

**Statement of K.T. McFarland**  
**Nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to Singapore**  
**Senate Committee on Foreign Relations**  
**July 20, 2017**

Thank you, Chairman Corker, Ranking Member Cardin, and Members of the Committee for the honor of allowing me to testify before you here today as the nominee to become the United States Ambassador to Singapore.

I'd like to first thank Senator Lieberman for that very kind introduction, and for our family friendship that spans over half a century. Senator Lieberman is a man of integrity, enormous ability and true patriotism. He is also a man that encourages us all to be better people, and we are all the better for having him in our lives.

I am also deeply humbled by Dr. Henry Kissinger's letter of endorsement for my nomination to serve in this position—he has been a boss, mentor and friend for decades, beginning with my first job in Washington, when I was a freshman at George Washington University in 1970. It continued through my years at Oxford and MIT, during the Reagan Administration, while I was in cable news and coming full circle when I joined the Trump Administration—in the same West Wing office that I had started working in 45 years before.

I am also thankful for the strong endorsement from the President's National Security Adviser, General H.R. McMaster, most my recent boss. He is a man of great intellect and strategic vision. I would also like to thank Secretary Tillerson for the opportunity to work with him and the very able people at the State Department and at Embassy Singapore.

But most importantly, I would like to thank President Trump for believing in me, and for selecting me for not just one, but two, of the most important positions in his Administration, first as Deputy National Security Adviser, and now as nominee for Ambassador to Singapore.

If I am confirmed, I would not be able to take on this new responsibility of moving halfway around the world to promote America's interests, were it not for the support of my very large family, including my husband, our five children, their spouses and our five grandchildren. My husband Alan, and our five children Andrew Gavin, Fiona, Luke and Camilla. Daughter in law Gretchen and son-in-law Matt Melton our five grandchildren Arabel, Alasdair, Lachlan, Louisa and Gigi.

And if confirmed, I would not dare take on this heavy responsibility without the support of Embassy Singapore, home to some 19 government agencies, and especially to the extraordinarily talented and dedicated Foreign Service Officers who serve there. The men and women of this Mission are the very best of the best. I would consider it an honor to serve with them.

So, why Singapore? Three reasons:

**First, our economic relationship is robust.** We have had a bilateral Free Trade Agreement since 2004, our first such agreement with an Asian country. The US has a healthy trade surplus of nearly \$20 billion in goods and services with Singapore. 215,000 American jobs are supported by our trade with Singapore. US businesses invest over 180 billion dollars in Singapore, twice as much as we invest in China and five times our investment in India. 4,200 US business are headquartered in Singapore, and more than 30,000 Americans live there.

**Second, we have close security relationship.** When America closed our bases in the Philippines in the 1990s, Singapore stepped up to make its facilities available to the US Navy. In 1990 we signed the US-Singapore Memorandum of Understanding, which was expanded by follow-on agreements in the years since. Today our Poseidon P-8 aircraft operate out of Singapore. Our Littoral Combat ships rotate out of Changi Naval base. In fact, the USS Coronado, one of the Navy's newest Littoral Combat ships, is currently in Singapore – my daughter Navy Lt Fiona McFarland was one of the sailors that took the Coronado from its construction in the shipyard, through its sea trials, and its commissioning into the Fleet.

Singaporean pilots train with American pilots, Singaporean sailors join programs with our sailors, our militaries train together, our intelligence, homeland security and law enforcement communities share information and best practices.

Singapore was the first Asian nation to join the Global Coalition Against ISIS. When Secretary Tillerson asked me to chair the 68-nation ministerial earlier this year, I met with Singapore's foreign minister. We discussed our common threats: the spread of radical Islam, North Korean nuclear proliferation and competing territorial claims on the South China Sea.

**Third, we have a lot in common.** We're both melting pot societies where people of different races, cultures and religions have come together to create a meritocracy, and democracy. Our free market economies are innovative, dynamic and entrepreneurial. We're at the cutting edge of technology and the digital age. Our nations have been beacons of stability and prosperity – and an important example of what can be accomplished through hard work, the rule of law and economic freedom.

Even so, we urge them to go further with human rights agenda. We urge them to continue their efforts to curb human trafficking, building on their adoption in 2015 of the Prevention of Human Trafficking Act. We also urge them to expand their political freedoms, freedom of speech, assembly and a free press.

But the Singapore's value to the United States is more than just our bilateral relationship, strong as it may be. I'm a New Yorker where one of the first rules is location, location, location. Despite its small size - Singapore is about four times the size of Washington, DC, or about the size of NYC without Staten Island - Singapore sits astride one of the

most important geostrategically important locations in the world. It is the economic gateway between East and West as one of the world's most important trade routes - on the Malacca straits. It is the world's largest transshipment port. Singapore is also the security gateway between East and West as the entrance to the South China Sea.

The world's diplomatic chessboard is being rearranged. Economic growth will increasingly come from Asia, especially Southeast Asia. North Korea is on the verge of becoming a nuclear weapons state that will threaten not just Northeast Asia but South Asia as well, and even the US. China is building a blue water navy and flexing its military muscles up and down the Asia Pacific. It seeks to disrupt our relationships with many Asian nations as it lures them into China's orbit. Radical Islamic elements – including terrorists fleeing the crumbling Islamic State -- are moving to other parts of the world, including the Asia Pacific region. With each of these security issues, the strength of the US-Singapore relationship will be instrumental to our success.

If the Senate does confirm my nomination, I see my job as the steward of all aspects of our close relationship with Singapore: as the chief commercial officer in promotion of US-Singapore trade; as the chief security officer in maintaining the close US-Singapore security and law enforcement relationship; as the chief proponent of American values; and as the President's personal representative to one of America's most important partners in the region if not the world.

I look forward to answering your questions today, and if confirmed as Ambassador to Singapore, I will work with the members of this committee to advance America's interests. Thank you for taking the time to consider my nomination. I look forward to answering any questions you may have.