

**Testimony of Jennifer Galt Nominee to be
Ambassador to Mongolia Senate Foreign
Relations Committee June 23, 2015**

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

It is an honor to appear before you as President Obama's nominee to be Ambassador to Mongolia.

I am deeply grateful for the confidence that the President and Secretary Kerry have shown in me, and, if confirmed, I look forward to working closely with the Senate to build on the already strong ties between the United States and Mongolia.

My career in the Foreign Service spans 27 years, most of them spent in Asia. I joined the Foreign Service out of a commitment to serve my country and have consistently sought assignments where I felt I could make a difference and where I could contribute to advancing an important relationship. My career has taken me to the former Yugoslavia, Taiwan, India, the U.S. Mission to NATO, and, multiple times, to China.

The love and support of my family has sustained me throughout. I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to my husband, Fritz, and my children Phoebe and Dylan, who have traveled the globe with me, and to my father, Bob Zimdahl, and my brothers Randy, Bob and Tom. My father, in particular, has demonstrated his support by visiting us at every overseas post. I am enormously proud that my daughter Phoebe, a rising college junior, is here with me today.

This is an exciting year for U.S.-Mongolia relations, as we mark the 25th anniversary of Mongolia's decision for democracy, a milestone that the Senate recognized in its June 1 resolution. Our partnership has grown stronger since then Secretary Baker first visited the newly democratic Mongolia in 1990. As the only former Soviet satellite in East Asia to choose democracy, Mongolia is an important model in the region and, as the saying goes, punches above its weight on issues of strategic interest to the United States, including coalition military efforts, peacekeeping, and the promotion of democratic principles and values. Our relationship is one of shared interests and is characterized by enormous potential.

There are many opportunities for the United States to deepen our partnership with Mongolia. I would like to highlight a few areas where I would focus my attention, should I be confirmed as Ambassador:

Sustaining our strong partnership across sectors: Mongolia and the United States share a common interest in promoting peace and stability. Mongolia is a stalwart partner in Afghanistan, and deploys capable peacekeepers wherever they are needed, including currently in Sudan and South Sudan. In April 2014, the United States and Mongolia signed a Joint Vision Statement that articulated the parameters for our security relationship, acknowledging the important role Mongolia plays as a stabilizing influence in Asia and commending Mongolia's support for UN

peacekeeping operations around the world. Just last week, the U.S. and Mongolia conducted our yearly multi-national peacekeeping exercise, Khaan Quest. Mongolia demonstrates leadership in international fora to promote democracy and human rights, such as the Freedom Online Coalition, hosting a successful annual conference in May; and the Community of Democracies, hosting the Ministerial in 2013. Mongolia is a model of democracy and has demonstrated a willingness to mentor others in the region, offering training and exchanges with leaders from Burma to Kyrgyzstan. If confirmed, I would welcome the opportunity to work with Mongolian officials to advance our shared interests in these critical areas.

Strengthening economic ties and creating opportunities for U.S. businesses: Recent high-level engagements in Mongolia have demonstrated our commitment to enhancing commercial opportunities for U.S. companies. In the last six months, we resumed Trade and Investment Framework Agreement talks, launched a new Economic Policy Dialogue, and the Millennium Challenge Corporation began the process of developing a second compact with Mongolia. Each of these initiatives is an opportunity to expand economic growth, model responsible business conduct, promote trade and investment, and to create opportunities for U.S. companies. Mongolia government demonstrated its interest in attracting foreign investment by signing and ratifying the U.S.-Mongolia Agreement on Transparency in Matters Related to International Trade and Investment (the Transparency Agreement) in December 2014. The Mongolian Prime Minister is traveling to Washington and New York this week to deliver the message to U.S. companies and Members of Congress that Mongolia is open for business, our business.

Mongolia's recent progress on a major copper and gold mine with a Western company signaled to the international community its renewed seriousness of purpose in attracting foreign direct investment, which has declined 85 percent since 2012. With large reserves of coal, copper, gold, uranium, and other minerals, there are many opportunities for U.S. companies in mining and related sectors. If confirmed, I would support these opportunities by actively informing potential U.S. investors about the investment climate and advocating on their behalf. I would also continue our efforts to promote a more diversified economy in Mongolia and to generate increased commercial opportunities for US companies, including support for Department of Commerce efforts such as the U.S.-Mongolia Business Forum, which this year will focus on agriculture. I would encourage good governance, transparency, and responsible business conduct, including through working with the Mongolian government to implement the Transparency Agreement.

Enhancing civil society and people-to-people ties with Mongolia: I believe that two key components of U.S. support for Mongolia's democracy and its independence and leadership in the region are engagement with its nascent civil society and deepening people-to-people ties. If confirmed, I would continue the work of my predecessors in areas such as the rights of persons with disabilities, where, thanks to exchanges between government leaders and civil society, we are working with Mongolian parliamentarians on draft legislation that may include lessons learned from our Americans with Disabilities Act. I would, if confirmed, continue our robust sub-national cooperation as well, including the Alaska-Mongolia State Partnership, which began with cooperation between the Alaska National Guard and the Mongolian Armed Forces, and has grown to include economic and social ties. I am particularly pleased that Mongolia's ties to the United States also include a sister city relationship between Ulaanbaatar and Denver, in my

home state of Colorado. If confirmed, I also would look forward to supporting one of our largest Peace Corps programs anywhere, with over 150 volunteers in country this year. Peace Corps volunteers work side by side with Mongolians in English teaching, healthcare, and community youth development. The efforts of these volunteers – our grassroots ambassadors in Mongolia – have been extremely effective.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, it would be the highest honor for me to serve our country as Ambassador to Mongolia.

America's security and prosperity are closely and increasingly linked to the Asia Pacific. One of the most important tasks of American statecraft over the next decade is to lock in the increased investment — diplomatic, economic, strategic, and military — from the Administration's sustained rebalance to the region. I welcome the opportunity to be on the front lines of this endeavor. If confirmed, I will lead a diplomatic mission of approximately two hundred U.S. and Mongolian employees, representing five agencies. I will do my very best to ensure that all members of that community and their families have the leadership, security, and support they need to engage on behalf of the United States, so that Americans continue to sustain and benefit from the growth and dynamism in the Asian region. If confirmed, I will also do my utmost to ensure that the United States delivers on the strategic and historic opportunities of the next century of Mongolia's democracy.

Thank you for considering my nomination. I look forward to your questions.