

**Testimony of Bruce J. Oreck**  
**Ambassador-Designate to the Republic of Finland**  
**July 28, 2009**  
**Senate Foreign Relations Committee**

Madam Chair and distinguished members of the Committee, I am honored to be here today as President Obama's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to the Republic of Finland. I would like to thank the President and Secretary Clinton for the honor of this nomination and, if confirmed, for the privilege of serving our country. And I want to acknowledge my wife Cody Oreck, my partner and best friend for 31 years, who is here with me today.

The Finns were a part of the great waves of immigration that built America from the very beginnings of the settlement of the New World. In fact, the great grandson of one of those Finnish immigrants signed the United States Declaration of Independence on behalf of Pennsylvania in 1776. Today we see signs of Finnish influences in all aspects of American life. Our cultural and personal ties to the Finns run deep and true.

Finland is a valued and important partner in promoting peace and democracy in the world. For example, in 2008, while serving as the Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Government of Finland was a leading player in establishing a ceasefire agreement in Georgia. Finland is a member of NATO's Partnership for Peace program, an important contributor to NATO's Kosovo Force and to the EU rule of law mission in Kosovo, and has temporarily doubled its troop contribution in Afghanistan to approximately 200 in support of that country's presidential elections this August. And Finland has prioritized, and is committed to increasing, its overseas development assistance. If confirmed, I will seek opportunities to work with Finland to enhance and expand our shared values of respect for human rights and democracy as key factors in stability and security.

If confirmed, I will work actively to increase prospects for U.S. companies in Finland, and to expand our trade and investment linkages. I believe my experience in the private sector positions me well to do this. I practiced corporate law for nearly three decades and share the profound respect that both Americans and Finns hold for the rule of law upon which democracy

rests. Growing up in and working in a large family business, I know firsthand the challenges of identifying and nurturing business opportunities. And through my work in green building and alternative energy, I have both an understanding of and the experience with the technologies that will be a critical part of the solutions to achieving energy security and climate safety, to which both Finland and America are deeply committed. The robust pursuit of green technology and green jobs by America and its allies will be the foundation of the next generation of shared economic prosperity and security.

With the consent of the Senate, I look forward to representing the United States in advancing a deeper connection between the United States and Finland. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today, and I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.