of payroll taxes paid by Marshallese, American contract employees and other workers, plus other fees, account for around 25 percent of the Marshall Islands' total tax collections each year. USAKA also engages in regular humanitarian and development projects on Kwajalein Atoll. If confirmed, I will work to maintain

the strong relationship between USAKA and the Marshall Islands government and to promote USAKA's developmental assistance for affiliated Marshallese communities.

The United States and the Marshall Islands also have an important economic relationship. The United States is the Marshall Islands' largest trading partner. Under the Compact of Free Association, the United States provides over \$60 million in aid to the Marshall Islands annually. U.S. federal agencies operate 22 different government programs in the Marshall Islands. If confirmed, I will work closely with these agencies, and particularly with the Department of the Interior, which has primary responsibility for implementing the Compact's economic provisions, to ensure that assistance efforts are appropriately coordinated and implemented with transparency and accountability. The Compact includes a trust fund mechanism that will serve as a resource base to the Marshall Islands after annual grant assistance expires in 2023. If confirmed, I will promote economic development and strongly advocate that the Marshallese work vigorously toward economic self-sufficiency.

We enjoy a unique and positive relationship with the Marshall Islands and, if confirmed as the U.S. Ambassador, I hope to be able to contribute to this mutually

beneficial association. I promise to bring all my energy and talent to bear to ensure that the interests of the U.S. government prevail while working in concert with the expressed interests of the Marshallese government and its people. Additionally, I believe that coordination between the U.S. executive and legislative branches will be important to this endeavor, and if confirmed, I look forward to working with the Committee and the Congress.

Thank you, again, for this opportunity to appear before you. I am happy to respond to any questions you may have.