

## NOMINATIONS

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THURSDAY, MAY 1, 2025

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:36 a.m., in room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. James E. Risch presiding.

Present: Senators Risch [presiding], Ricketts, McCormick, Hagerty, Cruz, Scott, Cornyn, Shaheen, Murphy, Kaine, and Van Hollen.

Also present: Representative Ciscomani and Senator Graham.

Senator RISCH. This morning we have five important nominations made by the President of the United States for various positions. We are going to have some introductions here in a moment.

The way this—run the show is we are going to let the people who are here introduce, and they have other things they have to do so we will excuse them, and then myself and Senator Shaheen will make opening remarks.

We will then hear from the nominees, and then we will open it to a round of questioning. So let us start.

Is Senator Graham here? I guess not.

Well, Congressman, you are going to introduce Leah Campos for the Dominican Republic. Is that correct?

Representative CISCOMANI. That is correct, Chairman. Yes.

Senator RISCH. Please.

### STATEMENT OF HON. JUAN CISCOMANI, U.S. REPRESENTATIVE FROM ARIZONA

Representative CISCOMANI. Well, thank you.

Thank you, Chairman Risch, and thank you, Ranking Member Shaheen and members of the committee.

It is an incredible honor to introduce my good friend and President Trump's nominee to be the next Ambassador to the Dominican Republic, Leah Campos.

Leah and I have known each other for over 10 years. We first met in 2015, and for the past decade I have known and I have seen her dedication and known that she has been destined to represent our nation at the highest levels.

She is an incredible leader with a wealth of knowledge on the U.S.-Dominican Republic relationship. When you consider Leah's background you clearly understand why President Trump has chosen her to serve in this role.

She has worked extensively throughout her career in strategic roles relating to Latin America and the Caribbean in both public and private sectors.

Like me, Leah is a product of the American dream. She comes from a family focused on service and patriotism, and Leah often highlights the inspiration her parents have been for her in her service.

Her father came from humble roots in a mining town in our home State of Arizona and went on to serve in the Air Force for over 28 years. Her mother is an immigrant from Spain.

Leah grew up abroad where she learned the importance of the United States' role in the world, and her background makes her uniquely qualified to represent our nation in a role as ambassador.

Her decade long service with the U.S. Government makes her well qualified to serve our nation, and if confirmed I am confident that Leah will thrive in this role to support and strengthen the U.S. interest with the Dominican Republic.

Mr. Chairman, thank you again for the opportunity to introduce Leah, and thank you, Leah, and your family for your willingness to serve our great country.

With that I yield, sir.

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Congressman. Thank you for taking the time to come over here. I know it is a long walk the other way and——

Representative CISCOMANI. Always good to see you all. Thank you so much.

Senator RISCH. Thank you.

So, Senator Hagerty, would you be so kind as to introduce Charles Kushner?

**STATEMENT OF HON. BILL HAGERTY,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM TENNESSEE**

Senator HAGERTY. Certainly.

Chairman Risch and Ranking Member Shaheen, thank you so much for having this hearing, for the wonderful panel that we have here.

You all are about to have the opportunity to serve the greatest nation in the world, to represent us. It is the honor of a lifetime. It certainly was for me the honor of a lifetime to do a job like you are preparing to do, and I certainly look forward to your confirmations very soon.

But today it is a special honor for me to introduce my good friend, Charlie Kushner. Charlie is President Trump's nominee to be the U.S. Ambassador to France and Monaco.

I have been very fortunate, I think, to get to know Charlie and his family. They are going to be, I think, a terrific representative to us.

Their children, Dara, Nicole, Josh, and Jared are all tremendously successful in their own right, and I have had the pleasure to know and work closely, of course, with Jared and his wife, Ivanka.

I think Charlie and Seryl will be extraordinarily proud that their children are a testament to America's values. The character that they demonstrated in so many ways are your finest achievement,

and I think, frankly, Charlie, you embody the American dream with what you have accomplished in your lifetime.

As the son of Holocaust survivors who immigrated to the United States in the 1940s with absolutely nothing, Charlie rose to become one of the country's most successful real estate developers.

Indeed, he is a skilled and talented negotiator, a leader who treats his employees like family, and he is a respected philanthropist.

From my perspective as a lifelong businessman who served as U.S. Ambassador to Japan during President Trump's first term, I believe that the skills and experience that Charlie has developed have made him successful in the private sector but also will drive exceptional success in his role as America's Ambassador to Paris.

But let me say this. President Trump selected Charlie for this role not because of his business acumen and experience in tough negotiations, but also because Charlie is a deeply patriotic American who recognizes the strategic and historical importance of our transatlantic relationships.

Charlie understands the unique and enduring bond between the United States and France, a bond that is rooted in shared history, democratic values, and mutual interests.

He is committed to advancing U.S. national security interests by deepening the U.S.-France alliance through pragmatic defense collaboration and fair and reciprocal trade negotiations.

In short, Charlie is a doer, and he is energized not only to represent our country but to accomplish great things for the American people.

I am confident that Charlie, when he is confirmed, will work tirelessly to build a more secure and prosperous future for both the American and French people.

I look forward to his testimony today and to working with my colleagues in this committee to ensure his nomination moves forward as quickly as possible.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Senator. I appreciate that.

And, Senator Graham, you have the floor.

**STATEMENT OF HON. LINDSEY GRAHAM,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM SOUTH CAROLINA**

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and to all the members of the committee.

It is my honor to introduce Edward Sharp—I did not know his middle name was Sharp but it makes sense if you get to know him—Walsh, who has been nominated to be Ambassador to Ireland where we all like stopping on our way to someplace else, and now that Ed is going to be the ambassador I hope—and I am sure you will—I am going to stay a bit longer.

I have known Ed for many years now. He is a very close friend to President Trump. So to our friends in Ireland, you are getting one of the closest friends that President Trump has, and that will benefit you because when Ed picks up the phone President Trump will answer.

He is very excited about this job. He is a professional engineer, a real estate developer in New Jersey, and being in New Jersey I

am sure that is a challenging task to be in the real estate business and a builder.

But he has the—he is the founder and president of the Walsh Company, which was established in 2003. He is a highly respected businessperson. He went to Villanova, got in a car wreck, lost one of his classmates. Spent the entire first semester in the hospital. He is a very determined fellow when it comes to succeeding.

The biggest success was marrying his wife Lynn. They met at Villanova. They have three beautiful daughters—Rachel, Maggie and Anna—and two grandchildren, Hallie and Declan. Did I get that right?

Mr. WALSH. Declan.

Senator GRAHAM. OK. OK. And two dogs and two goats, and I met them all.

So I just want to let you know that when President Trump called me about thinking about nominating Ed to be Ambassador to Ireland that is a perfect fit.

Ireland is a wonderful place, a very welcoming place. People are full of life, and it is a great place to visit, and they have been a good ally of the United States.

And to the people of Ireland, again, you will be getting one of the closest friends that President Trump has, and in this business that matters.

To the people of the United States, to my colleagues in the Senate, you will be getting a very accomplished man who is dedicated to his country, is very excited about representing our nation in Ireland.

He and his family are just topnotch people. He has been successful in every endeavor in his life, and I can assure you he will be a great Ambassador to Ireland for all of us, and I would encourage this committee to support him.

And to Ed and your family, congratulations. You have earned this honor.

Senator RISCH. Well, thank you, Senator Graham, and you are right about us all stopping in Ireland.

Unfortunately, that usually has to do with the fuel capacity of the fleet that carries us. But we are always glad to stop there, even if it is briefly.

So thank you. I know you have got other things to do so we will excuse you.

Senator Cornyn.

#### **STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN CORNYN, U.S. SENATOR FROM TEXAS**

Senator CORNYN. Thank you, Senator Risch and Senator Shaheen. Thanks for holding this hearing on these very important positions.

I am pleased to introduce my friend and fellow Texan, Joe Popolo, President Trump's nominee to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to the Netherlands.

Joe has been a great friend over the years. One time I visited him in his office, and he showed me a keepsake on his desk which he saved from childhood.

It was a framed page of a scratch paper from a child—with a child's handwriting on it which reads, quote, "I will behave in school," close quote, 14 times.

[Laughter.]

Senator CORNYN. You can imagine the story behind that, but apparently that was one that his mother had given him that assignment as a result of a particularly rambunctious incident in his early years.

The fact that Joe saved this artifact and keeps it on his desk every day speaks to his appreciation for the lessons he learned from his parents, lessons of dedication to hard work and studiousness in school.

Considering Joe's outstanding achievements in life it is clear that those lessons have served him well. He has an impressive track record in the business world and has made many great contributions to Texas, as Senator Cruz and I can both attest to.

Under his leadership he tripled the size of Freeman Company and built it into a world class brand. He is the founder of Charles & Potomac Capital, a private investment firm focused on venture capital and private equity.

But Joe is more than just a businessman. He is an active member of the community and has been involved with philanthropic organizations in Texas, around the country, and around the world.

He is on the board of trustees at Boston College where he earned his BA, the board of the National World War II Museum, the Papal Foundation, and many other worthy causes.

He has been recognized for his leadership by the Dallas Business Journal as the most admired CEO, Entrepreneur of the Year by Ernst & Young, by the Dallas Entrepreneurial PAC with Governor William P. Clements, Jr. award, and by his alma mater Boston College with the John P. Curley award.

I am grateful that Joe and his family will be willing to take on this important assignment, and I know his life has prepared him well for this role to represent the United States abroad as the U.S. Ambassador to the Netherlands.

So congratulations, Joe, on your nomination. Given the Senate's schedule and the conflicting committee assignments I am glad I got here in time to deliver your introduction. But thank you, and congratulations.

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Senator Cornyn.

Mr. Popolo, I can assure you that the nuns that taught me were not nearly as generous as your mother was in such a short list.

Senator Cruz.

#### **STATEMENT OF HON. TED CRUZ, U.S. SENATOR FROM TEXAS**

Senator CRUZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I will confess I too have written many of those lists, but I guess I had the good sense to throw them away afterwards and not to follow them in the many years since.

Good morning, Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Shaheen, members of the committee. It is an honor to introduce my friend Joe Popolo.

I have known Joe for many years. He is an incredibly successful business leader in the State of Texas. Joe graduated from Boston College with a degree in finance.

He earned his MBA in finance and economics from the University of Chicago Booth School of Business, and after receiving his MBA, Joe joined the Freeman Company in 1997 and transformed it into the world's leading live event brand experience company.

He currently serves as the chairman of the board of Pinnacle Live. Joe has been instrumental in shaping multiple industries including technology, health care, media, energy, real estate.

His knowledge across these diverse fields reflects his intellect and his qualifications to represent the interests of the United States of America at the highest levels of diplomacy overseas.

