

**Opening Statement of Nicholas A Merrick  
Nominee for U.S. Ambassador to the Czech Republic  
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations  
June 12, 2025**

Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Shaheen, and distinguished Members of the Committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee to be the next United States Ambassador to the Czech Republic. I am deeply grateful for the trust and confidence that the President and Secretary Rubio have placed in me with this nomination.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to my wife of 35 years, Leslie, and to our four children, son-in-law, and grandson – many of whom are here today. I would also like to acknowledge my late mother – Dr. Judith Merrick – a history professor who instilled in me a love of learning and a deep interest in European history.

I come before you with a profound sense of duty and commitment to serve our great nation and to work to ensure that President Trump's America First agenda is carried out to the fullest. And one of its core principles and a top priority for me will always be to safeguard the lives and well-being of Americans in Czechia. Also, since Czechia is both a trusted NATO ally and a vital partner, I am eager to strengthen our bilateral relationship, enhance our mutual security, and promote shared prosperity.

My professional background is that of a businessman. My 40-year career spanned the industries of investment banking, telecommunications and investment management. The consistent theme in all of my endeavors

has been the concept of team victories – the DNA of which goes back to my days of playing college football. I've never wanted to accomplish anything alone and my most satisfying experiences have been in playing both large and small parts in other people's success stories. That's true for me in business and in non-profit pursuits. For the last 13 years, I have been a part time high school teacher, and for the last seven years I have been a Trustee – and three-year Chairman -- of the pension fund serving retired Dallas police and firemen.

If confirmed, I will bring that collaborative instinct to bear in my role as Ambassador and will work with the Administration and Congress to further our partnership with the Czechs. The United States and Czechia share a long history of friendship and cooperation built on a foundation of shared values. Indeed, 80 years ago, General Patton and his Third Army helped liberate the city of Pilsen in what is now western Czechia, shedding American blood on Czech soil for the sake of freedom. Today, the U.S.-Czech partnership is stronger than ever, and, if confirmed, I will work tirelessly to ensure that our relationship continues to thrive.

There are many decisions Czechia has made that I admire -- and that closely align with U.S. interests. Most notably, since 2022, Czechia has migrated from near complete reliance on Russian natural gas to almost total western sourcing, including U.S.-procured LNG. The United States has a long history of showing up, supporting our partners and backing up our rhetoric

with actions and resources, and Czechia has demonstrated that in many ways it shares this same genetic code.

If confirmed, one of my top priorities will be to enhance the mutual security of the United States and Czechia. Czechia is a steadfast member of NATO, an outsized supporter of Ukraine, and a crucial player in the Alliance's efforts to maintain stability in Europe. I will work to strengthen our defense cooperation, to boost Czechia's NATO defense contributions, and to support Czechia's efforts to modernize their armed forces – such as their recent decision to purchase Lockheed Martin F-35 aircraft in a \$5 billion transaction.

I will also focus on expanding our economic and commercial ties. My career in investment management has given me experience with every investable asset class and many early-stage businesses. Today, President Trump's policies, underpinned by the principles of free markets and morally grounded capitalism, are enabling a rare opportunity for expanded wealth creation and truly shared prosperity. My goal is to bring that opportunity to bear for the benefit of America first, and also for our economic partners in Czechia.

Czechia is a dynamic and innovative economy with significant potential for growth, and I will work for the United States' participation in that growth by advocating for balanced trade policies, including right sizing our existing trade deficit, and by facilitating specific opportunities for U.S. businesses.

In conclusion, I am deeply honored to be considered for United States Ambassador to the Czech Republic. If confirmed, I will advance U.S. national interests, strengthen our bilateral relationship, and promote American values. I am confident that we and our Czech partners, as good teammates with like-minded principles, can build a safer, stronger, and more prosperous future for both of our nations.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I look forward to answering your questions.