

Claudia Slacik
Opening Statement

Nominee to Serve as a Member of the Board of Directors of the Export-Import Bank of the United States
United States Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee
November 1, 2017

Chairman Crapo, Ranking Member Brown, and distinguished members of this Committee, it is an honor to appear before you today. I am grateful to be nominated by the President to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Export-Import Bank, and if confirmed, I would be honored to serve and do all I can in this capacity to support jobs for my fellow citizens.

Let me start by thanking the members of this committee who I had the pleasure of meeting before today's hearing. I appreciated all the comments you had about the Bank. For those of you whom I did not yet meet, I look forward to having similar conversations with you if confirmed. Similarly, if confirmed, I look forward to working with all of you and your staffs on any issues you have related to the Bank.

Before presenting my background, let me first introduce you to the members of my family who are here today. First, my spouse Susan Davis, who was born and raised in Louisiana and who has dedicated most of her professional life in service to impoverished people in the neediest parts of the world.

And second, my brother, Kurt Slacik who was born in New York State and who is now a senior executive at a steel mill in Pennsylvania.

As for myself, I was born in upstate New York and grew up there as well as in New Jersey, Illinois, Connecticut, California and Massachusetts. I also spent five years in Brussels, Belgium where my father was a senior executive for a major US company. I am a product of both public and parochial schools. I received my undergraduate degree from Smith College and my MBA from New York University. While my parents are both deceased, I have four siblings and five smart and beautiful nieces. My paternal grandparents immigrated to the United States from Czechoslovakia just before the First World War and set up a small meat packing business in upstate New York. My maternal grandfather was a coal miner in Scranton Pennsylvania.

I have spent the last 35 years in the US financial services industry mostly as a commercial lender to corporations and an international trade finance specialist. I also have experience in corporate restructurings, risk management, and general management. I have served on the boards of several companies, both public and private, with a specialty serving on their Audit Committees, in addition to service on several nonprofit boards.

My most recent professional position was as the Chief Banking Officer at the Export-Import Bank from 2013 through 2016. I learned first hand of the importance of the Bank to American exporters and the workers they employ. By leveling the playing field for large businesses and assuming risk for smaller companies, EXIM enables American businesses to successfully compete on the global stage where foreign governments do the same for their national companies. The Bank thereby accomplishes its ultimate mission of helping our businesses grow and supporting jobs in the United States - jobs that pay nearly 20% more than other jobs of a comparable nature involving products and services consumed here at home.

During my tenure as the Bank's Chief Banking Officer, the staff and I analyzed billions of dollars of transactions for small, medium and large companies which supported hundreds of thousands of jobs. My responsibilities included expanding the public's awareness of the Bank, and overseeing the due diligence and underwriting of all transactions greater than \$10 million before they were presented to the Board. I also ensured that the

Board, which has the ultimate authority to approve transactions larger than \$10 million, understood the structures and risks of the transactions brought before them so they could determine reasonable assurance of repayment. My close working relationship with the Board also allowed me to gain a keen appreciation for the role of the Board and the responsibilities of Board members.

I think my extensive experience as a commercial lender would serve me well as a Board member. During those years, I acquired skills in credit and risk analysis, as well as how the international credit markets operate. I also obtained a keen understanding of reputation and character risk. Needless to say, these skills are critical for members to possess in order to keep the bank's loan losses and default rate to a minimum while at the same time helping businesses and workers as much as possible.

If confirmed as a member of the Board of Directors of the Export-Import Bank, I pledge to vigorously carry out the mission of the Bank. I further pledge to diligently work with all members of this committee to address their concerns and keep them informed of the Bank's activities.

Mr. Chairman, Senator Brown and Members of the Committee, thank you for your time and consideration of my nomination. I look forward to answering any questions you may have.