

Opening Statement of Edward A. Burrier
Nominee to be Deputy Chief Executive Officer
United States International Development Finance Corporation
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
Videoconference - August 5, 2020

Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Menendez, and Members of the Committee: I am honored to appear before you today as the President's nominee to serve as the first Deputy Chief Executive Officer of the United States International Development Finance Corporation (DFC).

I greatly appreciate Chairman Royce's introduction. I owe more than just my career to the Chairman. As a young staffer on Capitol Hill, I met my wife of 14 years, Gretchen. She and our son William are here with me today, and I am grateful for their support. Like me, Gretchen has also spent her career in government, and she knows the demands, responsibilities, and honor that come with being a public servant.

I grew up in Fairfax, Virginia, the youngest son of two talented musicians. My father served in the United States Army Band for over 30 years. Integrity, respect for others – and most of all – hard work, were instilled in me by my parents. As a senior in high school I volunteered for a local congressional candidate who went on to win a historic election. I was enthralled that I had played a small part in that democratic process – even if it was just stuffing envelopes.

While at Mary Washington College, I did several internships on Capitol Hill and spent one summer interning for a member of Parliament in London. In my last semester, I took a commuter train from Fredericksburg, Virginia to intern at the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa– then chaired by Congressman Royce.

After graduation, the congressman offered me a job in his personal office – opening mail, answering phones, and giving Capitol tours to constituents from Orange County, California. Little did I know that I would spend the next 18 years working for the congressman. I worked my way up from the personal office to the Committee and earned a master's degree in National Security from the U.S. Naval War College at night along the way.

I became Deputy Staff Director of the House Foreign Affairs Committee in 2013 – a position I held for the next four and a half years. During that time, the Committee worked – alongside this Committee – to advance U.S. interests abroad, bolster those yearning for freedom, solidify alliances, and even helped put a warlord or two behind bars. Those results were achieved by being consultative, solution-oriented, and working across the aisle.

I brought these qualities with me when I transitioned to the executive branch three years ago. As Vice President for External Affairs at the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, I led OPIC's efforts both in the interagency and with this Committee on the BUILD Act, the landmark legislation that created DFC.

I believe strongly in DFC's mission. Simply put, there are not enough government resources to tackle the challenges of the developing world. Through DFC, we can leverage the power of private capital to help meet demands, improve lives, and advance American interests.

I've seen firsthand the impact that U.S. development finance can have. I've met with Shrouq, an energetic woman in Amman, Jordan who took a small loan to start a driving school to empower

women. I've met with homeowners in Ghana, who achieved that dream thanks in part to DFC financing. And I've visited a DFC-financed powerplant in Togo that is giving the country a chance to power its economy forward.

From microfinance to secure telecommunications to infrastructure, DFC support is critical in helping create opportunity and growth. The role of DFC is only expanding as the developing world grapples with a sobering economic outlook in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Times like these are precisely when institutions like DFC are needed most.

Of course, this is also when our strategic competitors are looking to take advantage of the situation to expand their influence. If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, I look forward to working with the Committee to ensure that DFC maximizes its tools and is a robust alternative to authoritarian financing that can leave developing countries worse off.

Mr. Chairman, I am committed to U.S. leadership and engagement in the world. And I am convinced that DFC will be at the forefront of our country's development policy for generations to come. If confirmed, I pledge to work closely with the Committee to strengthen DFC's foundations so that the bold vision you had in drafting the BUILD Act becomes a reality.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I look forward to your questions.