

Testimony of Andeliz N. Castillo
Nominee to be U.S. Alternate Executive Director of the InterAmerican Development Bank
(IDB) Hearing Before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee

October 31, 2019

Good morning,

Chairman Risch, Chairman Rubio, Ranking Members Menendez and Cardin and Members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee:

I am very honored and humbled that President Trump has nominated me to serve as the U.S. Alternate Executive Director of the Inter-American Development Bank. I am grateful to Secretary Mnuchin and U.S. Executive Director of the Inter-American Development Bank Eliot Pedrosa for their confidence and support throughout this process.

Earlier this year, I was blessed to become a mom to my seven month old son, Noah Manuel. It is the toughest, yet the most rewarding role I have held thus far. I share this responsibility with my loving husband, Reinaldo Pagan, who is here with me today. I must say that I am an incredibly proud wife of a U.S. veteran. My husband served this country for more than 20 years in the U.S. Army. My mom Nevis and stepdad Jorge, who have always supported me with their unconditional love, could not be here today but are watching from my home as they care for my son. Lastly, I would be remiss if I did not recognize my beautiful grandparents, Manuel and Bertha, who are watching from above.

I was born and raised in New York City as a first generation immigrant. My mother, along with her three sisters, and my grandparents fled to the United States, settling in New York in pursuit of basic rights and opportunities that were stripped away in their homeland of Cuba. Their experience of losing everything due to communism and authoritarianism, taught me early on the value of democracy, economic opportunity, human rights and freedoms. In addition to my mother's immigrant experience, her ability to successfully raise my brother Alex, my sister Adrianna and me for several years on her own instilled the principles of self-reliance, hard work and perseverance.

In my nearly 15 years of professional experience, I have had the great privilege to serve the American people in the legislative and executive branch. I have worked in communications, coalition-building, intergovernmental affairs, and policy. My professional introduction to Western Hemisphere affairs began in the office of South Florida Congressman Lincoln Diaz-Balart, and continued in a greater

capacity after joining the House Committee on Foreign Affairs under Chairman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen. Today, in the Vice President's office, although my primary function is to serve as an interface between civil society groups and Vice President Pence, I have worked closely with the Western Hemisphere national security team on issues to advance democracy and human rights throughout the region. I was fortunate to visit Colombia, Argentina, Chile and Panama with the Vice President on his first official trip to Latin America.

Outside of government, I led a non-profit organization as Chief Operating Officer and Chief of Staff for several years. I gained valuable management and operations experience, overseeing a team of nearly 100 full-time employees across ten states.

If I am fortunate to be confirmed, I look forward to addressing issues that are hindering progress in Latin America and the Caribbean such as poverty, corruption, weak institutions, gang violence, socialism, lack of human capital, and China's growing influence. The shared goal of the United States and of the Inter-American Development Bank is to achieve long-term economic prosperity, political stability and freedom across the Hemisphere – fundamentally to improve the lives of our southern neighbors. I share that vision and commit to working with this Administration and Congress, especially Members of this Committee. I pledge to use the means available to advance democracy and human rights. And as a proud Hispanic woman, I look forward to working towards expanding opportunities for women throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.

Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member and other Members of this Committee, thank you again for this opportunity to appear before you. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.