

Statement of Thomas Barrett
Nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg
Submitted to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee
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Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished Members of the Committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee as U.S. Ambassador to the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. I am truly humbled and honored by the trust and confidence the President and Secretary of State have placed in me. If confirmed, I pledge to work closely with this Committee and the Congress to advance U.S. interests and priorities in Luxembourg.

I am here today as a direct result of the love and support of my family. My wife Kris, who just retired from teaching grade school, has been my best friend and partner for over 30 years. Together, we are blessed with four children: Tom, Annie, Erin, and Kate. All of them are in their twenties. Each of them is a remarkable young adult.

Growing up in Milwaukee, I was also blessed to have parents who set the example of how to be caring and responsible. My dad was a navigator in World War II and taught my brother, sisters, and me the importance of being responsible. My mother lost her first husband during the Battle of the Bulge and then met our father. She taught us resilience and caring.

I have committed my life to public service. I have had the good fortune and honor to serve as an elected official for over thirty-six years; first as a state legislator, next as a member of Congress for ten years, and currently as Mayor of Milwaukee, for the past seventeen years.

I am especially proud that my home state of Wisconsin is also the home of many people of Luxembourg descent. In fact, it is the home of the Luxembourg American Cultural Center, just a short drive from Milwaukee.

The United States – Luxembourg relationship is strong, based on our shared history and values, mutual interests, strategic alliance, and economic ties. Luxembourg is a charter member of NATO and one of the founding members of the EU. It is also host to numerous monuments to the American liberators after both World Wars, and it is the final resting place for over 5,000 American service members, including General George Patton. As a premier financial capital in Europe, Luxembourg is one of the U.S. economy's largest sources and destinations for investment.

If confirmed, my number one priority will be the safety and security of U.S. citizens abroad. There are approximately 3,100 U.S. citizens who reside in Luxembourg and 30,000 who visit annually. I also pledge to maintain the safety and security of members of our mission in Luxembourg.

Luxembourg is a small country that is home to one of the largest financial centers in the Eurozone and, remarkably, the second largest investment fund center in the world, behind only the United States. Luxembourg is a world leader in green and sustainable finance. It is home to

the world's first and largest "green exchange" for debt instruments. It is also home to the EU Investment Bank, which is the lending arm of the European Union.

As Mayor of Milwaukee, I have chaired the Great Lakes and Saint Lawrence Cities Initiative and have worked to create green solutions to clean up rivers, parks, and brownfields. That is important because it is imperative that we work at all levels of government, domestically and internationally, to support President Biden's efforts to combat global climate change. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Luxembourg on this important issue. I will work with Luxembourg to address this challenge in areas where it has a competitive advantage, such as sustainable finance.

Luxembourg is also a pioneer and an important player in space, and one of the original signatories of NASA's Artemis Accords in October 2020. In 2019, the United States and Luxembourg signed a groundbreaking agreement on Space. If confirmed, I will continue to expand our civil, commercial and defense cooperation in space.

Luxembourg is in the heart of Europe both psychologically and geographically -- and, I should note, the size of its population is very close to that of Milwaukee. It is home to ten EU institutions and offices, including the European Court of Justice; it has produced three EU Commission presidents; and it is a strong voice for institution building and rulemaking in the European Union.

President Biden has emphasized the importance of our Transatlantic relations and working with those who share our values. If confirmed, I will be honored to work with Luxembourg to advance our shared priorities and U.S. interests in Luxembourg.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to appear before you today. I would be happy to answer your questions.