

**Statement of Jennifer Wicks McNamara**  
**Nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to Socialist Republic of Vietnam**  
**Senate Committee on Foreign Relations**  
**December 11, 2025**

Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Shaheen, and distinguished Members of this Committee - it is an honor to appear before you today as the nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. I would like to thank President Trump and Secretary Rubio for the trust they have placed in me.

I am joined by my husband, George, and a few close friends. My parents, Gary and Elizabeth Wicks, and my daughter, Kim, are here in spirit - watching from Minnesota and Scotland, respectively - as well as other relatives and friends. I'm grateful for their ongoing support. I am deeply appreciative of my White House and State Department colleagues for everything they have done to support my nomination.

I am a Midwest girl at heart - growing up in Minnesota with public school teacher parents who instilled in me the values of hard work and public service. My government career began more than 31 years ago with the U.S. Army at Yongsan Garrison in Seoul, Korea and took me to Hawaii and Fort Belvoir, Virginia. In 2003, I joined the State Department, serving in several offices before becoming the Director of the Office of Presidential Appointments in 2012. There, I have guided and advanced about 1,000 candidates for State Department leadership positions requiring the advice and consent of the Senate, and Presidential appointment. It's a true privilege to be on the "other side" before you now.

The President and the Secretary are clear about the Indo-Pacific's geopolitical and strategic importance, with Vietnam being one of our most important partners in the region. A strong, independent, and resilient Vietnam is in the United States' interest. Just 30 years ago, our two countries established diplomatic relations, and in 2023 we elevated bilateral ties to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. If confirmed, I will advocate

foremost for U.S. interests in this vibrant bilateral relationship, focusing on defense and security cooperation, trade and investment, and people-to-people ties.

The strength of our military cooperation builds on extensive efforts to address the legacies of the Vietnam War. With Congressional support, the United States has partnered with Vietnam to remove 700,000 pieces of unexploded ordnance, provide assistance to one million persons with disabilities, and address dioxin contamination in Danang and at Bien Hoa Air Base. For decades, Vietnam provided critical assistance to enable the repatriation of more than 1,000 American soldiers' remains, and if confirmed I will do my utmost to support the continuation of these critical war legacy programs.

Security cooperation extends to shared interest in regional stability by countering global threats and aggressive behavior in the South China Sea. The second U.S.-Vietnam Law Enforcement and Security Dialogue held in September advanced joint efforts to strengthen law enforcement and disrupt transnational crime, such as online scam operations in Southeast Asia that defraud Americans of billions of dollars annually. If confirmed, I will make every effort to deepen security cooperation and ensure that our efforts are targeted, effective, and aligned with key strategic priorities benefiting the American people.

Bilateral trade with Vietnam has grown enormously in recent years, and the opportunity for shared economic growth is significant. Yet, the current trade relationship is imbalanced. If confirmed, I will promote equitable market access for U.S. goods and services, including technology, energy, and agricultural products; support the development of resilient, diversified supply chains; and encourage Vietnamese investment in the United States.

The bonds between the American and Vietnamese people are robust. Vietnamese Americans are the fourth largest Asian American population in the United States, contributing to strong people-to-people ties. Tourism

and student programs are trending upward. While this relationship is strong, Vietnam's human rights record continues to be of concern with reports of harassment, arrests, and convictions of activists, journalists, bloggers, and religious freedom advocates due to speech deemed critical of the government. If confirmed, I will urge the Government of Vietnam to respect freedoms of expression, peaceful assembly, association, and religion or belief. I also will do everything I can to ensure the safety and welfare of all United States citizens in Vietnam and personnel serving in Mission Vietnam.

Through open dialogue we will continue to advance regional security, shared prosperity, and our bilateral partnership. If confirmed, I look forward to collaborating with Mission Vietnam's expert team and partnering with Congress to deliver results on behalf of the American people. One final note - my thoughts are with the Vietnamese people as they recover from deadly storms resulting in devastating floods and landslides. Thank you for your consideration of my nomination. I look forward to your questions.