

**Opening Statement for Mr. Robert Sweeney
Nominee to be United States Director of the Asian Development Bank,
with the Rank of Ambassador
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
February 12, 2026**

Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Shaheen, and distinguished Members of this Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. It is a distinct honor to be considered for the role of U.S. Director of the Asian Development Bank. I would like to thank President Trump and Secretary Bessent for their confidence in me and for the opportunity to serve in this important position.

I am very grateful to the Senators, their staffs, and the staff of this Committee who have taken the time to meet with me. I have appreciated the opportunity to discuss your priorities and, if confirmed, I look forward to working together to promote the interests of the United States at the Asian Development Bank.

I would also like to thank the members of my family for their love and support. First, my wife, Maria; I am deeply grateful for Maria's advice, support, and love in all of our 33 years and many adventures together. Next, our three children, each of whom we could not be more proud: Andrea; Robert; and Kelly. This family has been the bedrock of my adult life, without which I am sure I would not be appearing before you today.

I have had the privilege of pursuing a long career in finance centered on international business development as an executive in banks and financial companies around the world, including in Seoul, Tokyo, and Taipei, among others. If confirmed, it would be an honor to return to Asia to seek enhanced relationships that are appropriate to the new challenges and opportunities which as a nation we face today.

It would be a special privilege to serve as U.S. Director at the ADB at a time when there is much at stake in the region. China is the second largest economy in the world and is expanding its influence through its Belt and Road Initiative and its ADB competitor, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.

As Secretary Bessent has emphasized, America First does not mean America alone. At the ADB, the United States should be seeking to support developing country borrowers who are both willing to engage in fair trade with the United States and mutually interested in helping us diversify and fortify supply chains. If confirmed, I would seek to promote lending policies and development projects that strengthen the economies of the countries involved, leading to a freer and fairer international economic system.

It is also of vital importance that long-contemplated reforms of ADB policies and operational efficiency are enacted and accelerated. Secretary Bessent has emphasized the need for the ADB to pursue and intensify procurement reforms seeking greater transparency and efficiency. U.S. taxpayers deserve to know that their contributions to the ADB are both productive and efficiently stewarded. If confirmed as U.S. Director, I will ensure that the ADB maintains its focus on its core economic development goals for the countries it serves. It must do so in a streamlined and transparent structure for operational efficiency.

The U.S. Treasury's role in the ADB today is vitally important. As one of the two founding countries and largest equity holders, its leadership can drive the policies and operations of the ADB. As a consequence, it must ensure the ADB is effective in delivering economic development financing and value, both diplomatic and economic, to both the countries it serves and the U.S. taxpayer. If confirmed, I will focus on deriving U.S. taxpayer shareholder value both in the efficiency of its operations and opening opportunities for U.S. businesses to deliver results for ADB-funded projects. Finally, I understand and respect the importance of a close working relationship with Congress. If confirmed, I commit to working with Congress on issues surrounding the Asian Development Bank.

Thank you again for your time today. I look forward to your questions.