

**Statement of Manisha Singh**  
**Nominee to be Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs**  
**Senate Committee on Foreign Relations**  
**October 18, 2017**

Chairman Isakson, Ranking Member Shaheen and Members of the Committee, thank you for your time today. I am humbled and grateful to be considered to serve as the next Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs.

I want to express my gratitude to President Trump and Secretary Tillerson for the confidence and trust they have placed in me to take on this important role.

I am particularly honored to appear before this committee-- I had the privilege of being on the staff for several years.

I want to thank my friends for being here today. My family was not able to make it to the hearing, but they are watching from home, and I'd like to tell you about them. My parents both grew up in small rural villages in India. Neither set of my grandparents were able to read or write. My mom and dad knew that an education was the key to moving forward. We moved from India to Florida where my father completed a PhD at the University of Florida. I was two years old when I came here. My parents impressed on me and my sister how lucky we were to be immigrants to this great country. Here in America, a young girl could grow up to be anything she wanted.

My parents still live in Florida and my sister lives with her husband and their daughters in northern Georgia. I'd like to say the same thing to my nieces as my parents always said to me. Here in America, a young girl can grow up to be anything she wants. Never have I believed this more than as I sit before you today.

If confirmed, I would be the first woman installed to lead the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs. I have experience in the bureau, previously managing a division as a Deputy Assistant Secretary. It's composed of over 200 talented men and women in Washington as well as economic officers posted in every U.S. mission around the world.

In an era of global competition, we have to fight unfair practices and make sure that U.S. businesses have every opportunity to succeed. If confirmed, I would ensure that small and medium size enterprises, women and minority-owned businesses are a particular focus of our work. The bureau plays a key role in a healthy American economy by ensuring a level-playing field for our companies and by encouraging foreign investors to create good jobs here in America.

If confirmed, I would work closely with my counterparts to use our full range of instruments to partner with those who work with us and to enact serious consequences against global bad actors. We must make sure that economic resources are fully employed as carrots and sticks in the interest of American prosperity and stability.

I would utilize both my government and private sector experience to lead successfully. In the private sector, it was my job to understand the real life consequences of government decisions.

My legislative service has afforded me the privilege of hearing the concerns of every day Americans. If confirmed, I will work to make sure that everyone in the bureau is proud to be a member of my team and to make sure that we put the interests of the American people first.

I thank you again, and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.