

Statement of Darrell Owens
Nominee for U.S. Representative to the Organization for Security and
Cooperation in Europe, with the rank of Ambassador
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
April 28, 2026

Chairman Daines, Ranking Member Kaine, and distinguished Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today as the President's nominee to serve as the United States Permanent Representative to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

I am grateful to President Trump and Secretary Rubio for their confidence in me and for the opportunity to continue serving our country.

Before anything else, I want to acknowledge how meaningful it is for me to sit here today. Earlier in my career, I had the privilege of serving as a Senate staffer. I spent many hours preparing briefing materials, coordinating questions, and supporting the work of members of this body.

Because of that experience, I have an enormous respect for the role the Senate plays in shaping American foreign policy and exercising its constitutional responsibility of advice and consent. I also have tremendous respect for the professional staff who make this institution function every day. Having spent years on that side of the dais, it is both humbling and deeply meaningful to appear before you today on this side.

Public service has been the central thread of my career. I have had the privilege of serving in uniform as an officer in the United States Army Reserve, including time supporting U.S. military operations in Europe. As I mentioned earlier, I also had the opportunity to work in Congress, both in the House and Senate, on national security and foreign policy matters, helping Members of Congress navigate some of the most complex challenges facing our country.

Most recently, I served at the Department of Veterans Affairs as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Congressional and Legislative Affairs, where I worked closely with Congress to advance policies supporting our nation's veterans.

I would also like to acknowledge my family, who are here today. My wife Brooke has been steadfast in her support despite her own outstanding career and accomplished background, including as an Air Force Reserve officer. I am also

joined by my children, Lincoln, Madison, and our newest son, Jackson. And I apologize in advance if Jackson tries to introduce himself at some point during this hearing. My family is the foundation of everything I do, and I am grateful for their love and support. I'm also thankful for my parents, siblings, friends and colleagues who are here today and have been supporting me throughout my career, and who are excited to see me take on this new role.

If confirmed, I will approach this role with a clear understanding that American leadership in Europe remains essential to our security and prosperity.

The United States helped establish the OSCE during the Cold War - with broad support from Congress - as a forum where nations with profoundly different political systems could engage in dialogue, reduce tensions, and promote stability across the Euro-Atlantic region.

The Helsinki Final Act articulated a vision of comprehensive security that remains just as relevant today as it was in 1975. It recognized that military stability, economic cooperation, and respect for human rights are interconnected and essential to lasting peace.

For decades, the OSCE has played a valuable role in advancing these principles. It has served as a forum for arms control negotiations, confidence-building measures, and dialogue among nations that often see the world very differently. It has also supported partner countries through field operations focused on strengthening democratic institutions, border security, and economic transparency and stability.

Today, the importance of that mission is as clear as ever.

Russia's war against Ukraine has fundamentally challenged the European security architecture. At the same time, the OSCE remains one of the few institutions where states with differing perspectives can still engage directly on security issues. If confirmed, I will work closely with our allies and partners to ensure the OSCE continues to serve as a meaningful venue for dialogue, transparency, and conflict prevention.

At the same time, the organization must refocus on its core mandate. Over time, the OSCE's scope has broadened significantly, and it is important to get serious about reform to ensure it can effectively meet today's security challenges. If confirmed, I will work with participating States to ensure the organization becomes focused, effective, and capable of advancing peace and stability across the region.

Finally, I want to recognize the important role Congress has played in supporting the OSCE since its founding. The bipartisan leadership of the U.S. Helsinki Commission and the engagement of Members of Congress in the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly have been instrumental in advancing the principles reflected in the Helsinki Final Act.

If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with this Committee, the Helsinki Commission, and the Congress to advance policies that strengthen American leadership and promote peace, security, and prosperity across the region.

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