

**Statement of Caleb Orr**  
**Nominee for Assistant Secretary of State (Economic and Business Affairs)**  
**Senate Committee on Foreign Relations**  
**May 8, 2025**

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

I'm honored to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee for Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs. I'm immensely grateful to the President and Secretary Rubio for their trust and confidence. I also want to thank the Members and staff of this Committee for taking time to meet with me. As a former Senate staffer to then-Senator Rubio, I understand firsthand the vital role this Committee plays in shaping our foreign policy. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with you in this role.

On a personal note, I'd like to thank my wife Gabby and our daughters for their love and support. Gabby and our eldest, Poppy, are seated behind me, while Lily, our youngest, watches from home. I also want to thank my parents, Jim and Elaine, who along with many other family and friends are watching from the great state of Texas—the state my family has called home for six generations. I would not be here today without them. The greatest gift I've received from my family is a legacy of Christian faith. Above all, I thank God for His grace and provision.

As an attorney and long-time economic policy adviser to Secretary Rubio, the intersection of economic policy and international affairs has been the focus of my career. For seven years in the Senate, I had the privilege of serving under former Senator Rubio, helping build bipartisan consensus on confronting the economic and strategic challenges posed by China and creating incentives for re-shoring supply chains to the United States and near-shoring to the Western Hemisphere. As Deputy Staff Director of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, I worked with Congress—including several members of this Committee—and the administration to create and implement the Paycheck Protection Program, which was a lifeline to millions of American businesses during the pandemic. And as an attorney in private practice, I litigated complex securities cases to enforce the laws that underpin our world-class capital markets.

If confirmed, it would be a privilege to continue this work as Assistant Secretary, ensuring that our international economic policy first and foremost benefits America—American families, American workers, American businesses.

Congress has tasked this position with responsibility to the Secretary for “international economics and business matters in the conduct of foreign policy.” These issues have been central to American foreign policy since our nation's founding. In George Washington's Farewell Address, our first President exhorted that “extending our

commercial relations” must be part of “the great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations.” From merchant ships establishing new diplomatic ties in the early republic to manufacturing and financial companies spanning the world after World War II, throughout our history American businesses have been leading ambassadors for U.S. interests abroad.

The State Department’s Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs plays an important role in facilitating our commercial statecraft by participating in the administration’s international economic policymaking and advocating for American businesses through the Department’s missions around the world. If confirmed, my top two priorities as Assistant Secretary would be:

First, advancing commercial diplomacy. The American private sector’s innovation and dynamism are unmatched. Yet, for decades, unfair trade practices and investment restrictions abroad have impeded our competitiveness. With President Trump’s historic actions to bring about balanced and reciprocal trade, American companies stand poised to compete in global markets. Through exports and productive outbound and inbound investment, we can expand our influence, strengthen relations with key countries, and create high-wage jobs here at home.

Second, using economic tools to protect national security. Our financial system, capital markets, and the dollar’s status as reserve currency provide us with great leverage to advance our foreign policy interests. We must both protect and press these advantages. We must use tools such as sanctions and investment screening strategically but to maximum effect. If confirmed, I look forward to bringing these tools to bear in support of U.S. foreign policy goals.

Thank you for this opportunity. I welcome your questions and, if confirmed, look forward to advancing America’s economic interests both at home and abroad.