

Statement of Leah F. Campos
Ambassador-Nominee to the Dominican Republic
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
May 1, 2025, 10:30 am

Good morning. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

I am deeply honored and humbled to be nominated by President Trump to serve as United States Ambassador to the Dominican Republic and am grateful for the trust President Trump and Secretary Rubio have placed in me to lead our mission in Santo Domingo.

I would like to take a moment to express my deepest condolences to the people of the Dominican Republic who are still mourning the loss of loved ones following the tragic accident at a well-known nightclub in Santo Domingo last month.

I would like to recognize my four beautiful children, Christian, Isabela, Maria Soledad and Xavier who are here with me today, my parents Miguel and Pilar, who are watching from their home in Arizona, my siblings, and all my dear friends who have kept me in their prayers.

I come before you today a product of the American Dream. My father was born in Superior, Arizona - a copper mining town where he grew up in poverty working odd jobs to help his parents make ends meet when he wasn't at school where he stood out as a star little league baseball player. At the age of eighteen my father enlisted in the U.S. Air Force where he served for nearly 30 years, rising to the rank of E9 - the highest enlisted rank. His military service took him early in his career to Madrid, Spain where he met my mother. My mother was born in post-Civil War Spain to a family that had

been pursued relentlessly during the Spanish Civil War by the communists who targeted her parents for their devotion to their country and to their Catholic faith. Together my parents are the most patriotic Americans I've ever known; they transcended poverty through hard work and faith in God, raising my siblings and me to never forget the blessing of having been born citizens of this great country, to serve our country, and to remain faithful to God. Thanks to my father's military service, I grew up living abroad where I developed a deep understanding of the importance of our country's leadership around the world, with a clear-eyed focus on the vital national interests of the United States. After completing my graduate studies, I joined the Clandestine Service of the CIA - hoping to continue my family tradition of serving my country abroad in pursuit of peace, strength, and prosperity for the United States. After years of service at the CIA, I came to Capitol Hill where I was a senior foreign policy advisor on the Western Hemisphere to the then-Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. After some time in the private sector, President Trump has given me the most incredible opportunity to once again serve my country.

If confirmed, my primary focus as Ambassador will be to advance President Trump and Secretary Rubio's foreign policy priorities of ensuring a safer, stronger, and more prosperous United States.

As Secretary Rubio noted while visiting during his first official trip abroad, the United States and the Dominican Republic share a robust and dynamic relationship. More than two million Americans of Dominican heritage reside in the United States, five million U.S. tourists visit the Dominican Republic every year. The United States enjoys a more than \$5.5 billion trade surplus with the Dominican Republic, with more than 30 billion dollars in annual trade between our countries. These connections provide a strong foundation for collaboration on key issues that impact both our nations.

Among my top priorities, if confirmed, will be to work closely with the Dominican government to enhance border security and curb illegal immigration to the United States, while stepping up the work we already do together to disrupt the operations of drug cartels and transnational criminal organizations.

And, importantly, I will work tirelessly to counter the Chinese Communist Party's influence in the Dominican Republic and throughout our hemisphere.

In addition, if confirmed, I will make the morale and professional growth of all members of the U.S. Mission to the Dominican Republic a key priority - especially among first and second tour officers. Serving one's country, being a good steward of taxpayer resources, representing the beauty and strength of our great country abroad is honorable - and I hope to help cultivate, value, and strengthen the dedicated cadre of the men and women of the Foreign Service.

In closing, I am deeply honored by this nomination and am grateful to this committee for its consideration. If confirmed, I commit to working closely and respectfully with this committee, the administration, and my counterparts in the Dominican Republic to advance the President's foreign policy objectives. I look forward to any questions you might have of me. Thank you.