

Statement of Jeffrey Ross Gunter
Nominee be Ambassador to the Republic of Iceland
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
October 4, 2018

Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member Murphy, members of the Committee, it is a privilege and an honor to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee to serve as United States Ambassador to Iceland. I am humbled by the confidence placed in me by the President and the Secretary of State.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with this Committee and the Congress in advancing the interests, prosperity and protection of the United States in Iceland.

I would briefly like to introduce my children, my twins, my son Simon, and my daughter, Sophie. My late wife, Johanna, was a Jewish American, and a Dutch immigrant naturalized citizen, who passed away two years ago, after a brave battle with cancer, and is a large reason why, I am sitting here today.

I would like to specially thank Senator Ron Johnson, for introducing me, to the committee.

I sit here before this distinguished committee as a private citizen who has never held government office. However, I have spent my life serving others as a doctor, treating patients and managing medical clinics for over 25 years. I believe my experience as a practitioner of medicine and as an entrepreneur and manager in the private sector will suit me well as ambassador, if confirmed.

My medical career has been spent in the field of dermatology, and my practice has focused on providing healthcare to primarily rural areas of the Western United States, which has had historically less access our healthcare system, with patients needing to travel long distances with great inconvenience to receive care. Providing health access to rural communities has also blessed me with the opportunity to offer care for a great number of our military men and women and their families. Their unparalleled dedication and sacrifices are inspiring and have deepened my love of our great country.

I believe I will succeed as an ambassador because I have learned how to build a large organization, manage and invest in staff and providers, deliver care to patients, and be responsive to the needs of both the individual and the community. This work requires strong values, a strong work ethic, and a focus on the mission

coupled with the ability to work with others. If confirmed, I am prepared to bring all of my experience and skills to my new responsibilities.

If confirmed, my foremost priority as Ambassador will be promoting United States interests in Iceland. I will work hard to identify areas of common interest, advance these issues, and allow both countries to support each other, while working toward progress for our common goals.

While I have never been to Iceland, I have spent a considerable amount of time in Western Europe, as my late wife was from the Netherlands. I speak Dutch, French, and Spanish. Nevertheless, what is clear from my studies of Iceland is that it is a country of tremendous history, beauty, ambition, and accomplishment. Iceland is home to proud people and a land shaped by its environment.

The environment, like for so many of us, is uniquely important to me. I have spent my entire career battling on behalf of patients, against the harmful effects of the sun and its ultraviolet radiation, and the life-threatening skin cancer, it can create. I look forward, if confirmed, to continuing the dialogue with the Icelandic government about our environment and mutual ways of engagement going forward.

Iceland is a NATO ally and close partner of the United States. Together, the United States and Iceland cooperate on a range of important issues, from transatlantic security, to the sustainable development of the Arctic. In addition, completion of the Embassy's move to the long-awaited new chancery, in a seamless fashion, is a top priority as well.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Embassy staff in Iceland in an encouraging and cooperative manner to achieve common goals. My management style is to respect everyone, encourage their success, while still insisting on great work for you all, and the American people.

Iceland shares our democratic values and belief in the free market. Iceland and America can climb many mountains of opportunity together. If I am given the opportunity to represent the United States in Iceland, I can't wait to climb together with the State Department and the members of this Committee to meet our mutual challenges and goals.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you for this tremendous opportunity to appear before your committee today. If confirmed, I look forward to

hosting your visit to Iceland and to working closely with each and every one of you to advance the interests of the United States.