

**Statement of Arthur B. Culvahouse Jr.**  
**Nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to Australia**  
**Before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations**  
**December 4, 2018**

Chairman Corker, Ranking Member Menendez, and Members of the Committee –

It is my deep honor to testify before you today as the President’s nominee to be Ambassador to Australia, a vital and steadfast ally of the United States. I am humbled by the trust the President has placed in me by considering me to fill this important role.

I am here today in the Dirksen Building, on the same floor and just a few steps away from where my government service began as chief legislative assistant to the distinguished late Senator Howard H. Baker, Jr. A fellow Tennessean, he took a risk in hiring me right out of law school on the recommendation of a young Tennessee lawyer named Lamar Alexander. I was fortunate to learn from Howard Baker’s experience and wise counsel in the Senate, and then as law partners, and again in the Reagan White House when he was Chief of Staff and I was the White House counsel. I am also thankful for the friendship and advice of many distinguished colleagues in public service, particularly Senator Corker. More than anything, though, I value the support of my three daughters, Sarah Culvahouse Mills, Elizabeth Culvahouse Callahan, and Anne Culvahouse Teague. Their steadfast love and encouragement has been critical to every success I have enjoyed, whether in government or in the private sector. I am so pleased that they could join me today. I am thankful that, if confirmed, they will continue to support me in this new adventure.

The United States and Australia established diplomatic relations 78 years ago and have been formal allies since 1951, but we have been friends for far longer. The United States and Australia first fought side-by-side 100 years ago during World War I and have faced combat together in every major global conflict since, including World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Afghanistan, and Iraq. That history of shared sacrifice resonates personally with me since two of my uncles served in the U.S. military in the Pacific during World War II, while my father served in Europe. During a recent trip to Australia, I visited the War Memorial in Canberra, where I learned about the sacrifices Australians have made to defend freedom and democracy worldwide. I was honored to lay a wreath in gratitude for these contributions. Today, the relationship between the United States and Australia is as solid as ever. If confirmed by the Senate, my first priority will be to ensure that our alliance grows even more robust than when the ANZUS treaty was signed in San Francisco nearly seven decades ago.

In addition to the remarkably strong and active U.S.-Australia military relationship, our diplomatic, economic, and people-to-people ties with Australia are

dynamic and growing. Australia is a key foreign policy partner, working closely with us to persuade North Korea to de-nuclearize; to promote a free and open Indo-Pacific region; and to increase development assistance and infrastructure investment in the Pacific. Our economic ties go back to the late 1700s when American whaling ships provisioned in Sydney Harbor. One hundred years ago, the first U.S. firms opened offices in Australia. Today, the United States is far and away Australia's largest foreign investor. Two-way trade topped \$64 billion in 2017, and the United States enjoys a trade surplus with Australia of nearly \$29 billion. U.S. exports to Australia support roughly 300,000 jobs in the United States, while American companies employ more than 300,000 Australians. And our people-to-people connections are also deep and broad. In 2017, almost 1.5 million Australians visited the United States and nearly 730,000 U.S. residents visited Australia, up nearly 27 percent over the last two years. The United States is the top destination for Australians wishing to study abroad. If confirmed, I look forward to continuing to broaden and deepen these relationships – relationships that bring not only our governments more closely together, but our people as well.

Importantly, our relationship with Australia is not only about honoring our shared military sacrifice and close diplomatic, economic, and personal bonds over the past century – it is equally about nurturing and deepening these ties in the century to come. I am convinced that we have a bright future together, whether by working to confront current and emerging security challenges, by expanding our already strong bilateral diplomatic ties to include even greater cooperation with like-minded partners in the region, or by leveraging the opportunities presented by our open and innovative economies to work with Asia's rapidly growing middle class to make the entire Indo-Pacific a more prosperous and stable region in the years to come. If I am confirmed, I look forward to working with our team at Embassy Canberra and our consulates in Sydney, Melbourne, and Perth to connect to younger Australians through education exchanges, science and technology collaboration, investments by cutting-edge American firms, and our common foundation of shared history, enduring democratic values, and deep cultural bonds.

Thank you.