

Written Testimony of Judith D. Pryor, of Ohio
Nominee to Serve as a Member of the Board of Directors, Export-Import Bank of
the United States
United State Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
November 1, 2017

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Brown, Members of the Committee, I am honored to appear before you today as a nominee for the Board of Directors of the Export-Import Bank of the United States. I am deeply grateful to President Trump for nominating me and to Senator Schumer for his recommendation and support. If confirmed, I pledge to carry out EXIM's mission with honor and integrity. I would also like to thank Ranking Member Brown, Senator Heitkamp, and their staff for the trust they have placed in me, and for their support and encouragement.

And thank you, to all the members of the Banking Committee for your commitment to move this process forward. I have met with many of you and your staff to discuss your priorities related to the Bank and how we can ensure EXIM continues to support American jobs by increasing our exports of goods and services. If confirmed, I look forward to further conversations about how we can work together to help American businesses succeed in the international marketplace.

Last, I would like to introduce some of my family members who are with me today. My husband David Pryor, Jr. and my brother-in-law Mark Pryor – I married into an Arkansas family with a long history of public service and it seems some of that has rubbed off on me. Our son Hampton Pryor is with me today too. Every day, he reminds me to persevere, no matter the challenges life delivers. My parents have been gone awhile now, but today would have been Mother's 90th birthday. Happy Birthday Mom. My brother Joseph DelZoppo and my niece Christine could not be here today, but I am grateful for their love and support.

I am a proud product of Ohio public schools and graduated from Bowling Green State University. My brother and I are the first generation of our family to attend college.

From the American dream of my grandparents, who immigrated to the United States at the turn of the last century and settled in Cleveland to work in the factories; to the boom of the post-World War II years that my parents enjoyed; to my youth, and the unfortunate decline of manufacturing in the Factory Belt of the mid-west—now the Rust Belt—the need for the Export-Import Bank of the United States is even more relevant today.

If confirmed, my top priority will be to focus on EXIM's mission of supporting American jobs and growing American exports, while protecting taxpayer dollars. With over 95% of the world's consumers living outside U.S. borders, there are so many opportunities for American businesses to grow their customer base abroad. Indeed, I look forward to contributing to this growth,

particularly by increasing support for small businesses, but also by ensuring that businesses of all sizes are able to compete fairly in the global marketplace. There are 95 other export credit agencies in the world today, getting the Export-Import Bank of the United States fully up and running is imperative to helping American manufacturers grow their exports.

As an accomplished professional with 25 years of international experience in the private sector, coupled with six and a half years of government service at the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), I believe I would bring to EXIM Bank, a unique set of work and life experiences.

I spent most of my career working for American businesses with an international presence – from Asia to Africa, the Middle East, and western Europe, whether international start-ups, Fortune 100s, or small businesses – my private sector work has focused on the high-tech, broadcast, telecom and satellite communications industries. With decades of experience in corporate communications, marketing and sales, branding, messaging, and business development, I have been a trusted tone setter and caretaker of an organization’s public reputation.

Most of my private sector work took me to many overseas locations – mostly emerging markets that were new to me. At WorldSpace and other companies where I worked, I was fortunate to have local staff in country, and on whom I could rely to help navigate the activities and undertakings required of me. I remember how daunting it seemed. A new place, with different customs, languages, rules and regulations. This is a reality for many U.S. small businesses wishing to export into foreign markets. They are trying to figure out what they need to know, and do, to get their product from Point A to Point B. I recognize how difficult this can be.

Most recently, I was proud to serve during the Obama Administration, at the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, as Vice President of External Affairs and as a member of OPIC’s Leadership Team. This experience ingrained in me a sense of duty to ensure taxpayer dollars are protected and government programs are managed with integrity and efficiency. My department wore multiple hats, including responsibility for the Agency’s relationship with Congress, the media, and the general public. We built and launched a more customer-friendly interactive website, and greatly expanded engagement and information exchange with Congress and OPIC’s customers. I also held a seat on the Investment Committee weighing in on all project commitments over \$20 million, and was responsible for overseeing outreach to the U.S. small business community. This role made me realize that we should be doing so much more to support America’s small businesses. Here and everywhere, they are the engine of economic growth.

In fact, during my time at OPIC, my department expanded outreach efforts to the small business community by doubling the number of educational workshops hosted throughout the United States. To date, these workshops have educated over 4,000 small businesses – including minority and women-owned – about the services available to them through OPIC and other

Federal government agencies including the U.S. Export-Import Bank, U.S. Trade and Development Agency, and the Small Business Administration.

Last year alone, our Export-Import Bank supported over 2,600 small businesses, and has an 80-year track record of supporting U.S. jobs and growing exports by helping manufacturers of all sizes. EXIM can help take the fear out of exporting for smaller companies and it can ensure a level playing field, so all American manufacturers are able to compete fairly in the global marketplace.

If I am confirmed to the Board of Directors, I strongly believe my experience and background, paired with the new initiatives enacted by Congress in the 2015 Charter, will help to modernize the bank, and keep its mission current and relevant in today's changing times. I look forward to working with the employees at the Bank on many items, always with one objective in mind: to support and sustain American jobs through exports. If confirmed, I will also remain vigilant in protecting taxpayer dollars. To this end, I look forward to working with my fellow board nominees, the nominee for Inspector General, and the entirety of EXIM's management and staff.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Brown, Members of the Committee, thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today as I respectfully ask for your support to serve on the Board of Directors of the Export-Import Bank of the United States. If confirmed, I also look forward to working with you and the business community in your states and throughout the country, to help raise additional awareness of EXIM's financing products for small businesses and community banks.

Thank you and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.