

Statement of Joseph Burkhalter
Nominee for U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Moldova
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
June 25th, 2026

Chairman Hagerty and Members of the Committee:

I am honored to appear today as the nominee for Ambassador to the Republic of Moldova. I am grateful to President Trump for the trust he has placed in me with this nomination, and I am committed to serving the American people in this important role.

Before I continue, I want to introduce the most important people in my life. My loving wife of 40 years Gina who I meet here in Washington when we were both Hill staffers working for different Members of Congress. Our three amazing and accomplished children, Natalie, (and her fiancé Tom), our son Sam and our daughter in law Lauren, our daughter Olivia and our Son in law Robbie. Last and certainly not least our newest blessings, grandchildren Isabella, Roman and Luca. And of course a special thanks to my father who passed many years ago but I know is watching today from a better place and the sweetest Mom anyone could ever have who unfortunately could not be here today due to some health challenges.

Only with the support of my loving family was I able to build a successful Real Estate Development business, get elected as Speaker of the Georgia House of Representatives and then later work overseas for the last 16 years with two law firms. But on the note of public service I want to sincerely thank every member of this committee and their families for your public service. As you uniquely know, it's calling and a noble cause.

If confirmed as Ambassador to Moldova, my top priorities will be the safety and security of U.S. citizens in Moldova and to advance American interests.

The United States and Moldova enjoy a close partnership built on years of sustained U.S. engagement and support for Moldova's democracy. U.S.-sponsored exchange programs have engaged nearly 7,000 Moldovans, creating enduring

relationships that help us advance shared goals. While Chisinau's top objective is EU accession, the Moldovan government values its partnership with the United States and is committed to deepening the bilateral relationship. Recent hallmarks of our bilateral cooperation include Moldova's April 2026 decision to eliminate tariffs on almost all U.S. goods and our decision to build a \$130 million high-voltage transmission line to strengthen Moldova's ties to Western energy markets.

Energy security is a key tenet of the bilateral relationship. Over the past few years, Moldova has diversified energy imports and improved regional interconnectivity. If confirmed, I will work to expand opportunities for U.S. energy sector exports to Moldova. Likewise, I will support continued cooperation on cybersecurity to help secure the United States and unlock new commercial opportunities for U.S. businesses.

If confirmed, I will work to support Presidential peace initiatives, including the work of Special Presidential Envoys and others who are tirelessly working to resolve the conflict between Russia and Ukraine on Moldova's border. I will also support any future Presidential efforts to help resolve the long-frozen conflict in Transnistria should that assistance become necessary.

In conclusion, I would be honored to serve as Ambassador to Moldova. If confirmed, I will work to advance U.S. priorities, protect American citizens, and strengthen our bilateral relationship. I look forward to working with the Committee and our partners to deliver on these objectives.

Thank you for your consideration, and I welcome any questions you may have.