Joe has earned great respect throughout the State of Texas and throughout the country as a business leader who loves his State and loves our nation, and he will make an excellent Ambassador to the Netherlands, and I am grateful Joe has agreed to serve.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES E. RISCH,  
CHAIRMAN, U.S. SENATOR FROM IDAHO**

Senator RISCH. And with that, I am going to make a few remarks and turn it over to Senator Shaheen, and then we will have the nominees give us their thoughts, and then we will open it up to questions.

So, Mr. Kushner, France is our oldest ally dating back to when it joined the newly declared United States in our fight for independence. Today, the U.S.-France relationship is a pillar of global stability and a cornerstone of the NATO alliance.

As ambassador a large part of your role will be ensuring U.S. security interests are prioritized as we modernize and expand our military alliance to address the threats posed by Russia and China.

France has reached the 2 percent defense spending target, but that percentage does not match the recent rise in aggression from our shared adversaries.

I hope you will work with the French government to boost its defense spending to reach a necessary higher target. I also look forward to hearing your plans to work with France to maintain a fair and balanced economic relationship.

Mr. Popolo, you will face similar challenges in your role as Ambassador to the Netherlands, a great friend of the United States. The Netherlands is also a NATO ally with close economic and cultural ties to the United States.

As you know, the U.S. and the Netherlands share one of the longest continuous diplomatic relationships in our history.

Like France, Netherlands has met its 2 percent defense spending target, but for the strength and security of our NATO alliance we need to see that percentage grow.

Mr. Walsh, the U.S. and Ireland share important common interests. Ireland serves as a gateway for the critical telecom infrastructure linking Europe and the United States, and with this strategic position comes significant responsibility to address the very real threats of it.

I have previously called for Ireland to increase its defense spending to safeguard vital undersea cables from our shared enemies, and I hope you will address this with your Irish counterparts.

Additionally, as you know, Ireland has recognized a Palestinian state. This recognition fails to acknowledge actual conditions on the ground, and worse, the horrific attack against Israel on 7 October.

This is a mistake by Ireland. Until Hamas is destroyed a Palestinian state is exceptionally unlikely. Calls for statehood fail to recognize that Israel can no longer tolerate terrorists in Gaza or in Lebanon.

For too long these groups have been a dagger pointed at the heart of Jerusalem and must be destroyed. I hope you will ensure that our friends in Ireland will understand that America strongly supports Israel.

I also look forward to hearing how you will continue the United States' historic role in implementing the Good Friday Agreement.

Finally, Ms. Campos, the Dominican Republic is a strategic partner with which we share democratic values as well as economic and security interests.

We are particularly grateful for the Dominican Republic's support for the alliance for development and democracy that sought closer political and economic relations with our country and other regional democracies in the face of China's malign influence.

I hope you will work with the DR to further these efforts. Additionally, given the DR's proximity to Haiti it will also be important in your role to work with your colleagues to address the instability in its neighbors. Stability in Haiti will benefit the Dominican Republic and the world.

In the wake of the recent State Department reorganization you will all enter a State Department that will be more accountable to the American taxpayer than ever before.

I hope you will take this responsibility seriously. I know you will, and I look forward to seeing how you will use your positions, once confirmed, to make Americans safer and more prosperous.

Thank you again for being here.

I will now turn to Senator Sheehan.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JEANNE SHAHEEN,  
RANKING MEMBER, U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW HAMPSHIRE**

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Chairman Risch, and welcome to all of our nominees today and to your families. Thank you for your willingness to consider serving this country.

Whether it is countering adversaries like Russia and China or promoting economic opportunity and trade, America's alliances and partnerships are one of our greatest assets.

Unfortunately, this President is making it harder to be in partnership with the United States.

Mr. Kushner, France supported Ukraine in the aftermath of Putin's invasion, and President Macron has worked very hard to keep Europe united in support for Ukraine while pushing back against Russian aggression.

Right now, the U.S. approach to negotiations to end Russia's war in Ukraine is straining that European alliance. To date it had been a U.S.-European alliance, but now our European allies are anxious.

So, Mr. Kushner, your nomination comes at a critical time. I hope you will talk in your opening statement about the message you plan to send to the people of France and the French government and how you will lead the embassy in Paris. It confirmed, how would you work to deepen the ties between the U.S. and France?

Mr. Popolo, you have been nominated to serve as our Ambassador to the Netherlands, another longtime American ally.

The Netherlands is not only one of NATO's founding members but NATO's current Secretary General, as you know, is the former prime minister of the Netherlands, and the Netherlands will host—too many Ns there—host the NATO summit at the Hague in June.

This makes the post of U.S. Ambassador to the Netherlands critical to transatlantic security. I believe this Administration's confrontational approach toward Europe is a strategic mistake, especially in the case of the Netherlands.

The Netherlands is home to one of the most specialized, important pieces of technology in the global economy today, and that is microchip manufacturers. Everyone in the world depends on microchips, and China is keen to develop the technology required to make them.

So, Mr. Popolo, given that the Trump administration has levied tariffs on the Netherlands how would you make sure this trade war does not drive the Dutch to send this technology to China?

And Mr. Walsh, Ireland has been the target of tariffs by this Administration. Tariffs on Ireland not only raise prices for American consumers and businesses but they undermine the delicate balance of peace that was made possible by the Good Friday Agreement.

If confirmed I would like to hear how you will work to maintain this successful peace agreement.

Finally, Ms. Campos, you have been nominated to serve as our Ambassador to the Dominican Republic, the site of this year's Summit of the Americas. The Dominican Republic is one of the bright spots in the Western Hemisphere and the Caribbean in particular.

The government is very supportive of the United States, as you know, and if confirmed I hope you will work to address one of their major concerns, which is the situation in Haiti.

It is critical that we find a way forward to bring the violence in Haiti under control. Doing so is not only important to our relationship with the DR, it is critical to U.S. interests as well.

So I look forward to hearing from each of you today and to the question and discussion that we will have afterwards.

Thank you all.

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Senator Shaheen.

We will now hear from the nominees.

We are going to start with you, Mr. Kushner. You are up.



**STATEMENT OF CHARLES KUSHNER, OF NEW YORK, TO BE  
AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF  
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE FRENCH REPUBLIC,  
AND TO SERVE CONCURRENTLY AND WITHOUT ADDITIONAL  
COMPENSATION AS AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY  
AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
TO THE PRINCIPALITY OF MONACO**

Mr. KUSHNER. First, I want to thank Senator Hagerty for his very kind and gracious introduction.

Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Shaheen, and members of the committee, I am grateful to appear before you as I am truly humbled and honored for the opportunity to represent America in France and Monaco under the leadership of President Trump.

Now more than ever since World War II Europe needs strong American leadership to advance President Trump's agenda.

I want to acknowledge my family, especially my wife Seryl and our children, Dara and David, Jared and Ivanka, Nicole and Joseph, Josh and Karlie, and each of our 14 grandchildren. They are the pillars of my strength, the foundation of my life, and the love of my heart.

I am a child of Holocaust survivors who came to America in 1949 as poor immigrants without any means and education. I never knew my grandmothers and most of my family who were executed by the Nazis and thrown into a pit with 18,000 other Jews.

I have visited that site in Belarus several times with children and grandchildren to recite the Jewish memorial prayer. My parents loved and appreciated our great country, the land of opportunity, just as I do.

I do not know much about French art and wine, but I do understand business. I have spent my entire career defining challenging goals and working hard to achieve those goals.

As the founder of Kushner Companies over 40 years ago I have spent decades building and managing a diverse portfolio of assets.

My experiences have taught me a deep understanding of complex negotiations, strategic planning, and how to cultivate strong relationships, all essential skills in the diplomatic realm.

My heritage is deeply rooted in the partnership between the United States and Europe. If confirmed, I am dedicated to building an even stronger relationship between the United States and our oldest ally, France, a relationship that was forged in the birth of the United States and cemented by an unwavering commitment to end the horrors of both world wars.

This year marks the 80th anniversary of Victory in Europe Day, a day that symbolized the triumph of freedom over tyranny and oppression. For the United States it represented the culmination of immense sacrifices made by American soldiers and civilians.

For France it signified liberty, liberation, and the restoration of its freedom and sovereignty. Our shared history is a testament to the strength of our alliance and the values that we hold dear—life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness for Americans; liberty, equality, and fraternity for the French.

These principles guide our bilateral relationship and our efforts to safeguard national security. As ambassador I would work tire-

lessly to strengthen this vital relationship, focusing on three key priorities.

First, I will ensure that trade between our two nations revitalizes American industry and drives economic growth. France is our fifth largest investor with over \$360 billion invested in the United States.

However, President Trump has made clear the importance of having fair and reciprocal trade. I will work closely with France to bring greater balance to our important economic relationship and combat harmful regulations that target American companies.

Through joint action the United States and France can create even more opportunities for innovation and prosperity on both sides of the Atlantic.

Second, I plan to strengthen the U.S.-France defense relationship to better address common threats and ensure the safety of our citizens.

France is a key NATO ally, and our collaboration on counterterrorism, cybersecurity, and military actions operations is crucial for the security of America.

France still spends far too little on its own defense, especially when the war in Ukraine is on the footsteps of Europe. I will urge France to invest more in its defense capabilities as well as lead the EU to align with the U.S. vision of increased European commitments to security.

Third, I will be an advocate for accurate Holocaust education and will promote efforts to counter anti-Semitism more broadly. I will seek to ensure the safety and security of the Jewish community.

In France, recent reports reveal that 46 percent of young adults have never heard of the Holocaust. These findings are disturbing and underscore the urgent need for comprehensive education to ensure that past atrocities are not forgotten.

In closing, I am committed to serving the United States with dedication and integrity. If confirmed, I will prioritize the well being and safety of American citizens living and traveling in France.

I believe that by fostering a more balanced trade relationship, pressing for more French defense investment and spending, and promoting historical education we can create a more secure and prosperous future for both our nations.

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

[The prepared statement of Mr. Kushner follows:]

#### **Prepared Statement of Charles Kushner**

Senator Booker, thank you for your very kind and gracious introduction. More importantly, thank you for your special and close friendship for over 25 years. It is a distinct pleasure for me personally to see how you have become such a great Senator from New Jersey, a State near and dear to my heart.

Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Shaheen, and Members of the Committee, I am grateful to appear before you as I am truly humbled and honored for the opportunity to represent America in France and Monaco under the leadership of President Trump. Now, more than ever since World War Two, Europe needs strong American leadership to advance President Trump's agenda. I want to acknowledge my family, especially my wife, Seryl, and our children, Dara & David, Jared & Ivanka, Nicole & Joseph, Josh and Karlie, and each of my 14 grandchildren. They are the pillars of my strength, the foundation of my life and the love of my heart.

