

Opening Statement of Christopher Pilkerton
Nominee for Assistant Secretary for Investment Security
United States Department of the Treasury
United States Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
September 4, 2025

Chairman Scott, Ranking Member Warren and distinguished members of the Committee,

It is an honor to be nominated for this role and a privilege to be before you today. I would like to thank President Trump and Secretary Bessent for this opportunity. I am also happy to be joined today by friends and family, including my wonderful wife Amanda who has a small business bakery in our hometown of Tilghman, a small village in Maryland on the Chesapeake Bay, where I serve in the US Coast Guard Auxiliary.

The role of Assistant Secretary for Investment Security is critical to both the national security and economic growth of our country. As President Trump and Secretary Bessent have made clear, America is open for business, but we must be vigilant to ensure that that business does not jeopardize our country's safety or unwittingly advance any malicious interests of our adversaries.

By way of academic background, I hold a law degree, a master's in public affairs with a concentration in international economics, as well as university certificates in data analytics, artificial intelligence and machine learning. I have taught enterprise risk management at both law and business schools and have served as a Fulbright Teaching Scholar overseas.

Among my professional roles, I began my career clerking at the DOJ's Organized Crime and Racketeering Section and the Office of International Affairs - Criminal Division, as well as the State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement. I went on to serve as a narcotics and money laundering prosecutor in New York City, working closely with the brave men and women of the NYPD, FBI, DEA, and a host of other federal agencies and joint terrorism and intelligence task forces, including through the terrorist attacks of 9/11. I have also worked as senior enforcement counsel at the U.S. Securities & Exchange Commission, investigating domestic and international businesses; along with other private sector legal and global compliance roles in the financial services arena, including foreign regulatory analysis, corporate due diligence, and geopolitical risk evaluation.

I also served at the U.S. Small Business Administration, as both General Counsel and Acting Administrator. It was an honor to support so many entrepreneurs, including in areas such as DoD procurement, supply chain infrastructure, cybersecurity protocols, and the development of critical national security technologies through the agency's Small Business Innovation Research, Technology Transfer and Investment Company programs (SBIR, STTR, SBIC). Also, as the White House's Executive Director of the Opportunity Now initiative in 2020, I worked with many state and local leaders and assisted in the implementation of several of the bipartisan Covid-era economic programs.

I have also been an executive at the leading community development financial institution, helping to scale underserved small businesses across our country; and most recently have been Principal Deputy General Counsel at Treasury, supporting core domestic and international programs, including ongoing engagement with the intelligence and law enforcement communities on global threat assessments and security matters.

This is a critical time for our nation. Economic growth is a priority, and international investment will play a significant role by creating jobs, strengthening manufacturing, and advancing technologies that will propel America forward. That said, vigilance around just how foreign investment is introduced into this country is critical, as our adversaries will continue to be relentless in efforts to undermine our country's assets, technological competencies, and private data.

There can be no compromise of America's talent and treasure, and if given the opportunity to be confirmed, I will be resolute in this charge and commit to work closely with this Committee to achieve this goal. Given my background and experience, I believe I am well positioned to execute the responsibilities of this role alongside the committed career professionals at Treasury.

My thanks to all of you for your consideration of my nomination, and I look forward to answering your questions.