

**Opening Statement for Mr. William “Billy” Long  
Nominee for U.S. Ambassador to Iceland  
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations  
February 12, 2026**

Chairman, Ranking Member, and Distinguished Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the honor and privilege of appearing before you today as President Trump’s nominee to serve as the United States Ambassador to Iceland. I am deeply grateful to the President and Secretary Rubio for the trust they have placed in me with this nomination.

I would like to take a moment to acknowledge my family, who have been a source of unwavering support throughout my career.

The United States and Iceland share a long history of friendship and cooperation, rooted in our shared economic, security, cultural, and human connections. Our diplomatic relationship dates to 1941, when the United States assumed responsibility for Iceland’s defense during World War II. Since then, our partnership has only grown and matured, and if confirmed I look forward to nurturing and advancing it in the coming years. These ties are underpinned by the over 40,000 Icelandic-Americans who have done so much to enrich our country.

If confirmed, I will focus on four key priorities to further strengthen the U.S.-Iceland relationship:

First, protecting American citizens in Iceland. This is my first and foremost job, and I will work around the clock to ensure our citizens’ safety and security. Iceland is among the world’s safest countries and has been an exemplary partner in helping American citizens. If confirmed, I will prioritize ensuring U.S. tourists and businesspeople, long-term residents, and members of the embassy community are protected.

Second, enhancing our security cooperation. Iceland plays a critical role in transatlantic security as a founding member of NATO and a key partner in the North Atlantic. The Keflavik Air Base has been a cornerstone of our defense collaboration, providing strategic capabilities for monitoring and responding to emerging threats in the Arctic and North Atlantic regions. If confirmed, I will work closely with Icelandic leaders to ensure our continued cooperation in addressing shared security challenges, including countering malign influence from adversaries and enhancing NATO interoperability.

Third, advancing economic and energy collaboration. Iceland is a global leader in stable, low-cost energy, particularly geothermal and hydropower technologies. These innovations present significant opportunities for collaboration as the United States seeks to strengthen its energy dominance and power the next generation of AI and data centers. Iceland is also a dynamic, innovative economy, where partnerships with U.S. firms offer opportunities to propel both our nations’ economic growth. If confirmed, I will prioritize fostering partnerships between American and Icelandic businesses, researchers, and entrepreneurs to drive innovation and create jobs in both

countries. Additionally, I will work to expand trade and investment opportunities, ensuring that American businesses have fair access to Iceland's market.

Fourth, strengthening Arctic cooperation. As an Arctic nation, Iceland is uniquely positioned to contribute to the sustainable development and security of this vital region. The Arctic is increasingly at the forefront of global geopolitics, with new challenges and opportunities emerging as sea lanes open and resource exploration intensifies. If confirmed, I will work with Icelandic leaders to promote responsible stewardship of the Arctic, counter growing threats from adversaries, and ensure that the region remains a zone of peace and cooperation.

In conclusion, I am deeply honored by the opportunity to serve as the United States Ambassador to Iceland. If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to advance American interests, protect our citizens, and strengthen the bonds between our two nations. I am committed to fostering a relationship that reflects the shared values and aspirations of our people.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to your questions.