I am a child of Holocaust survivors who came to America in 1949 as poor immigrants without any means and education. I never knew my grandmothers, and most of my family, who were executed by the Nazis and thrown into a pit with 18,000 other Jews. I have visited that site in present-day Belarus several times, with children and grandchildren, to recite the Jewish memorial prayer. My parents loved and appreciated our great Country, the land of opportunity, just as I do.

I have spent my entire career defining challenging goals and working hard to achieve those goals. As the founder of Kushner Companies over 40 years ago, I have spent decades building and managing a diverse portfolio of assets. My experiences have taught me a deep understanding of complex negotiations, strategic planning, and how to cultivate strong relationships—essential skills in the diplomatic realm.

My heritage is deeply rooted in the partnership between the United States and Europe. If confirmed, I am dedicated to building an even stronger relationship between the United States and our oldest ally, France—a relationship that was forged in the birth of the United States and cemented by an unwavering commitment to end the horrors of both World Wars.

This year marks the 80th anniversary of Victory in Europe Day, a day that symbolized the triumph of freedom over tyranny and oppression. For the United States, it represented the culmination of immense sacrifices made by American soldiers and citizens. For France, it signified liberation and the restoration of its freedom and sovereignty.

Our shared history is a testament to the strength of our alliance and the values we hold dear—life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness for Americans; liberty, equality, and fraternity for the French. These principles guide our bilateral relationship and our efforts to safeguard national security. If confirmed, I would work tirelessly to strengthen this vital relationship, focusing on three key priorities.

First, I will ensure that trade between our two nations revitalizes American industry and drives economic growth. France is our fifth-largest foreign investor with over \$360 billion invested in the United States. However, President Trump has made clear the importance of having fair and reciprocal trade. I will work closely with France to bring greater balance to our important economic relationship and combat harmful regulations that target American companies and unfairly tax American innovation. Through joint action, the United States and France can create even more opportunities for innovation and prosperity on both sides of the Atlantic.

Second, I plan to strengthen the U.S.-France defense relationship to better address common threats and ensure the safety of our citizens. France is a key NATO ally, and our collaboration on counterterrorism, cybersecurity, and military operations both in Europe and farther afield is crucial to make America more secure. France still spends far too little on its own defense, especially when the war in Ukraine is on the doorstep of Europe. I will urge France to invest more in its defense capabilities, as well as lead the EU to align with the U.S. vision of increased European commitments to security, and to do so without unfairly excluding American companies and preventing European partners from having the best equipment available.

Third, I will be an advocate for accurate Holocaust education and will promote efforts to counter antisemitism more broadly. I will seek to ensure the safety and security of the Jewish Community. In France, recent reports reveal that 46 percent of young adults have not heard of the Holocaust. These findings are disturbing and underscore the urgent need for comprehensive education to ensure that past atrocities are not forgotten.

In closing, I am committed to serving the United States with dedication and integrity. If confirmed, I will prioritize the wellbeing and safety of American citizens living and traveling in France. I believe that by fostering a more balanced trade relationship, pressing for more French defense investment and spending, and promoting historical education, we can create a more secure and prosperous future for both our nations.

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

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Mr. Kushner. Well said.  
Mr. Walsh.

**STATEMENT OF EDWARD WALSH, OF NEW JERSEY, TO BE AM-  
BASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF  
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO IRELAND**

Mr. WALSH. Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Shaheen, members of the committee, it is an honor to come before you today as the nominee for the U.S. Ambassador to Ireland.

I am deeply humbled by the confidence placed in me by President Trump in this nomination. If confirmed, I am committed to representing our country to protect, promote, and advance our interests in Ireland.

First, I want to thank my wife Lynn who is here with me today. We have been together for 41 years ever since we met at Villanova University where I was studying to be an engineer and she was studying to be a nurse. I can honestly say I would not be standing here today without her love and support.

I would also like to thank my three daughters—Rachel Walsh-McGrath, Maggie Walsh-Kelly, and Anna for their constant love and support.

Anna is newly engaged to a young man with deep Irish roots and hopefully planning a wedding in Ireland. Anna and Maggie are here with us today while Rachel is home with her Irish twins Hallie and Declan McGrath.

I am confident that all three of our daughters along with their spouses Joe and Matt will continue to carry on our Irish traditions.

Family has always been very important to me. I am the youngest of seven kids, and I am grateful for the strong support of my siblings. Though my parents are no longer with us I know they would be incredibly proud today and probably a little surprised.

In 2003 I founded the Walsh Company, led it to become a recognized leader in construction and development across the Tri-State area.

My experience in the industry taught me that strong leadership and the ability to navigate complex challenges that are essential to building something that lasts, principles I will take great pride in and ones I will carry with me in representing our country and advancing our interests in Ireland, if confirmed.

I have had the privilege of being involved in several nonprofit organizations in my community, experience that also have shaped my values and approach to leadership. If confirmed those same values will guide me in my role as ambassador and advancing our mission in Ireland.

Ireland holds a special place in the hearts of many Americans, including my own. Our two nations are deeply connected by a rich legacy of shared history, culture, and values.

I am proud to come from New Jersey, home to over 1 million residents with Irish roots. Ten percent of our entire country has Irish heritage. That could be a low number considering how many messages I get on a daily basis.

As Ambassador I will strive to uphold and enhance these enduring bonds, advancing the relationship marked by strength and vitality.

One of our foremost priorities to be enhanced is the economic partnership between the United States and Ireland. Our bilateral

trade and investment partnership is vital to the prosperity of both nations.

Ireland has a population of 5 million people, yet is the sixth largest source of foreign direct investment in the United States. If confirmed, I will strive to enhance this framework so it serves Americans even more effectively.

I will work to support American enterprises and facilitate Irish investment in the United States. By promoting innovation, entrepreneurship, and equal opportunities for U.S. companies we can create a path to shared economic success and greater prosperity.

In addressing the global challenges of our time Ireland has been a steadfast partner. We collaborate closely on many issues, and I look forward to working together to advance our common interests and goals, and uphold the values we hold dear.

President Trump has made it very clear that Israel is a close ally of ours and that anti-Semitism has no room in the entire world. I look forward to working, constructively engaging on the issues contributing to the tensions between Israel and Ireland.

The depth of our shared heritage is a testament to the enduring friendship between our nations. I am committed to expanding the cultural and educational changes that built the bedrock of these longstanding and enduring people to people connections.

By promoting academic collaborations, cultural initiatives, and tourism we can further strengthen the bonds of understanding and good will that unite us and achieve us greater things together.

Last year we celebrated 100 years of diplomatic relations between the United States and Ireland. The year before we celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement.

I would be grateful to begin our next century of partnership with Ireland and set us on a path that rewards diligence, fairness, and dignity. I am fortunate that there is a longstanding, broad, bipartisan support for our interests in Ireland.

If confirmed, I will work to continue the long tradition of bipartisanship, not only when we exchange shamrocks in March but throughout the year.

I am also fortunate that I can exercise diplomacy from the green lawns of Ireland's fantastic golf courses.

Chairman, Ranking Member, and members of the committee, I am deeply honored by this nomination and the opportunity to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to Ireland.

I stand ready to answer any of your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Walsh follows:]

#### **Prepared Statement of Edward Walsh**

Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Shaheen, Members of the Committee:

It is an honor to come before you today as the nominee for the U.S. Ambassador to Ireland. I am deeply humbled by the confidence placed in me by President Trump in this nomination. If confirmed, I am committed to representing our country to protect, promote, and advance our interests in Ireland.

Throughout my career, I have been guided by a strong commitment to the American people and the principles at the foundation of our Nation. In building my company from the ground up in New Jersey, I have seen firsthand what we can achieve when we commit to three noble goals: diligence, fairness, and dignity. I have had the privilege of being involved in several nonprofit organizations in my community and those three principles have guided me there, as well. If confirmed, those principles will be the bedrock of my role as Ambassador and our mission in Ireland.

Ireland holds a special place in the hearts of many Americans, including my own. The bonds between our two nations are woven from the threads of shared history, culture, and values. I hail from New Jersey, where more than a million people can trace their ancestry back to Ireland. Ten percent of our entire country has Irish heritage. As Ambassador, I will work to honor and strengthen these enduring ties, fostering a relationship that is as resilient as it is dynamic.

One of my foremost priorities will be to enhance the economic partnership between the United States and Ireland. Our bilateral trade and investment partnership is vital to the prosperity of both nations. Ireland has a population of five million people, yet it is the sixth largest source of foreign direct investment in the United States. If confirmed, I will endeavor to make that framework deliver even more for Americans. I will strive to support American enterprises and facilitate Irish investment in the United States. By championing innovation, entrepreneurship, and a fair shot for U.S. companies, we can forge a path to shared economic success and even greater prosperity.

In addressing the global challenges of our time, Ireland has been a steadfast partner. We work in lockstep on issues ranging from defense to health. I look forward to working together to advance our common interests and goals and uphold the values we hold dear.

The rich tapestry of our shared heritage is a testament to the enduring friendship between our peoples. I am committed to expanding the cultural and educational exchanges that built the bedrock of these long-standing and enduring people-to-people connections. By promoting academic collaborations, cultural initiatives, and tourism, we can further strengthen the bonds of understanding and goodwill that unite us and achieve even greater things together.

Last year, we celebrated 100 years of diplomatic relations between the United States and Ireland. The year before, we celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement. And still, there is much work to be done. I would be grateful to begin our next century of partnership with Ireland, and set us on a path that rewards diligence, fairness, and dignity. I am fortunate that there is longstanding, broad, bipartisan support for our interests in Ireland. If confirmed, I will work to continue the long tradition of bipartisanship, not only when we exchange shamrocks in March, but throughout the year. I am also fortunate that I can exercise diplomacy from the green lawns of Ireland's golf courses.

Chairman, Ranking Member, and Members of the Committee, I am deeply honored by this nomination and the opportunity to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to Ireland. I stand ready to answer any questions you may have.

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Mr. Walsh.

Mr. Popolo.

**STATEMENT OF JOSEPH POPOLO, OF TEXAS, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS**

Mr. POPOLO. Thank you, Chairman Risch, and thank you, Ranking Member Shaheen and distinguished members of the committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee to be the U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

I am deeply honored by the confidence President Trump and Secretary Rubio have placed in me. I am grateful for the support of my family, especially my amazing wife of 32 years, Chris, who is also my best friend.

I am also honored to have our daughter Kit and our youngest son Connor here today. Our middle son Buck, who is a Boston public school teacher, could not be here today.

I am also glad to have my mom here today, who apparently made me write that "I will behave in school" missive several years ago, and Mr. Chairman, the Christian Brothers also helped with some discipline along the way, and I am honored that they are all here to support me. They mean more to me than anything in this world.

