

Opening Statement of Jennifer Johnson-Carroll
Nominee for U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
July 30, 2026

Good morning, Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Shaheen, and distinguished Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee for Ambassador to Trinidad and Tobago.

This nomination holds special personal meaning for me. I was born in Port of Spain. I immigrated to the United States at the age of eight, and I have carried a deep connection to Trinidad and Tobago throughout my life and career.

I have also committed to a life of service to the United States. As a Navy veteran who rose from an enlisted jet mechanic to retire as a lieutenant commander after 20 years of service, and later to serve as Florida's 18th Lieutenant Governor, I have dedicated my career to strengthening America's security and economic interests. As Lieutenant Governor, I led successful trade missions to Trinidad and Tobago and other nations, generating over \$70 million in new trade for Florida businesses. I will draw directly from these experiences in this role.

If confirmed, I will focus my efforts on four priorities central to strengthening the U.S.-Trinidad and Tobago relationship and advancing American interests and President Trump's vision in the Western Hemisphere.

First, my most important priority will be to ensure the safety and security of American citizens residing in Trinidad and Tobago, including the thousands who travel there each year for business and tourism.

Secondly, economic security and prosperity are critical to both our countries. I will promote American exports, market opportunities, and trade that generate commercial wins for U.S. businesses while helping Trinidad and Tobago build a resilient, diversified economy – positioning the United States as the key partner for its economic growth and competitiveness. I will advance our nation's economic strength by promoting fair trade, American investment, and energy security that benefit U.S. workers and industry, while building mutually beneficial ties with this resource-rich Caribbean partner.

Recognizing that economic and security interests are deeply intertwined, I will work closely with Trinbagonian officials to deepen our security partnership, building off our shared cooperation including through the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative. As a founding member of the Americas Counter-Cartel

Coalition and the Shield of the Americas, Trinidad and Tobago is a regional leader on security and a strong partner in the fight against transnational organized crime. If confirmed, I am committed to working with Trinidad and Tobago to stop illicit narcotrafficking that corrupts the lives and livelihoods of both our citizens.

Finally, if confirmed, I pledge to champion American sovereignty and independence, ensuring that U.S. engagement with Trinidad and Tobago serves our national interests first and reinforces our nation's right to control its own borders, resources, and decision-making. I am committed to supporting enhanced border security and regional migration cooperation, working with Trinbagonian authorities to prevent illegal immigration and ensure orderly, lawful movement of people throughout the Caribbean.

Together, these priorities reflect this Administration's commitment to a safe, secure, and more prosperous Western Hemisphere. I look forward to your questions and, if confirmed, to advancing these goals on behalf of the American people in Trinidad and Tobago.