Opening Statement of Pete Snyder
Nominee for U.S. Ambassador to Ecuador
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
November 10, 2026

Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Shaheen, and distinguished Members of the Committee, it is an honor to appear before you as the nominee to serve as United States Ambassador to the Republic of Ecuador. Thank you for the opportunity to present my qualifications, perspective and commitment to advancing American interests abroad.

I am deeply grateful to President Trump for this nomination and his confidence in me, to Secretary Rubio and the dedicated professionals at the State Department for their tremendous assistance.

This administration has emphasized decisive American leadership, economic strength, and strategic clarity in the Western Hemisphere – advancing U.S. economic interests, growing democratic values, and confronting dangers at our very own doorstep.

If confirmed, I will carry forward these priorities with discipline, professionalism, integrity and an absolute, relentless enthusiasm.

I am joined by my wife Burson, who served as a House and Senate staffer for nearly 20 years, our 11-year-old daughter Bee, my sister Michelle and many other friends. Thank you all for your support and counsel.

My path to this room today runs right through rural Pennsylvania, where I was raised. I attended the College of William and Mary in Virginia, balancing an early focus on Russian and Russian Studies and the demands of being a walk-on freshman to a very competitive Top 25 Division I wrestling program.

By trade, I am an entrepreneur. It's both an addiction and an affliction. In the late 1990s, as a 26-year-old founder, I helped pioneer what soon became the social media industry. My first company – the first social media marketing firm in the world – launched from a rental apartment four blocks from this hearing room. It was a bootstrap operation; I was so poor – or as we say in entrepreneur-speak "capital challenged" – that my now-wife Burson had to pick up the bill at Tortilla Coast on her Senate staffer salary because her "hot shot tech entrepreneur" boyfriend couldn't afford to.

Being a founder has taught me a lot. And the grace and kindness of others taught me even more.

You see, any founder worth their salt needs to be several things at once. You are forced to wear many hats: as an innovator spotting gaps in the market and executing solutions; as a storyteller painting a picture of the future and possible; as a manager and motivator of people and culture; and, above all, as chief accountability officer for yourself and your team.

If confirmed, these are the leadership skills and the approach I will bring to this mission.

As this committee knows, Ecuador is both our trusted partner and a country with many challenges.

The Ecuadorean people have elected President Daniel Noboa, who comes from the private sector and business world like I do. Both President Noboa and the people of Ecuador have asked for our help, and thanks to you and this administration, the United States has answered the call. Our assistance can help curtail flows of drugs and illegal migrants, and can support productive investments and robust economic growth both in Ecuador and at home. Senate-willing, I look forward to working with President Noboa in the weeks and months to come, and I commit to working with this esteemed Committee to keep you both informed and engaged on our progress together.

Mr. Chairman, the United States and Ecuador share a friendship of more than two centuries that is stronger and more consequential than ever. If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to help our partner face multiple challenges. I pledge to work closely with this Committee and your terrific staff to keep you both informed and engaged in the progress we are making with our good friends and partners in Ecuador and the region.

In doing so, together we will make America safer, stronger and more prosperous, both in Ecuador and here at home.

I look forward to your questions and thank you for your consideration.