

**Testimony of Matthew J. Matthews  
Ambassadorial Nominee to be the U.S. Senior Official for the  
Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Forum**

**Senate Foreign Relations Committee**

**February 11, 2016**

Mr. Chairman, and Members of the Committee, I am honored to appear before you today as the President's nominee to serve as the U.S. Senior Official for APEC with the rank of Ambassador. I appreciate the confidence that President Obama and Secretary Kerry have shown in me and, if confirmed, I look forward to working with you to advance U.S. economic interests through the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum as we strive to foster a rules-based economic system in the Asia-Pacific region that supports prosperity abroad and here at home.

I'm happy to be here with my wife, Rachel. My two children are grown and live and work in Portland, Oregon, and Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, so were unable to join us today.

APEC is the premier economic organization in the Asia-Pacific region and a key venue for engaging the most economically dynamic region of the world. APEC's 21 members span both sides of the Pacific and account for over half of the global economy. They purchase 62% percent of our goods exports, and comprise a market of 2.7 billion potential consumers.

Through APEC, the United States works with our partners to tackle a wide range of issues critical to long-term prosperity across the Pacific Rim. For over twenty-five years, APEC has steadily advanced a vision of growth and integration, within Asia and across the Pacific.

The United States works within APEC to open markets in the Asia-Pacific region and connect them to U.S. exporters. APEC's focus includes eliminating barriers to trade and investment and creating better environments for our companies to do business overseas.

APEC has played – and will continue to play – a central role in enabling agreements like the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and those at the World Trade Organization (WTO) by helping economies envision and prepare for a high-

standard, rules-based economic system throughout the Asia-Pacific region. Agreements like these can deepen America's economic ties to the region and build a more level economic playing field that will help Americans to compete successfully.

The economies of the Asia-Pacific region have benefitted greatly over the past half-century from progressively freer and more open trade and investment. The vast majority of the region's citizens live better lives because of the region's economic integration, but disruptions in the financial markets, natural disasters in the region, rising inequality in many regional economies and raising long-term potential growth are key challenges.

APEC is part of the solution, and the United States and other APEC members recognize that just as important to ensuring meaningful prosperity is promoting economic growth that is sustainable and benefits all our citizens.

If confirmed, I will work with Congress, the business community, and my colleagues in the Executive Branch through APEC to expand and sustain economic growth at home and abroad, and to promote new opportunities for our exporters overseas.

If confirmed, I will build upon my experience in the Asia-Pacific to advance our economic interests in this region. Most recently, I served as Foreign Policy Advisor to former U.S. Pacific Command Commander Admiral Sam Locklear in Honolulu, but I have spent most of my thirty-year career in the Foreign Service primarily handling trade and economic issues at our Embassies and Posts overseas. In particular, my time working on macroeconomic reform and financial market access issues during multiple tours each in China and Taiwan, and on bilateral Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) in both Australia and Malaysia, has provided me with a good foundation of knowledge of both the region and the issues that the United States is working to address through APEC.

Mr. Chairman, it would be a great privilege to serve my country as the U.S. Senior Official for APEC with the rank of Ambassador. The Asia-Pacific region represents the future of the global economy, we can play a key role in shaping and sustaining the vision for the region through APEC. I look forward to helping the United States work through APEC to promote growth and job-creation in the Asia-Pacific for American businesses and citizens.

Thank you for considering my nomination. I look forward to your questions.