

**Statement of Ronald Douglas Johnson
Nominee for U.S. Ambassador to Mexico
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations**

March 13, 2025

Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Shaheen, and distinguished Members of this Committee.

I am truly honored to appear before you today as the President's nominee to serve as the United States Ambassador to the United Mexican States. I am very grateful to President Trump for the faith and confidence he's placed in me, and to Secretary Rubio for his support.

I am grateful for the opportunities I've had to meet with many of you and for your consideration today as I sit before you in this time-honored process. I'm humbled at the opportunity to serve our nation in this capacity and especially at such an important period in our relationship with Mexico. If confirmed, I look forward to a continuing dialogue with you on your priority issues.

I am supported in this endeavor by a strong and patriotic family. My wife, Alina, immigrated to this country with her parents over 60 years ago as a refugee from Cuba. She has actively contributed to my service to this country for over 44 years, and it has not always been easy. My government careers have required frequent separations and duty in high-risk areas. Together we've raised four grown children, Robert, Lori, Michael, and Joshua.

Our parents have all passed away, but we are people of great faith, and we believe they look down upon us today with pride and compassion. Our families both struggled and worked hard in an America that they loved and patriotically served. In their lifetime, it was sometimes hard just to get by, but they weren't satisfied with just getting by. They wanted to pass on a

better life for their children and to build better communities, a better nation, and in the process, a better world.

Our youngest son Joshua is a veteran of the Iraq war and together we represent the third and fourth generation of our family to have served our nation in combat. After World War II, my father worked as a store manager for many years before finally embarking in his own small business. My mother's father had been a sharecropper in Alabama.

My in-laws came here from Cuba with nothing, and they both worked well after what is today considered "retirement" age. My father-in-law was proud to say that he wasn't born in America but that he chose America as his new country. He understood just how fragile freedom is and he loved the USA. After Cuba fell to communism, my mother-in-law helped hundreds of young Cuban children flee the island aboard Pan-Am airline flights to Miami as part of operation Pedro Pan.

Our parents instilled values like honesty, respect, accountability, and a strong work ethic in their children, aiming to raise us with a strong moral compass and positive character traits by modeling these values through their own actions and words. If confirmed, these values of initiative, enterprise, and integrity will remain constants in my pursuit to promote U.S. interests in Mexico.

Our relationship with Mexico is one of paramount importance and complexity. We share a nearly 2,000-mile border from San Diego, California, to Brownsville, Texas. Our deep economic integration, shared security and border challenges, and strong cultural ties reflect Mexico's role as an essential partner for the United States. If confirmed, I'll advance this administration's top national security priorities, including securing our border from the flows of illegal drugs and aliens, ensuring a fair playing field for U.S. businesses and workers, and enhancing the security of U.S. citizens. I'll work tirelessly to address the issues that directly impact U.S. citizens, from transboundary pollution in southern California to securing water deliveries for communities in Texas.

The first priority will be to ensure the rule of law at the border. If confirmed, I will foster cooperation with Mexican authorities to halt and deter further illegal alien flows, and to accept the deportation of their citizens currently in the United States illegally. Mexico's recent actions to secure the border demonstrate the power of our partnership, including its deployment of 10,000 National Guard troops to the border and acceptance of the deportation of illegal aliens. Neither country can solve the challenge of illegal immigration alone, and I'm convinced that we can find solutions that will benefit both our countries.

Among my highest priorities will be the protection of the American people. Mission Mexico is one of the largest U.S. diplomatic missions in the world, with 3,300 employees, nine consulates, and nine consular agencies. It is also the largest consular operation in the world, and I fully understand and appreciate the value of those consular services to our fellow Americans and your constituents. If confirmed, I will take seriously the solemn obligation of protecting the many millions of U.S. citizens who live in, and visit, Mexico. This includes working with Mexican authorities to dismantle drug cartels that sow violence and addressing the scourge of illegal drugs that inflict tremendous harm on communities in both the United States and Mexico. I have a profound respect for the rule of law and understand the responsibility we all have to hold ourselves and others accountable for crimes against our people.

As it relates to goods, Mexico surpassed China as United States' number one trading partner. Last year, our bilateral trade hit a record \$840 billion — over \$1.5 million exchanged every minute. If confirmed, I would work to ensure U.S. companies and workers are treated fairly as we look towards the USMCA review, clearing a path for shared prosperity while safeguarding U.S. economic security, including from predatory Chinese trade practices.

There's a lot to celebrate in our relationship with Mexico that often gets lost amidst discussion of the challenges. More than 10 percent of all Americans—some 40 million people—are of Mexican heritage. Our cultures

have grown increasingly intertwined, and our societies share a spirit of optimism and new thinking that allows us to connect and collaborate to meet shared challenges and improve the lives of our people.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and Members of this committee, our relationship with Mexico is unique in its direct impact on the security and prosperity of the American people. If confirmed, I pledge to be a good and faithful steward of that relationship. Thank you.