

Statement of Peter McCoy
Nominee for U.S. Ambassador to Montenegro
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
August 5, 2026

Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Shaheen, and distinguished Members of the Committee, I am honored to appear before you as President Trump's nominee to serve as the next U.S. Ambassador to Montenegro. I am profoundly grateful to the President and Secretary Rubio for their trust in me, and I hope to earn this Committee's confidence.

I would like to start with a huge thank you to my wife of 16 years, Jennifer. Without her unwavering love and support, I would not be here today. She's a wife, mother, and active Circuit Judge in the State of South Carolina. She is my rock and I love her more than words can describe. I would like to acknowledge my three children. Mae Loflin (15), Lucy (13), and Peter (12). I'm so thankful God has allowed each of these blessings in my life and I'm so proud to be their father.

I also would like to acknowledge my parents Peter and Lucy McCoy. This coming October they will celebrate 50 years of marriage. My mother is a retired schoolteacher and my father retired from working for a South Carolina paper manufacturing company. From birth they instilled the values of faith, hard work, treating everyone with kindness and respect, and pride in family. They worked successful careers putting the education and needs of myself and my brother above their own personal wants. I'm very proud to be their son.

I have been a practicing attorney for 21 years. I am proud to have served in the South Carolina House of Representatives for ten years. I was known as a hard worker, an ethical worker, and a consensus builder. I was fortunate at the close of my tenure in the House to be elected by my peers, both Republican and Democrat, to serve as Chairman of the Judiciary Committee. Following my career in the House, I was proud to be nominated by President Trump to serve as United States Attorney for the District of South Carolina. I am also the current Chairman of the South Carolina Public Service Authority, appointed by Governor Henry McMaster, which is the fourth largest state-owned utility in the Nation.

I would like to thank the incredible men and women at the Department of State. Working with them over the last few months has been incredible. They are all dedicated public servants, and it has been an honor to work and learn from them. I would also like to thank the late Senator Lindsay Graham. He was an incredible friend and ally to me. I miss his guidance and his humor. Senator Tim Scott has been a faithful friend going back to our days together in Charleston SC.

I appreciate his continued advice and counsel. South Carolina is fortunate to have had both their leadership.

Turning to Montenegro- if confirmed, I am committed to working with you to advance U.S. interests in Montenegro through an America First Foreign Policy.

Montenegro and the United States share an enduring bond rooted in 120 years of diplomatic relations, one that has only deepened in the two decades since Montenegro re-gained its independence.

If confirmed, I will lead our team with three clear priorities, beginning with the most fundamental: the safety and security of all U.S. citizens in Montenegro and our dedicated embassy staff.

With that foundation in place, if confirmed, I will work to expand commercial opportunities that advance U.S. prosperity, building on the intergovernmental agreement concluded in July. The U.S. private sector — the world's foremost engine of growth and innovation — is ideally positioned to partner with Montenegro on infrastructure, security, energy, and technology, featured in the Adriatic-Ionian Corridor and other projects. Our mission would strive to level the playing field for U.S. companies, enabling Montenegro to reduce its dependence on strategic competitors such as China.

Beyond economic engagement, if confirmed, I will deepen law enforcement and security cooperation with Montenegro to safeguard U.S. interests. Under my leadership, the embassy would continue to support Montenegro in countering threats from transnational criminal organizations, including those linked to Western Hemisphere cartels, that harm citizens in both our countries.

Additionally, I would seek to leverage two decades of collaboration through the State Partnership Program with Maine's National Guard to enhance interoperability and streamline defense acquisitions ensuring Montenegro meets NATO capability targets and meets its Hague Summit spending commitments. If confirmed, I will partner with the government to ensure Montenegro remains a stalwart NATO Ally — helping to secure Europe's eastern flank and promoting stability across the Western Balkans.

I thank the Chairman and Ranking Member for the opportunity to appear before the Committee today, and I look forward to your questions.