

Opening Statement of Andrew Veprek
Nominee for Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of Population,
Refugees, and Migration
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
September 11, 2025

Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Shaheen, and distinguished Members of this committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. President Trump has nominated me to lead a bureau charged with addressing what is, in my view, our country's greatest challenge: migration. I thank him and Secretary Rubio for entrusting me with this task.

I also want to thank my family. Over 23 years in the U.S. Foreign Service, I have had the privilege of serving my country in a variety of capacities, all around the world. My family has supported me throughout, graciously accommodating many moves and long absences.

Members of the Committee, during President Trump's current administration, we have seen a significant reduction in border encounters and a reversal of migratory flows into the United States. These are important achievements. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration helps sustain the President's whole-of-government effort to giving Americans the secure borders they deserve, and to ensuring the sovereignty of our nation.

U.S. diplomacy is an important part of that effort. Whether it is ensuring that foreign countries facilitate the repatriation of their nationals who have no right to remain in the United States; negotiating arrangements to accept the transfer of illegal aliens removed from American communities; or working with the Department of Homeland Security to facilitate cost-effective voluntary removals, the Department of State has a leading role. And the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration must be at the forefront.

Regrettably, in previous years, the bureau took the opposite approach in the

policies it promoted and the foreign assistance programs it managed. Instead of protecting our borders, they facilitated mass migration into the United States. That will not recur on my watch. If confirmed, I will direct the bureau to support the voluntary re-migration of those who have no right to be in our country, and support other countries that help us achieve our immigration enforcement goals.

On that point, let me speak about foreign assistance generally. I share Secretary Rubio's vision for America First Foreign Assistance that aligns with administration policies and advances concrete U.S. national interests. I believe that to be a common-sense approach for good stewardship of public funds. If confirmed, I would seek to apply it in the foreign assistance programs managed by the bureau.

That means streamlining staffing; consolidating programming where possible; and getting other countries to step up so that the United States does not carry an outsized load. Also, we should not engage in so-called "forever aid"; that open-ended, blank-check approach can have the perverse outcome of prolonging humanitarian crises. Finally, for our strategic assistance, there must be a clear and direct connection with U.S. foreign policy goals.

I conclude by returning to my opening theme: the need to answer the challenge posed by migration. Perhaps the most important "root cause" of mass and illegal migration today is the abuse of refugee and asylum systems. The current framework of international agreements and norms on migration developed after the Second World War, in a completely different geopolitical and economic context. It cannot be expected to function in our modern world – and indeed, it does not.

The need for reform has been clear for a number of years. Under President Trump, we finally have a leader willing to consider it. If confirmed, I will seek to work with other countries to build the support needed to reform this broken system. I will aim to ensure the principles of national sovereignty and rule of law get proper consideration in the global migration regime.

Senators, thank you again for the opportunity to be here. I look forward to answering your questions.