

**Opening Statement of Bernie Navarro
Nominee for U.S. Ambassador to Peru
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
November 19, 2025**

Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Shaheen, my long-time friend Senator Rick Scott. It is a profound honor to appear before you today as the nominee to serve as U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Peru. I am grateful to President Trump for entrusting me with this nomination and to Secretary Rubio for his support. Their confidence in my ability to serve the American people is humbling, and I look forward to the opportunity to advance our nation's interests in Peru.

It is a blessing to be here today with my beautiful wife, Claudia, a proud Peruvian-American, and our three children – Alexandra, Matthew, and Jake. I am also joined by my brother, Gilbert; my sister, Norma; my 86-year-old mother, Norma; and my 87-year-old father, Gilberto.

My parents were born in Cuba. They lost everything to communism and fled their homeland in search of freedom. I will forever be grateful to them – for their courage, their sacrifice, and their unwavering faith in the promise of America. They put their own dreams aside so that my siblings and I could achieve ours. From an early age, they taught us that anything resembling communism is not only wrong, but a direct threat to the liberty and opportunity this nation represents.

Today, I can proudly say that my parents' dreams have come full circle. Their journey – from losing everything in Cuba to seeing their son achieve the American Dream – is a testament to what this country makes possible. If confirmed, I will carry their story – and the story of countless families like ours – as proof that the American Dream is not just alive, but thriving.

Over the past weeks, I have had the privilege of meeting many of you to discuss the United States' relationship with Peru. Under the Trump Administration, we have a golden opportunity to put America and

Americans first as we advance our interests abroad. If confirmed, I pledge to work closely with this Committee to support the Administration's goals: protecting the safety of U.S. citizens, promoting economic prosperity and regional security, and deepening a bilateral relationship that has endured for nearly two centuries. President Trump nominated me – the founder and owner of Benworth Capital with nearly 30-years of financial services experience and first-hand knowledge of Peru – to demonstrate the Administration's commitment to strengthening our bilateral relationship.

The U.S. - Peru bilateral relationship is grounded in mutual respect and shared values. Peru's dynamic economy, bolstered by its mineral wealth, agricultural growth, and infrastructure projects, presents significant opportunities for American industry. I have witnessed firsthand the potential for expanding our economic ties. During the aftermath of the Great Recession, when South Florida's economy was struggling, I served as Chairman of one of the region's largest trade associations. Rather than standing still, I insisted that we think differently and look beyond our traditional markets. We organized a trade mission to Peru that produced historic results for our members and forged business relationships that continue today. If confirmed, I will bring that same resolve to my work in Peru.

Peru's economic opportunities are not without challenges. China has exploited South America's natural resources to advance its strategic interests at the expense of our partners, and Peru is no exception. China's vast investments in Peru's critical infrastructure, energy sector, and mining industry give Beijing significant economic leverage, which impacts our shared commercial and security interests. China has also increased its cultural presence in Peru through the establishment of Confucius Institutes. I have worked to root out this type of Chinese influence here in the United States. During my time as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Miami Dade College, the largest college in the US, I worked with my colleagues to remove a Confucius Institute that had established itself there, helping the college regain its academic independence. If confirmed, I will apply the

same dedication to efforts that safeguard Peru's independence from malign influences.

Beyond economic ties, our collaboration with Peru is vital in addressing shared security challenges. Dangerous criminal organizations and narcotics traffickers are terrorizing the people of Peru and threatening the stability of the region. If confirmed, I will support efforts to establish a strong, comprehensive response to these threats, improving the safety of Peruvians and Americans alike.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and Members of this committee. If confirmed, I will dedicate myself, as I have always done, to strengthening the bonds between our nations, advocating for American interests, and advancing policies that promote security, prosperity, and stability. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to answering your questions.