I am an entrepreneur at heart. I learned about entrepreneurship watching my father, Joseph Popolo, Sr., and my mother build and grow their computer software company, and I will bring that ethos of hard work, team building, and drive to preserve and strengthen our historic relationship with the Netherlands.

I spent over 18 years leading the Freeman Company together with my team, transforming us into the global leader in live events.

As its president for 7 years and CEO for 11, my team and I tripled Freeman's growth to \$3 billion in revenue while leading 7,500 full time employees and 30,000 part time employees in 25 cities on four continents including in the Netherlands, and now as founder and CEO of Charles & Potomac Capital, my team and I invest in businesses that solve problems and create jobs.

If confirmed I will bring that same passion to build something stronger and better in our critical relationship with the Dutch.

I am also proud to serve on the board of trustees of Boston College and to support educational philanthropy. As an entrepreneur, CEO, and philanthropist I am focused on bridging differences, building consensus, and delivering results, and I am confident that I will do the same in our relationship with the Netherlands if I am so lucky to be confirmed.

I admire the Dutch people and their longstanding partnership with the United States. The Netherlands was the second country to recognize our republic and has a long history of peaceful and mutually beneficial relations with the United States and our Dutch friends are very proud of this history.

They are thankful for the U.S. sacrifices that the servicemen and women made to liberate the Netherlands in World War II. In fact, later this month the U.S. and the Dutch will celebrate the 80th anniversary of the founding of the Netherlands American Cemetery at Margraten.

That is the second largest U.S. military cemetery outside the United States, and at that cemetery Dutch families, many of whom have adopted nearly 8,300 graves of men and service women, will come together.

And then in June, as you noted, NATO will host its annual Summit in the Hague, and with your support I hope to be able to be there to represent the United States at these critically important testaments to our relationship with the Netherlands.

If confirmed, I look forward to the opportunity of building on the legacy of this great relationship and important alliance, and my priorities would include three things.

First, I will work for the continued growth of the trade relationship in a way that prioritizes the prosperity of the American people. The United States enjoys a trade surplus with the Netherlands of more than \$60 billion, the largest in the world, and Dutch trade and investments support more than 1 million American jobs.

The Netherlands, as you noted, Ranking Member Shaheen, is a global leader in critical and emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and semiconductor equipment manufacturing, and they are a valuable partner to the United States in this sector.

Drawing on my experience in investment I will seek export opportunities for U.S. companies and ensure that high tech coopera-

tion between American and Dutch firms continues and to grow Dutch investment in the United States.

Second, I will continue to encourage Dutch contributions to U.S. national security priorities. The Netherlands as you noted, Mr. Chairman, is a highly effective fighting force, and their defense spending exceeds NATO's 2 percent of GDP spending target, and with President Trump's 5 percent goal in mind I will work with the Dutch government to lead a way for Europe in reaching this important goal.

And third, I will focus on our cooperation with the Netherlands on critical and emerging technologies. As has been noted, some of the world's most cutting edge technology is produced and designed in the Netherlands.

Dutch companies play a key role in advanced semiconductors, and as one of the most digitally advanced countries in Europe and home to a major global internet exchange the Netherlands is a vital partner for the United States on cybersecurity.

This alliance is even more important as we respond to the growing threats from strategic competitors like China.

In closing, I am committing to serve the United States in a bipartisan manner with dedication and integrity, and if confirmed I will prioritize the well being and safety of U.S. citizens living and traveling in the Netherlands.

I am eager to work with this esteemed committee, the hard-working and patriotic American foreign service professionals at the U.S. mission of the Netherlands and the indispensable Dutch staff to advance our Nation's interest and strengthen our partnership with the Netherlands.

I believe that by fostering economic growth, establishing a more balanced defense partnership, and protecting and promoting critical technologies we can create a safer, stronger, and more prosperous future for both nations.

I am here to serve, to listen, and to make the United States the strongest nation in the world, and I would just also like to add in closing that, Chairman Risch and Ranking Member Shaheen, I have had the chance to watch a lot of these hearings, knowing I was preparing for my own, and I want to congratulate both of you on the bipartisan and very collegial and respectful manner in which you have conducted these hearings.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Popolo follows:]

#### **Prepared Statement of Joseph Popolo**

Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Shaheen, and distinguished Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you as President Trump's nominee to be the U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of the Netherlands. I am deeply honored by the confidence President Trump and Secretary Rubio have placed in me. I am grateful for the support of my family, especially my amazing wife of 32 years Chris, who is also my best friend. I am also honored to have our daughter Kit and youngest son Connor here today, and who, along with along with our oldest son Buck, mean more to me than anything. I am honored that my mother, Mary Connelly, is also here today.

I am an entrepreneur at heart. I learned about entrepreneurship watching my father, Joseph Popolo Sr., and mother build and grow their computer software company. I will bring that ethos of hard work, team building and drive to my work to preserve and strengthen our historic relationship with the Netherlands.



I spent over 18 years leading the Freeman Company, together with my team transforming the company into the global leader in live events. As its president for 7 years and CEO for 11 years, my team and I tripled Freeman's growth to \$3B in revenue, while leading 7,500 employees in 25 cities on four continents—including in the Netherlands. Now, as founder and CEO of Charles & Potomac Capital, my team and I invest in businesses that solve problems and create jobs. If confirmed, I will bring this same passion to build something stronger and better in our critical relationship with the Dutch.

I am also proud to serve on the Board of Trustees of Boston College and to support educational philanthropy. As an entrepreneur, CEO, and philanthropist, I have focused on bridging differences, building consensus, and delivering results, and I am confident I will do the same in our relationship with the Netherlands if I am confirmed.

I admire the Dutch people and their longstanding partnership with the United States. The Netherlands was the second country to recognize our republic and has a long history of peaceful and mutually beneficial relations with the United States. Our Dutch friends are proud of this history. They are thankful for the sacrifices that U.S. servicemen and women made to liberate the Netherlands in World War II. In fact, later this month, the US and the Dutch will celebrate the 80th anniversary of the founding of the Netherlands American Cemetery at Margraten. At the cemetery, Dutch families have adopted the nearly 8300 graves of US service men and women. In June, NATO will host its annual summit in the Hague. With your support, I hope to be able to represent the United States at these critically important testaments to our relationship.

If confirmed, I look forward to the opportunity of building on the legacy of this great friendship and important alliance, and my priorities would include these three important goals:

First, I will work for the continued growth of our trade relationship in a way that prioritizes the prosperity of the American people. The United States enjoys a trade surplus with the Netherlands of more than \$60B, the largest in the world, and Dutch trade and investment support more than one million American jobs. The Netherlands is a global leader in critical and emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and semiconductor equipment manufacturing, and they are a valuable partner to the United States in this sector. Drawing on my experience in investment, I will seek export opportunities for U.S. companies, ensure that high-tech cooperation between American and Dutch firms continues, and grow Dutch investment in the United States.

Second, I will continue to encourage Dutch contributions to U.S. national security priorities. The Netherlands' military is a highly effective fighting force, and Dutch defense spending exceeds NATO's 2 percent of GDP spending target. With President Trump's 5 percent goal in mind, I will work with the Dutch government to lead the way for Europe in reaching this important goal.

Third, I will focus on our cooperation with the Netherlands on critical and emerging technologies. Some of the world's most cutting-edge technology is produced or designed in the Netherlands. Dutch companies play a key role in advanced semiconductors. As one of the most digitally advanced countries in Europe and home to a major global internet exchange, the Netherlands is a vital partner on cyber security. This alliance is even more important as we respond to growing threats from strategic competitors like China.

In closing, I am committed to serving the United States in a bipartisan manner, with dedication and integrity. If confirmed, I will prioritize the wellbeing and safety of U.S. citizens living and traveling in the Netherlands. I am eager to work with this esteemed committee, the hardworking and patriotic American foreign service professionals at the U.S. Mission to the Netherlands, and the indispensable Dutch staff, to advance our nation's interests and strengthen our partnership with the Netherlands. I believe that, by fostering economic growth, establishing a more balanced defense partnership, and protecting and promoting critical technologies, we can create a safer, stronger, and more prosperous future for both our nations.

I'm here to serve, to listen, and to make the United States stronger through this alliance. I would also like to add, having been an up-close observer to this process for the last few months, how edifying it is that you Chairman Risch, and you Ranking Member Shaheen, have conducted these hearings in an extremely professional and bipartisan manner.

Thank you for your time, and I look forward to your questions and, if confirmed, to getting to work. Thank you.

Senator RISCH. Well, we try to make it work. Thank you so much. I appreciate that.

Ms. Campos.

**STATEMENT OF LEAH F. CAMPOS, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**

Ms. CAMPOS. Good morning.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, distinguished members of the committee, and staff, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

I am deeply honored and humbled to be nominated by President Trump to serve as United States Ambassador to the Dominican Republic and am grateful for the trust President Trump and Secretary Rubio have placed in me to lead our mission in Santo Domingo.

I would like to take a moment to express my deepest condolences to the people of the Dominican Republic who are still mourning the loss of loved ones following the tragic accident at a well known nightclub in Santo Domingo last month.

I would like to recognize my four beautiful children—Christian, Isabela, Maria Soledad, and Xavier—who are here with me today, my parents, Miguel and Pilar, who are watching from their home in Arizona, my siblings, and all of my dear friends who have kept me in their prayers.

I come before you today a product of the American dream. My father was born in Superior, Arizona, a copper mining town where he grew up in poverty working odd jobs to help his parents make ends meet when he was not at school, where he stood out as a star Little League baseball player.

At the age of 18 my father enlisted in the U.S. Air Force where he served for nearly 30 years, rising to the rank of E9, the highest enlisted rank.

His military service took him early in his career to Madrid, Spain, where he met my mother. My mother was born in post-civil war Spain to a family that had been pursued relentlessly during the Spanish civil war by the communists who targeted her parents for their devotion to their country and to their Catholic faith.

Together, my parents are the most patriotic Americans I have ever known. They transcended poverty through hard work and faith in God, raising my siblings and me to never forget the blessing of having been born citizens of this great country, to serve our country, and to remain faithful to God.

Thanks to my father's military service I grew up living abroad where I developed a deep understanding of the importance of our country's leadership around the world with clear eyed focus on the vital national interests of the United States.

After completing my graduate studies I joined the Clandestine Service of the CIA, hoping to continue my family's tradition of serving our country abroad in pursuit of peace, strength, and prosperity for the United States.

After years of service at CIA, I came to Capitol Hill where I served as senior foreign policy advisor on the Western Hemisphere to the then Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

After some time in the private sector, President Trump has given me the most incredible opportunity to once again serve my country. If confirmed, my primary focus as ambassador will be to advance President Trump and Secretary Rubio's foreign policy priorities of ensuring a safer, stronger, and more prosperous United States.

