

Prepared Statement of Linda Mysliwy Conlin  
Board Member – Designate  
Export – Import Bank of the United States

Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs

United States Senate

Thursday, February 26, 2004, 10:00am

Mr. Chairman, Senator Sarbanes, distinguished members of the Committee, it is an honor and a privilege to appear before you today as the President's nominee to become a Director at the Export – Import Bank of the United States.

I appreciate the confidence that President Bush has placed in me and am deeply grateful to the President for giving me another opportunity to serve my country. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the members and staff of this Committee.

I would like to recognize my husband, Joe, and my 87-year-old mother, Helen Mysliwy, who are both here with me today. I would also like to recognize my colleagues from the Department of Commerce and the fine team from the EX-IM Bank who have provided me with enormous support.

I know the Committee has my biographical information, so I won't go into the details of my qualifications but ask that they be submitted with this oral statement.

Two years and seven months to the day, I had the honor of appearing before the members of this Committee to ask for your consideration of my nomination to serve as Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Trade Development. My commitment today remains the same as it was then: if confirmed, to help American exporters and workers succeed in an increasingly competitive global economy. Exports of goods and services in this country support more than 12 million jobs, good jobs, paying as much as 18 percent more than the average.

I am, however, mindful of what Secretary of Commerce Don Evans, whom I have been very proud to serve, often says, "that governments don't create wealth and prosperity: people do. It is government's role to create the right conditions in which America's workers and businesses will flourish."

Creating the right conditions to grow export-related jobs means providing exporters with tools to compete in today's global marketplace. During my nineteen years in federal and state government, I have helped companies, both large and small, gain access to world markets by providing the support to reach those markets.

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In trade development, I work alongside a group of over 370 dedicated professionals, including trade and industry specialists whose mission is to help strengthen the export competitiveness of diverse sectors of the U.S. economy, from traditional manufacturing to information technologies and service exports. These specialists provide data and analysis critical to the development and monitoring of the impact of our trade agreements, ensure that industry perspectives are taken into consideration in trade negotiations through an advisory committee system, and offer general export assistance as well as advocacy for companies competing for large foreign government tenders.

Representing Secretary Evans as an *ex officio* member of EX-IM Bank's Board of Directors, I also have come to appreciate the critical role that access to export and project financing plays in enabling our companies to compete.

I know that today's small and medium-sized businesses represent 97% of all exporters, yet generate 30% of this country's exports. Two-thirds of these companies export to just one market. I am pleased to see that the EX-IM Bank has placed a priority on cooperation among the 19-members of the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee to leverage federal resources in reaching this important community of potential exporters.

If confirmed, I look forward to helping Chairman Merrill implement his broad vision in providing competitive products to the new knowledge-based service economy as well as traditional industries.

I look forward to working with Committee members, Chairman Merrill, Vice Chair Foley, Directors Grandmaison and Cleland, the career professionals at the EX-IM Bank, the Administration's trade team and the exporting community in meeting this challenge.

Mr. Chairman, Senator Sarbanes, members of the Committee, I respectfully ask for your favorable consideration of my nomination and will be pleased to respond to your questions.