

**Opening Statement of F. Cartwright Weiland**  
**Nominee for Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of State**  
**Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs**  
**U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee**  
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Good morning. I'd like to thank Chairman Risch and Ranking Member Shaheen for holding this hearing. Since you've already have heard from so many nominees this year, I'll stick to one idea Republicans and Democrats agree on – brevity.

I'd also like to thank President Trump and Secretary Rubio for entrusting me with this nomination. It's a great honor to serve a country that I love.

I wouldn't be here without those mentors and role models who instilled in me, from an early age, a strong sense of civic obligation. These are people, first and foremost, like my parents, watching from home.

But they also include people like Senators John Cornyn and Lamar Alexander, Judge E. Grady Jolly, Ambassador Mary Ann Glendon, and the monks and lay faculty at Cistercian Prep School in Irving, Texas.

Finally, I'd like to thank my wife Carol, my aunt Anne Weiland and uncle Stu Seides, and my young children Jay and Bridget, who are in the audience.

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My kids, actually, are a good segue, because when I think about the job I've been nominated for, I try to keep them in mind.

Inside the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, my colleagues at the State Department see two parallel, troubling patterns:

- First, adolescents abroad, some as young as twelve, thirteen years old, recruited by criminal gangs, often online, soon become adept at using weapons like machetes and M-16s. They help sell and move illicit drugs.
- Second, Americans in the same age bracket, teenagers in places like D.C. and Dallas and Detroit. They ingest substances that were smuggled across the southern border inside tires or toys. The pills or powders depress their respiratory systems and slow down their heart rates until, tragically, they take their last breath.

INL's job is to disrupt criminal enterprises driving both trends.

The bureau assists police forces, border guards, coast guards, and national guards in foreign countries. So, you could say INL is in the business of "guarding." And the most important thing it guards is U.S. national security.

If confirmed, my mission would be to execute the President and Secretary Rubio's vision of ensuring the safety, security and prosperity of Americans.

That means degrading the capabilities and dismantling the structures of narco-terrorist groups pushing poison into the United States. It also means stemming the flow of fentanyl and the myriad of other deadly substances our fellow citizens are dying from. And it means maintaining America's strategic advantage in the law enforcement space so that our adversaries don't make inroads in places that are pivotal to our future.

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This is personal to me. After college, I moved to Mexico, where I saw firsthand what the absence of a durable rule of law looks like. The country is in some ways a paradise – its natural beauty, its culture, the warmth of its people. But when a friend of mine bribed a police officer after a routine traffic stop in Mexico City, the United States and its criminal justice system, for all its challenges, suddenly seemed very far away.

Meanwhile, back home in Texas, people were dying. Two guys I played high school football with – Gone. Their lives vanquished by drugs they may not have even known they were taking.

I started to see that not only as a tragedy but also an injustice. The fact that the cartels often pay no price. That they profit off American customers' weakness, confusion, ignorance, and desperation. That they collude with Chinese chemical brokers whose government feigns blamelessness. That drug traffickers launch their products, and thus illegally cross the border, into a country that's not their own – for the explicit purpose of hooking and harming our fellow citizens.

That righteous indignation – the sense that enough is enough – is what motivates me.

It's encouraging to say that, in certain respects, the good guys are winning – overdose deaths in the US have fallen of late, which is a credit not only to the U.S. Congress but also executive branch officials, state and local authorities, and our overseas partners. But we still have a long way to go before the scourge of synthetic drugs and the narco-terrorist networks that profit from them are permanently kept at bay. That is the effort to which I hope to be able to contribute.

Thank you for considering me for this position; I look forward to your questions.