As Secretary Rubio noted while visiting the Dominican Republic during his first official trip abroad, the United States and the Dominican Republic share a robust, dynamic relationship.

More than 2 million Americans of Dominican heritage reside in the United States, and 5 million U.S. tourists visit the Dominican Republic every year.

The United States enjoys a more than \$5.5 billion trade surplus with the Dominican Republic with more than \$30 billion in annual trade between our countries.

These connections provide a strong foundation for collaboration on key issues that impact both of our nations.

Among my top priorities, if confirmed, will be to work closely with the Dominican government to enhance border security and curb illegal immigration to the United States while stepping up the work we already do together to disrupt the operations of drug cartels and transnational criminal organizations. And importantly, I will work tirelessly to counter the Chinese Communist Party's influence in the Dominican Republic and throughout the hemisphere.

In addition, if confirmed I will make the morale and professional growth of all members of the U.S. mission to the Dominican Republic a key priority, especially among first and second tour officers.

Serving one's country, being a good steward of taxpayer resources, representing the beauty and strength of our great country abroad is honorable, and I hope to help cultivate, value, and strengthen the dedicated cadre of the men and women of the Foreign Service.

In closing, I am deeply honored by this nomination and am grateful to this committee for its consideration. If confirmed, I commit to working closely and respectfully with this committee, the Administration, and my counterparts in the Dominican Republic to advance the President's foreign policy objectives.

I look forward to any questions you might have of me. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Campos follows:]

**Prepared Statement of Leah F. Campos**

Good morning. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

I am deeply honored and humbled to be nominated by President Trump to serve as United States Ambassador to the Dominican Republic and am grateful for the trust President Trump and Secretary Rubio have placed in me to lead our mission in Santo Domingo.

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stood out as a star little league baseball player. At the age of 18 my father enlisted in the U.S. Air Force where he served for nearly 30 years, rising to the rank of E9—the highest enlisted rank. His military service took him early in his career to Madrid, Spain where he met my mother. My mother was born in post-Civil War Spain to a family that had been pursued relentlessly during the Spanish Civil War by the communists who targeted her parents for their devotion to their country and to their Catholic faith. Together my parents are the most patriotic Americans I've ever known; they transcended poverty through hard work and faith in God, raising my siblings and me to never forget the blessing of having been born citizens of this great country, to serve our country, and to remain faithful to God. Thanks to my father's military service, I grew up living abroad where I developed a deep understanding of the importance of our country's leadership around the world, with a clear-eyed focus on the vital national interests of the United States. After completing my graduate studies, I joined the Clandestine Service of the CIA—hoping to continue my family tradition of serving my country abroad in pursuit of peace, strength, and prosperity for the United States. After years of service at the CIA, I came to Capitol Hill where I was a senior foreign policy advisor on the Western Hemisphere to the then-Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. After some time in the private sector, President Trump has given me the most incredible opportunity to once again serve my country.

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And, importantly, I will work tirelessly to counter the Chinese Communist Party's influence in the Dominican Republic and throughout our hemisphere.

In addition, if confirmed, I will make the morale and professional growth of all members of the U.S. Mission to the Dominican Republic a key priority—especially among first and second tour officers. Serving one's country, being a good steward of taxpayer resources, representing the beauty and strength of our great country abroad is honorable—and I hope to help cultivate, value, and strengthen the dedicated cadre of the men and women of the Foreign Service.

In closing, I am deeply honored by this nomination and am grateful to this committee for its consideration. If confirmed, I commit to working closely and respectfully with this committee, the administration, and my counterparts in the Dominican Republic to advance the President's foreign policy objectives. I look forward to any questions you might have of me. Thank you.

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Ms. Campos.

We are now going to turn to a round of 5 minute questions, and for those of you who do not usually watch this committee you see all the comings and goings.

It started with the people who introduced our witnesses, and then the panel has to come and go, but we all have overlapping demands on our time, and it is awkward, but we somehow get it done. We appreciate your indulgence in that regard.

So starting with questioning, first of all, as far as the Netherlands is concerned, Mr. Popolo, I hope you will be able to convey to the Dutch those of us who work in the national security lane so much appreciate their understanding of their place in the supply chain on semiconductors.

Semiconductors are a national security issue. It is a really unfortunate circumstance that the—we have been through in recent

years where the United States invented this technology, and then the manufacturers and inventors, drawn by the siren of cheap wages, moved everything to Asia, and now, because it is so critical to everything we make, particularly defense but in automobiles, refrigerators. Anything you have has these in.

The Dutch play an incredibly critical role because they are the bottleneck. They make the machines that make the machines that make the semiconductors, and they have been very good with us as far as understanding that selling the highest technology to the Chinese is a real problem for national security.

They have been tremendous in that regard, and I hope you will be able to appreciate the—I hope you will be able to convey to them the appreciation that we have for that.

Mr. POPOLO. Thank you, Senator.

The State Department did a great job of briefing us in certain things, and that is one of them, just how critically important a partner the Dutch are in national security and technology and export controls with respect to China. So absolutely I will convey those thoughts.

Senator RISCH. Thank you. I appreciate that.

Concerning Ireland, my grandmother was a Murphy, no relation, I am sure, to Senator Murphy. At least I do not think so.

In any event, I got to tell you it is heartbreaking to see the mistake that the Irish are making regarding the Jewish state and Hamas.

It is absolutely heartbreaking is all I can say as far as watching that, with zero recognition of what Hamas did on October the 7th, and I truly hope that—Mr. Walsh, that—this is going to be a tough needle to thread when you got a close ally making a horrible mistake.

But you got to thread that needle, and I hope you will convey the message that they are very much out of step with the United States as far as a relationship with those countries in the Middle East.

Your thoughts.

Mr. WALSH. Yes. Thank you for the question.

It certainly is a topic that we are going to be discussing for a long time, and I am looking forward to getting, really, a detailed brief on all the issues relevant to this.

But I do know that President Trump has been very clear along with many of you that Ireland is an ally, and there is no room for anti-Semitism throughout the world.

So it definitely will be a big part of my conversations with them, and I do look forward to that but I clearly—I hear you. Be glad to meet with you on it.

I will meet with you again on it if you want to, and hopefully, when you come over we will meet and even have other meetings if you would like. And I do understand the issue, but I am really looking forward to kind of diving into more of the detail.

Senator RISCH. It is going to be a tough needle to thread, but they are an ally.

Senator Shaheen.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Kushner, there is no doubt that you have been a successful businessman. You have a compelling personal story, and obviously, a very successful family.

But you also have been convicted of a felony, pleading guilty to 16 counts including fraud, lying to the Federal—tax fraud, lying to the Federal Election Commission and retaliating against a cooperating witness for which you spent 2 years in prison.

So can you speak to how you reassure this committee and the American public about your judgment to be able to manage one of the most important embassies and relationships in America in terms of our allies and our history?

Mr. KUSHNER. First, let me say I respect the question. I understand the question. I respect the question highly, and it is a question I would ask as well.

My misjudgment and mistake was over 20 years ago. Since then, I have been pardoned by President Trump. But I do not sit here before you today and tell you I am a perfect person. I am not a perfect person.

I made a very, very, very serious mistake, and I paid a very heavy price for that mistake. My wife paid a heavy price. My children paid a heavy price, but since then I look at life as a balance sheet.

And many of us have assets, many of us have liabilities, and I have liabilities for sure, and the mistake I made in the past is one of my many liabilities.

But I also like to think of my life in context that I have had a lot of assets. My wife and I have given away over a hundred million dollars of our own money to charities for children, hospitals, education, and a whole bunch of other worthy causes, and I think that at the end of the day there is only one accountant I trust, that I believe in, and it is God, and God is going to assess my assets and liabilities and see how my balance sheet weighs.

In terms of my past bad judgment and my future judgment or my current judgment, because you are correct, it is a big responsibility this ambassadorship as it is for all of us, but I think that my past mistakes actually make me better with my judgment, better in my view of life, better in my values, to really make me more qualified to do this job maybe if I had not been on top of a mountain and fell off that mountain at some point in my life.

So thank you for raising it, and it is an issue that I am sure is on a lot of people's mind that they do not have the courage to raise it. So thank you.

And it is an example also for my grandchildren who are sitting here today, who—that if I make mistakes you have to admit your mistakes, and you have to go on with your life and make it productive and worthwhile.

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, thank you for that frank response.

Also, just to follow up, your nomination is being advanced through the committee at relatively a quick pace for this committee because you were nominated in February but the committee only recently received your financial disclosure, which is quite lengthy.

So do you commit to continuing to respond promptly and fully to any additional questions that the committee has about that financial disclosure?

Mr. KUSHNER. Yes. Without a doubt, I will respond and follow the guidance of the committee as to what I should be doing and not doing by way of divestiture and relinquishing responsibilities.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you very much.

Mr. Walsh, the Good Friday Agreement facilitates cooperation between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, and what do you think should be the role of the U.S. to help be a guarantor of the Good Friday Agreement and supporting this cross-island engagement?

Because clearly it is going to be critical to maintain the relationship both between the U.S. and Ireland and Ireland and Northern Ireland.

Mr. WALSH. Thank you, Senator.

It is a great question, but before I answer that I just want to say that meeting with your team was really great, and I want to thank them for information that they gave me also.

This also is or has been in the past a complicated situation, but today the U.S. has played such an important role in the Good Friday Agreement in the past that I think that today it is going to continue that strong support.

I do plan on also meeting with Ambassador Stevenson a few times to actually discuss with him and keep that line open and I think the communication is the key to this whole issue.

I think just understanding it, meeting with people, and keeping that agreement going, basically, and I think we certainly have all the support of all of you on this agreement, and I would be glad to meet with anybody at any time if there is any issues. And as soon as there is something that comes up I will let you know.

But I am with you on it. It is a very, very important part, and I know a lot of Senators in the past certainly have spent a lot of time and effort on this, and we want to continue that support.

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, thank you. As you point out, there are a lot of Americans of Irish descent who are watching this very closely as well.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

One of the things that Chairman Risch did not point out is that we are in the middle of a vote and so that is—people are going back and forth to vote, so that is why I will be leaving to go vote and be back shortly.

Senator MCCORMICK [presiding]. Wonderful. Thank you.

What a great panel. We have a University of Pittsburgh graduate. We have a Villanova graduate, who is an Irishman. We have my friend Charles Kushner, and we have my friend Joe Popolo. So congratulations to all of you and to your families on this great, great opportunity to serve.

I will thank the Chairman and the Ranking—I mean, I could go on all day here; I'm by myself now. I mean, this is good.

