

**Statement of Trevor Traina**  
**Nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Austria**  
**Senate Committee on Foreign Relations**  
**March 1, 2018**

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, Distinguished Members of the Committee.

I am humbled to be here today as President Trump's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to Austria. I am excited that the President has presented me with this opportunity to work with the White House, Secretary of State Tillerson, and the highly capable team at the State Department and the U.S. Mission in Vienna.

I am delighted to be joined by my amazing wife, best friend, and partner in all things, Alexis. With her are our two wonderful children. Johnny and Delphina sustain me and have been very brave at the idea, if I am confirmed, of leaving their friends and moving half way around the world.

A diplomatic post is both an honor and an obligation. I learned this from my grandfather Wiley Buchanan who was the United States Chief of Protocol and Ambassador to Luxembourg as well as Ambassador to Austria, the very same post for which I am being considered.

My grandfather is no longer with us, but he would be absolutely delighted by my nomination. This is not a guess, but the sworn testimony of my grandmother, who just celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. If I am confirmed she would have the confusing honor of being the wife and the grandmother of the ambassador to Austria. She too is delighted by the idea.

Thanks to my grandparents, the very first country I ever visited was Austria. I stayed at the Ambassador's Residence in Vienna and saw first-hand what it means to serve one's country as Ambassador. Chief of Mission responsibilities are real and they are not to be taken lightly. I saw how hard my grandfather worked, and I also observed how hard our diplomats worked to make the world safer and more secure. I heard from my grandfather about Russia and the Cold War and the threat of nuclear weapons and how the entire Foreign Service labored night and day to keep us all safe, advancing our interests as we slept soundly back at home. Someday, I thought, I want that responsibility too.

I have returned to Austria many times since to visit friends and family and even to introduce my children on their first trip to Europe. But I never dreamed I might have the opportunity, if confirmed, to return again in the same job that my grandfather had!

Austria is not just a country I know. It is a country I love. It is a country with a rich history that sits at the crossroads of Europe and enjoys strategic connections to the Balkan states. As a neutral nation, Austria plays a significant role in multilateral conversations and in diplomatic efforts well beyond the borders of Europe.

Austria has a new Chancellor and governing coalition and, if confirmed, I look forward to working with its government in pursuit of our shared goals of peace, security and prosperity in Europe and beyond. Although neutral, Austria is an active and vital participant in many peacekeeping operations, firmly planted in the Trans-Atlantic community, and an important partner in the fight against crime and terrorism.

While it is hard to be fully prepared to be a Chief of Mission, I have been fortunate to have educational and cultural experiences that have helped me. I have lived in Europe and, motivated by my grandfather and my early interest in the Foreign Service, studied International Relations at both Princeton as an undergraduate and at Oxford University as a graduate student.

My business career has also prepared me for the management responsibilities of an ambassador. In my career, I have run companies, evaluated employees, hired division heads, and managed people. I have also set goals and priorities and met those goals. I would bring this experience into my new role, if confirmed. I have founded or co-founded five companies in the technology field and have invested in dozens more. I sold my first company to Microsoft, staying on for two years, and have seen the best of what large companies and small companies have to offer organizationally. I might add I know a bit about bureaucracy from the experience! As the CEO of my current company I manage a team and budget not unlike that of the Mission in Austria. I believe I would be able to lead the Embassy staff with a clear vision and a commitment to the highest ethical standards.

The President has stated his desire for diplomacy that leads to economic opportunity. Austria is an increasingly important destination for American goods and services and its companies have made significant investments in our dynamic economy. As a technology entrepreneur, I believe that America's lead in new technologies powering the digital revolution are a matter of pride and a natural touchpoint for outreach and advocacy in foreign countries. I would look forward to the opportunity to promote U.S. business, especially technology, in Austria. While technology startups in Austria number only a few thousand, 500-1000 new ones are launched every year and existing exchange programs with Silicon Valley and Austin, Texas, represent a great start to what could be an even bigger connection.

I have sat on the boards of companies and of organizations like the Haas School of Business at UC Berkeley and I have honed my ability to seek consensus and to identify opportunities for improvement.

Vienna is one of the cultural capitals of Europe and the celebration of cultural excellence is at the core of Austrian identity. My service on the boards of two of America's top museums and my own passions for art have already brought me to Austria. I would look forward to the opportunity to promote art and cultural exchange between the United States and Austria, furthering deepening this already strong connection between our societies.

Finally, I would look forward to outreach to the Austrian people on behalf of the people of the United States. In many places the memories of World War II and the American role in the rebuilding of Europe are fading. As we mark the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Marshall Plan and its positive impact in Europe and Austria, I would hope to refresh the bond between Austrians and

Americans on the basis of our common values and shared post-war history that continues to demonstrate the full value and potential of American friendship.

It is an honor to appear before the Committee today. If confirmed, I commit to give everything I have and using all my energy, experience, passion, and resolve to represent all Americans and to serve our country and its interests successfully.

I thank you for your time and look forward to answering any questions you might have.