I will thank the Chairman and the Ranking Member for convening this hearing and thank you all for your service.

Let me start with you, Mr. Kushner. I just want to say it is great to see you this morning. I know you and your family.

I am a big admirer, and I really do think your life is representative of the American dream. It is an American story as the son of Holocaust survivors to be sitting here today as a successful busi-

nessman, a successful citizen and the future Ambassador to the Republic of our oldest ally.

There is three things I would like to just put into the record in terms of your qualifications.

First, I am heartened by your testimony that Holocaust education will be a priority for you in France. I think we have seen post-October 7 that the scourge of anti-Semitism exists across America and across the world, and I commend you on your commitment to lead on that front, and I will be happy to support you in any way.

I was also want to just spend a minute thanking you and recognizing your leadership on criminal justice reform. A friend of mine for, I do not know, 25, 30 years now, is Cory Booker—Cory and I have spoken about your leadership in New Jersey and all that you have done to help young men and women returning from prison get back on the right path in their lives, and I want to share for the record a specific statement from Senator Booker, and I quote, “I can unequivocally say that without Charlie Kushner we would have not passed the bipartisan First Step Act, which led to the liberation of thousands of Americans from unjust incarceration and unjustifiably long prison sentences.

“His work has helped us to reform the criminal justice system, save millions in taxpayer dollars, and help nonviolent offenders have a successful chance, a second chance in life.”

So thank you for that. I want to make sure we recognize that leadership. I think it answers, in part, Senator Shaheen’s question of the leadership you bring to this important role.

And finally, I want to just say I was encouraged by the priority you put on strengthening the U.S.-France defense relationship.

On that front, the French Carrier Strike Group recently returned to Toulon after a 5 month deployment in the Indo-Pacific.

These types of deployments are absolutely critical to preserving freedom of navigation, as you know, in the Indo-Pacific against our greatest geopolitical rival and adversary, China, and to ensure that France is leading alongside the United States in the face of the PLA’s increased military assertiveness, which we see throughout the region.

So with all that, let me ask you the first question. Will you commit to encouraging France to continue such deployments and to conduct future Taiwan Strait missions and transits?

Mr. KUSHNER. Absolutely yes, because it is France and America working in tandem with exactly the same objective to keep those regions safe and secure.

So the urging of the President, I think, in terms of urging for more spending on defense capabilities is critical, and the working together to secure those areas of the world are also critical. So I am committed to it, absolutely.

Senator McCORMICK. Very good. Thank you.

And second, shifting to Europe, one of the things I think President Trump has done masterfully is put the pressure on Europe, France and other countries, to pay their fair share of NATO and in defense investment, but we are still not where we need to be, as you know.



So in your role as ambassador what will you do to continue to assert the kind of pressure we need to make sure that America's role in the world is supplemented by a really robust defense spending on the part of France and others?

Mr. KUSHNER. I think President Trump has done most of the work already because Macron in particular they are up—they have increased their—from their GDP to two point something percent of their spending. But it still ranks the lowest third.

They are 19 out of 32 of the allies. So they still rank very, very low in terms of what they are spending. Macron himself, because of the pressure of President Trump, has acknowledged that he wants to go to 3 percent so it is the job of myself and whoever else can insert influence to get him up to the 5 percent mark of the GDP, and I plan to try to be influential to push just that.

Senator McCORMICK. Very good. Thank you.

And I will just try to squeeze in one more question.

Ms. Campos, shifting gears to drug trafficking, it is a big deal in Pennsylvania. We have a huge fentanyl crisis. We, as you know, have a lot of efforts to—by the cartels to further build out their drug trafficking operations throughout the Caribbean and South America, Central America.

In your role will you commit to working with law enforcement and really making drug trafficking a priority?

Ms. CAMPOS. Thank you, Senator, for that important question.

As you know, the Dominican Republic, and as I mentioned in my statement, the Dominican Republic and the United States already have a really strong relationship across all the anti-drug trafficking, anti-criminality operations.

As you also know, we have not had an ambassador in the Dominican Republic for 4 years. So I am hopeful that if I am confirmed that getting there will help reinvigorate, strengthen that partnership that we already do have with the Dominicans, strengthen their commitment and our commitment as well.

Thank you.

Senator McCORMICK. Very good.

Thank you all.

Senator RICKETTS [presiding]. In the absence of Chairman Risch I am going to go ahead and just take over here.

So now—it is not an Alexander Haig moment, though, just so you know.

[Laughter.]

Senator RICKETTS. Senator Kaine.

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Senator Ricketts, and congratulations to all the nominees for these important positions.

Mr. Kushner, my colleague Senator Shaheen raised a question that is a concern to us about your—the circumstances of your criminal conviction. But I know that is not the whole story.

I have heard from my colleague Senator Booker that you played an important role in helping him work to get the First Step Act passed during the first term of President Trump.

Could you describe that a bit?

Mr. KUSHNER. Senator Booker and I—after I had my experience I volunteered at Rikers Island. I went there once a week, and I tried to mentor young males between the age of 18 and 24.

I asked Senator Booker to please come with me one day because I thought he would be an inspiration to these boys. And Rikers is a tough jail. It is not a Federal prison.

And he went so far as to get on the floor and challenge these prisoners, who are pretty tough guys, you know, to push ups. Took off his shirt and did push ups for them, and he inspired the day-lights out of them.

But I think my experience, particularly having my family live through it and my son Jared serving in the first Administration, he felt passionate about this, and he used—it was paramount important to him and he used as much political capital with the President to say this is important.

As a result of that criminal justice act the amount of thousands of people that have come home early that are nonviolent offenders—that have come home early to their families, I hear it all the time.

I do not say anything but I am proud of my son for it being important to him and having the compassion for the human beings that are going through that that have made mistakes.

But so I feel that, again, through an act of God that this somehow resulted in helping Senator Booker and my son Jared pass that legislation.

Senator KAINE. He shared that story with a couple of us, and I wanted you to be able to share it, too.

Ms. Campos, I am the lead Democrat on the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee so your role working with the leader of the Western Hem Subcommittee on the House side is something I am impressed by.

And with respect to the Dominican Republic, one problem we have, I think, in foreign relations, and maybe particularly in Latin America, we pay a lot of attention to the headaches, and we do not shine a lot of spotlight on the good actors who are doing the right things.

The Dominican Republic is generally one of the nations that has done things right, and this Alliance for Development in Democracy with Ecuador, Costa Rica, and Panama is an example of nations in a region where there is some, you know, democratic backsliding, trying to lean forward and do better.

And I was in the Dominican Republic, you know, in the last couple years with Representative Espaillat, who is from the Dominican Republic, and we were trying to shine a spotlight on some of the positives.

So I hope that that is one of the things you will be able to do is in the position should you be confirmed sort of uplift the, hey, there are good actors in the Americas. Sometimes the good actors, though, tell us, you know, we never get attention from the United States. The U.S. is only paying attention to the problems.

And so you have the nations that I mentioned or you have the Uruguays and Paraguays and others that are doing things well. They kind of feel ignored by us.

One of the pressing challenges, obviously, that the Dominican Republic and that we face is the situation in Haiti, and Secretary Rubio talked about that during his confirmation hearing.

Should you be confirmed what do you think you might be able to do with respect to, you know, trying to help both the United States and the Dominican Republic play a constructive role in a new chapter—a new, more positive chapter for Haiti?

Ms. CAMPOS. Thank you, Senator, for both of those questions and comments.

You are right. The shining stars often get ignored, and yes, the Dominican Republic is one of them. I was very heartened that the Dominican Republic was included in the Secretary's first trip abroad.

I think that sent the Dominicans a strong message in terms of our commitment to the partnership we have with the Dominicans and also the President announcing his intention to nominate me so early in the process I think also sent a good message of the priority we will place on that relationship.

In terms of Haiti, I do not want to get ahead of the Administration's intended policy with Haiti, but I will tell you that I look forward to working very closely with our mission in Port-au-Prince, with this committee—your staff raised this with me when I met with them as well—and with the Administration to find solutions to stabilizing the situation in Haiti, which is troubling at best.

Senator KAINE. It is a really important one, and the worse it goes it ends up affecting us in, you know, illegal migration, et cetera, et cetera. So we have a whole series of reasons, both altruistic and selfish, to want to invest and get this right.

I am glad that the security force under the leadership of the Kenyans with participation of others, funding from the United States, is going forward. I think we need to retain a commitment to that.

But anyway, thank you for your answers, and I yield back, Mr. Chair.

Senator RICKETTS. Senator Hagerty.

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and again, to all four of you, congratulations on the significant appointments that you have been nominated for and hope you are confirmed for.

Mr. Popolo, I would like to start with you, if I might, on an issue where I think your business background is going to bring incredible force and weight. That has to do with foreign military sales.

It is a current issue with the Netherlands. Just recently the State Department announced that they had approved the sale of 200 Tomahawk land attack missiles.

It is a \$2.2 billion value sale, but importantly, it is going to step up the Netherlands defense capabilities, and it is going to help support our defense industrial base.

And this committee has heard me talk many times about my frustrations with the Foreign Military Sales process. It is sclerotic. It takes too long.

To see a businessman come into this role makes me optimistic that you will see an opportunity like this to go into the Foreign Military Sales process when you are there and find significant improvements.

So I would just like to get any thoughts you might have and let you know that my staff stands ready to work with you in this process.

Mr. POPOLO. Thank you, Senator. Great question.

As has been said in the introduction, obviously, the Dutch are a very important military partner. They are a founding NATO partner. They are part of the F-35. They are among the highest if not the highest in spending on military as a percentage of GDP in the EU.

However, there is an opportunity to grow, and I would love to get more information from you and more detail and to dig into that process. It is a great opportunity for us.

The EU, as you know, has a big trade imbalance with us, and although the Netherlands is a positive one military sales are absolutely a way we can help drive down that trade deficit.

Senator HAGERTY. Do you see other opportunities as a businessperson to work more closely with the Dutch, particularly on national security and economic security issues?

Mr. POPOLO. Absolutely. I would say they are the most like minded partner of ours in Europe. They already support over a million jobs in the U.S., and I would love and open the door to any U.S. corporation who would like to do business overseas and create jobs and opportunity here in America to come and visit. Our mission will be open and ready for business.

Senator HAGERTY. Well, I appreciate that, Joe.

And something very related I am going to go to Charlie and to Mr. Walsh as well on this one, broad question. But if you think about your business careers and the success that it has brought you, again, I could not be more optimistic about how you are going to take that knowledge and that skill set and bring it to bear as ambassadors representing this great nation.

So I would first come to you, Charlie, and then I will come back to you, Edward, on your thoughts about how you are going to deploy your private sector expertise as ambassador representing our country.

Mr. KUSHNER. There are so many issues. If you take just the trade, the fact that France—there is over \$150 billion of bilateral trade, which results in a \$17 billion deficit for America. So that alone—and it breaks down to be about \$14 billion of goods and about \$3 billion of services.

So when you take that deficit alone, and you see what could be done in terms of there is so much trade going on, so to put more emphasis on what is being purchased from America rather than being sold from America I think there is so much work to be done.

Liquefied natural—the LNG, the liquefied natural gas, France buys 34 percent of its imports from Russia. Gets 38 percent of its imports from America. So why—and the parts that it gets from Russia they sell to neighboring countries.

So why is that permitted, and why should we not be standing there as cheerleaders for America saying, you should be buying a lot more LNG from America?

So it is areas like that that are just very imbalanced and unfair that I think business people are going to understand, zero in on, and make a difference.

Senator HAGERTY. Terrific.

Mr. Walsh.

Mr. WALSH. Thank you for the question. There is a few answers to that, actually.

One is just by owning your own company you generally have to lead a group of people, and I am looking forward to leading the embassy in Ireland, if confirmed, and all the people that are there.

Gaining their trust is very important to me, and actually just leading them with a bunch of goals, which are your goals and President Trump's goals, and get them organized enough and get some timelines going so that we can actually reach those goals.

My other background, though, really is an engineer and I do think the engineering kind of mindset of just analyzing a situation and coming up with a solution is generally pretty good.

But I have also been in sales my whole life, and I think that is also a pretty important part going to Ireland on talking and actually communicating with everybody there and just kind of getting consensus and getting things done.

Senator HAGERTY. The Irish deputy prime minister came to visit me very recently. I think there is a great desire to do more with America. He clearly had a desire to help reduce our trade deficit, as you know, our farmer firms in particular but there is a great deal of intellectual property that moves through Ireland.

I think you are going to have great opportunities there, and I wish you all for the best.

Mr. WALSH. I agree.

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator RISCH [presiding]. Thank you very much.

Senator Scott.

Senator SCOTT OF FLORIDA. Thank you, Chairman.

First off—

Senator RISCH. I am sorry. Excuse me, Senator Scott.

Senator Ricketts was next. I apologize. Just was not paying attention to the list.

Senator RICKETTS. I told you.

Senator RISCH. And I forgot.

[Laughter.]

Senator RICKETTS. Anyway, well, hey, first of all, thank you to all of our nominees here for your willingness to serve our great nation, and I want to especially thank your families because they will serve alongside you and make it possible for you to be able to serve our country. So thank you very much to the families who are willing to sacrifice along with our nominees here.

Mr. Kushner, I am going to start with you because, again, we have talked about how important the relationship with France is, and you know, there has been a recent United Nations report confirmed that Iran now possesses enough 60 percent enriched uranium to produce six nuclear warheads.

This escalates the threat beyond the U.S. and Israel, posing a direct risk to our allies across the Middle East and Europe. This enrichment defies U.N. Security Council Resolution 2231 which was originally codified in JCPOA.

I applaud President Trump's decisive move to reimpose maximum pressure on Iran as well as entering into negotiations with Iran on a nuclear deal.

However, the credibility and strength of these talks hinge on the United States entering with room with maximum leverage—entering the room with maximum leverage. That is why I have introduced a resolution backed by 18 of my colleagues urging the E3 to trigger the snapback of U.N. sanctions before the October deadline.

The French have supported the snapback of sanctions but have stated that it is contingent on reaching a nuclear deal.

Mr. Kushner, do you believe that restoring U.N. sanctions would give President Trump a stronger hand in confronting the Iranian regime?

Mr. KUSHNER. Without a doubt it would, and why the French have not used that snapback to date is a mystery to me because I would think that they would have used it.

I am not sure if they do not have the will or the desire, whatever it may be, but I will be pushing that because I think that should be exercised, and it expires within months.

So the fact that they have that right and have not used it is a shame. I think we should be standing up and really lobbying very, very hard for them to exercise it, and I think maximum sanctions is—there is very—I think President Trump really has this issue, and it is not—it is either going to be negotiated no nuclear, or it is going to have to be an alternative of military, and I think President Trump has made that clear.

So I think maximum protect—maximum leverage on the Iranians. I think France and America are in total agreement on that.

Senator RICKETTS. Well, Mr. Kushner, that really heartens me to hear you say that because I agree with you 100 percent.

You know, during the first Trump administration we saw that because of those sanctions the Trump administration was able to bring Iranian foreign reserves down from \$122.5 billion to under \$14 billion, and that cut off their ability to be able to fund the terrorism that we see around the world, and continuing to put pressure on the way the Trump administration has is important.

You know, my colleague here, Mr. McCormick, was talking about the Indo-Pacific and that has emerged as an area of key threat from communist China, and he mentioned about—he talked a little bit about France's role there as well.

It is home to 1.6 million French citizens who live across seven overseas territories and over 9 million square kilometers of French exclusive economic zone.

Recognizing this, France became the first European country to adopt an Indo-Pacific strategy in 2019, and through the strategy France participated in the freedom of navigation exercises that we are talking about through the Taiwan Strait.

But we have seen Communist China being incredibly aggressive with their illegal, coercive, aggressive, and deceptive practices in especially relating to our allies with Philippines and especially Taiwan as well.

I authored the BOLSTER Act to encourage European engagement in support of Taiwan's security with one of the largest militaries in Europe and naval forces as well. Extending their presence for this reason, France could really play a great role.

Can you talk about how can you work with France to get them to better support Taiwan and the relationship there, given its leadership, and—you know, France's leadership in the Indo-Pacific?

Mr. KUSHNER. I think France recognizes the same thing that America recognizes, what a threat China is to the world.

I do not think there is daylight between them in terms of assessing them as their capability and their infiltration and stealing technology and all the other things and devaluing currency and robbing us on trade.

So I think France and America are very aligned. It is just that France has to step up to be more aggressive like America is now stepping up to be more aggressive, and I see it as my job as a future ambassador to meet with the officials and apply that pressure, knowing that they should be more in step lock with the American policy.

So I am all for your proposal, and I am all for supporting it—

Senator RICKETTS. Great. Well, thank you very much—

Mr. KUSHNER [continuing]. And being a cheerleader for it.

Senator RICKETTS. Right. Great.

Well, thank you very much, Mr. Kushner, and again, I hope that once you are confirmed as ambassador that you will work with whoever is in leadership in France, whether it is President Macron or somebody else, to remember that even though we certainly respect France as having their own policies and wanting to have the independence from the United States that they deserve as a sovereign nation, that we work better together as a team and especially when we are confronting Communist China.

This is the single biggest threat that we face internationally. But it is not just a threat to the United States.

It is a threat to France and all the other freedom loving countries in the world because Xi Jinping is a dictator who is bent on world domination, and you know, for France to go a separate way from the United States would undermine our collective security.

So I hope you will emphasize that when you get there. Thank you.

Senator RISCH. Well said, Senator Ricketts. Well said.

Senator Scott.

Senator SCOTT OF FLORIDA. [Off mic.]

Senator RISCH. I think so.

Senator SCOTT OF FLORIDA. All right. Thank you, Chairman.

Well, first off, congratulations to each of you. You are going to—it is a great opportunity to be an ambassador, and you will have an opportunity of a lifetime and to really have an impact on relationships with each of these countries.

So let me start with Mr. Popolo. We have a strong relationship with the Netherlands. It is nice to see the government is committed to the 2 percent threshold for defense spending.

It has taken a long time, and you know, I was just in Finland, Denmark, and Estonia, and they are spending significantly more.

If you listen to what NATO's needs are, when you go over there they are absolutely convinced that Putin will invade as soon as the—or within a reasonable period of time after the Ukraine war is over.

So what do you—you know, what are you going to do to get them to step up and be a better NATO partner?

Mr. POPOLO. Thank you, Senator Scott.

As you noted, they are currently a little above 2 percent. They are a founding NATO partner, part of the F-35 program. So they—I feel like we are aligned.

However, President Trump has made clear that we have to share the burden more equitably in the EU, and frankly, Russia is primarily a European problem.

So I am going to be pushing on behalf of the President and Secretary Rubio to see what we can do to get them closer to the 5 percent that as I think you know is what he has requested.

There is going to need to be forces in Ukraine after, I believe, President Trump will be successful in negotiating a peace deal. There has to be a conversation about how that is going to be supported. The threat of China continues to grow, and so the Europeans and the Dutch also they need to step up.

Senator SCOTT OF FLORIDA. You know, it seems to me that we—the world is dividing up between the bad guys—Communist China, Russia, Iran, North Korea and a few others—and then the democracies.

How—and it seems to me we have to align our economic interests, and so how are you going to help the Netherlands get better at aligning their economic interests with ours where both countries have the opportunity for their workers to be able to sell products and services into each other's countries, and we stop buying from the people that want to demolish our way of life?

Mr. POPOLO. Excellent. Thank you, Senator.

We do—we are blessed to run a trade surplus with the Netherlands today, although a lot of that does come into Rotterdam and then go out to other countries in Europe.

I am certainly going to be wearing the hat of the U.S. LNG producers to see if we can sell more. Generally speaking, I would love to be a representative for the U.S. business community that would like to come over and expand our relationship.

They are currently supporting over a million U.S. jobs, and I think, generally speaking, they have been really good partners.

Where there have been issues around national security or export controls that we have been able to work together. But clearly, I am going to be trying to build that relationship.

We share an existential threat with China, and there is no reason we should not be tighter together in opposition to what they are doing.

Thank you.

Senator SCOTT OF FLORIDA. Thanks.

Mr. Walsh, historically we have had a very strong relationship with Ireland, and I hope that continues. However, several members of the Irish government have made inflammatory, one sided statements blaming Israel for the conflict in the Middle East while ignoring terrorism by Hamas and Hezbollah.

How are you going to be able to push back against this rhetoric and hold them accountable for disparaging a U.S. ally?

Mr. WALSH. Thank you for the question, Senator.



It is a really important topic and something I look forward to actually getting a lot more information on in the future.

But first, I would like to say that Ireland did at least condemn the October 7 attack, so that was a good start, and President Trump has made it very clear that Israel is an ally, and I am fully on board with that, and any anti-Semitism throughout the whole world will not be tolerated.

And I agree with that also, and I would love to meet with you or anyone else in the committee to actually talk about that further.

But it is certainly on my mind and something that I am looking forward to discussing more, and just having open conversation with them to talk it through so they understand what our role is in that.

Senator SCOTT OF FLORIDA. Thank you.

Ms. Campos, the Dominican Republic has had some issues because of the unrest in Haiti. What are your plans to be able to address the refugee crisis that the Dominican Republic is dealing with and trying to make sure the Dominican Republic is part of the solution with regard to Haiti?

Ms. CAMPOS. Thank you. Thank you for that question, Senator.

As I mentioned earlier to Senator Kaine, who asked a similar question, I am not able right now to get ahead of what the Administration wants to do in terms of Haiti, but I do commit to working very closely with our embassy in Port-au-Prince, with the Administration, with you and your staff here at this committee to try to find solutions to stabilize Haiti because you are right, the attendant effects of the instability on the Dominican Republic and on in particular your State of Florida, sir, are serious.

So I will be working hard with my colleagues, as I said, in Port-au-Prince to come up with some solutions there.

Senator SCOTT OF FLORIDA. All right. I thank each of you.

Mr. Kushner, good luck with France. I do not see them as the perfect ally. They do not seem to always cooperate with us to make sure countries like Iran are held accountable. But I know you will work your butt off trying to make sure they do the right thing.

Congratulations to each of you.

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Senator Scott.

We do not use the word perfect in the same sentence with allies most of the time. It is just a fact of life.

Senator SHAHEEN. Or with colleagues.

[Laughter.]

Senator RISCH. Careful. Careful.

Senator Shaheen.

Senator SHAHEEN. Mr. Popolo, the Netherlands recently announced an additional \$2.2 billion in security assistance to Ukraine focused mostly on drone technology, and in October the Netherlands—I am having so much trouble with that today—announced that it has begun to deliver 24 F-16 fighter jets to Ukraine.

So as we see the Dutch staying the course and standing up to Putin's brutal invasion of Ukraine how will you continue to advocate for their ability to support Ukraine and help bridge the gap if there is one between that approach and the approach that the White House may be taking to Ukraine?

Mr. POPOLO. Well, thank you, Senator, for that question.

I absolutely, and I believe the President, is supportive of them stepping up as part of this overall burden sharing. We have to get Europe to take more responsibility for their defense.

The Dutch are also very good about wanting to buy U.S. military hardware, so I think that is a great thing. Some of the feedback I have gotten is that there is some supply chain issues that are preventing them from getting even more. So they would like to actually buy more from us than we are able to deliver.

So I will be a very forceful advocate to make sure that everything we have agreed to deliver and they are able to use in Ukraine that they would be able to do that.

Senator SHAHEEN. Good. Thank you.

I am pleased to hear that, and I would just point out as a member of the Armed Services Committee one of the challenges with those supply chain issues has to do with our industrial base's ability to produce the armaments that other countries would like to see from us.

Mr. POPOLO. Absolutely. Thank you.

Senator SHAHEEN. Ms. Campos, as I said in my opening statement, the next Summit of the Americas is scheduled to be in the Dominican Republic in December 2025.

That would occur during your tenure, if you are confirmed, and it has historically provided an opportunity for strengthening regional coordination with key U.S. partners on shared issues like migration, security, economic challenges.

What issues would you like to see addressed during this upcoming summit, and how can it serve as an opportunity for us, and will you commit to doing everything you can to ensure that we have some high level officials from the Administration there at the summit?

Ms. CAMPOS. Thank you, Senator, for that question.

Yes, indeed, it is scheduled to take place sometime in early December, I understand. I also understand that there is already a committee on the ground at the embassy working with the Dominicans on trying to come up with an agenda.

I have not yet been briefed on the details of that. If I am confirmed, of course, that will be a top priority of mine to understand what the agenda is and ensure that it aligns with the interests of the United States and our interest in keeping the region stable, democratic, secure. Combating the criminality in the region I think is an important topic.

I hope that that would become a key issue in the region—excuse me, at the summit, and I intend to get involved once I get there, if confirmed, and will report back to you if you have any questions about it.

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, thank you. I appreciate that.

One of the topics that has come up as we have had hearings for other nominees to be ambassadors to Latin American countries has been concern about China's increasing influence in the hemisphere, about their engagement with other Caribbean nations and particularly in Latin America.

So I hope that that will be an issue that will be considered for the summit as well.

Ms. CAMPOS. Yes, absolutely. And as I mentioned in my opening statement it is one of my key priorities, if confirmed.

As you know, the Dominican Republic switched its recognition from Taiwan in 2018, I believe, and you know, we have not had an ambassador, as I said, in a long time. So I am hoping to be, if confirmed, a positive advocate for turning away from the malign influence of China in the Dominican Republic.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you.

Thank you all very much.

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Senator Shaheen.

Senator Cruz.

Senator CRUZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome. Congratulations to each of the four of you.

Mr. Kushner, let us start with you. Iran's push to build a nuclear arsenal poses the most immediate threat to U.S. national security.

I agree with President Trump that the only acceptable nuclear deal is one in which the regime fully dismantles its enrichment capacity and that the United States should impose maximum pressure against the full range of the Ayatollah's malign activities.

That pressure should include snapping back U.N. sanctions against Iran, which were undone by the Obama-Biden administrations in U.N. Security Council Resolution 2231.

I asked Secretary of State Rubio whether he intends to go to the United Nations and do so as part of his written testimony to this committee. Here was his response.

Quote, "I believe it is in our national security interest for the U.N. Security Council to snap back the sanctions that were suspended under the JCPOA. I will execute the President's guidance and work with our allies to ensure that snapback takes place."

I asked the same question of Deputy Secretary Landau in his testimony, and he emphasized that he believes it is imperative for the national security of the United States to invoke the snapback mechanism.

Our European allies, including France, are also able to invoke the snapback mechanism.

First, do you agree with the assessment of Secretary Rubio and Deputy Secretary Landau that it is in the national security interest of the United States to snap back the U.N. sanctions?

Mr. KUSHNER. I 100 percent agree with the Secretary of State and with Chris Landau, and why this snapback has not occurred to date is beyond my belief, truthfully.

So part of my responsibility I feel will be to assist to apply maximum pressure on the French at the highest levels that I can to go ahead and make sure that this snapback is effectuated.

Senator CRUZ. Very good. Thank you.

Mr. Popolo and Mr. Walsh, as you know the International Criminal Court has been engaged in a campaign against our Israeli allies, which in turn poses an acute threat to American national security interest.

The ICC has issued arrest warrants against Israeli officials including Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to punish Israel for its campaign against Hamas. These warrants are utterly illegitimate.

They are setting a precedent to go after countries that are not members of the court, which exposes American officials and soldiers to acute risks.

Ireland has filed a motion to directly boost the ICC campaign. The Netherlands hosts the ICC, and its foreign minister has said that they will enforce the ICC warrants.

We have heard multiple times today that Ireland and the Netherlands have deep partnerships with the U.S., which is undoubtedly true. It is equally true that their support for the ICC endangers core American interests.

If confirmed, how do each of you intend to approach these issues? And we will start with you, Mr. Walsh.

Mr. WALSH. There is a lot to talk about there, and I have not been fully briefed on that item. I know that it is a big issue, though, and I know it is a big concern of yours and many others. Even President Trump has let me know that.

What we need to do about it is communicate the way we feel about it and then relay that message back to you guys and figure out a way to really hold them reliable to actually helping us.

And we are an ally of Israel so it is a difficult conversation, to tell you the truth, and I would be glad to relay your message and President Trump's message over to them at any time.

Senator CRUZ. Well, that is helpful, and I will say it is a clear assault on Israel but Israel is not a party to the ICC.

But it is also a clear assault on America because America is not a party to the ICC, and the same illegitimate authority that claims the ability to issue an arrest warrant for Benjamin Netanyahu would also claim the ability to issue an arrest warrant for President Trump, for the Secretary of State, for the Secretary of Defense, for American generals, for American soldiers.

We are not a party to the court. The court has no jurisdiction, and it is illegitimately asserting power over nations that have not acceded to its authority.

Mr. Popolo, your thoughts.

Mr. POPOLO. Thank you, Senator.

President Trump and Secretary Rubio have been very clear this is totally unacceptable, and while the Dutch are great partners we have a very, very clear difference here. I am going to be delivering the message that this is illegitimate, that they should not be targeting people who are not a party to the agreement.

I believe we have partial sanctions in place, and the President may very well choose to increase that pressure if we do not get the proper recognition from the ICC.

Senator CRUZ. Very good. I appreciate it. Thank you.

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Senator Cruz. Well said.

And as far as the court is concerned, you know, it was set up to address the issue where a country did not have a democracy and a legitimate and believable judicial system.

That is what it was for, not to handle cases for states that—countries like the United States of America that take care of their own problems. Thank you for bringing that up. Well said.

To our witnesses, thank you so much for being here today, and before closing I will order that letters of support that the com-

mittee has received for any of the nominees will be added to the record.

I will also note for the information of the members that the record will remain open until the close of business tomorrow to submit questions for the record, which if you get I hope you will answer quickly. It will help move along your nomination.

Thank you to the committee.

Thank you for your families for attending here. Thank you for your willingness to serve the country.

With that, the committee is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:11 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

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### **Additional Material Submitted for the Record**

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO LEAH F. CAMPOS BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* I am concerned about deepening Chinese involvement in sensitive sectors in the Dominican Republic, including its telecommunications sectors, people-to-people exchanges, and military cooperation. How might you seek to limit Chinese influence in the Dominican Republic during your time there?

*Answer.* China's economic expansion into the Western Hemisphere, especially companies directly owned by the Chinese Communist Party and the Chinese military, poses risks for U.S. national security and prosperity. If confirmed, I intend to work closely with the US Foreign Commercial Service (FCS) section to ensure we are being proactive in identifying commercial opportunities and tenders and matching them with US companies. In addition, I intend to ensure the US Mission in Santo Domingo has a China Watcher to help backstop FCS efforts to ensure the presence of US companies and innovation in competitive bids.

If confirmed, I intend to engage closely with the Dominican Republic to highlight the importance of international trade and investments that are competitive, transparent, and follow international best practices. In addition, US Embassy Santo Domingo will step up advocacy for the United States as the Dominican Republic's preferred partner on trade, investment, and security cooperation. I would also work with the Dominican Republic to prioritize engagement with trustworthy (preferably U.S.) technologies and partners, while encouraging Dominican legal reforms that promote transparency and competition.

*Question.* Dominicans are very concerned about the spiraling security situation in neighboring Haiti. To what extent is current U.S. policy on Haiti aligned with Dominican views on ways to address the security situation in Haiti?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I intend to work closely with my colleagues at the US Mission in Haiti to implement President Trump and Secretary Rubio's policies on Haiti, while coordinating with the government of the Dominican Republic to find ways to address the security situation in Haiti in alignment with U.S. policy. The United States and the Dominican Republic agree on the importance of a secure and stable Haiti focused on economic growth, the delivery of basic services, and development opportunities in Haiti, while reducing crime and illegal immigration to the United States and the Dominican Republic.