

Statement of William W. Hague
Nominee for the Position of Assistant Secretary for Insular and International Affairs
at the U.S. Department of the Interior
Before the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
June 23, 2026

Good morning, Chairman Lee, Ranking Member Heinrich, and Members of this Committee. I want to begin with an expression of gratitude to all of you for your leadership on this Committee. It is my honor to appear before you today as the nominee for Assistant Secretary for Insular and International Affairs.

I am grateful to President Trump and Secretary Burgum for this opportunity to serve our great nation.

I also want to offer a special word of thanks to my parents and my family, who have long supported me and made sacrifices over the years to make it possible for me to be here today. This includes my father and mother, Jim and Mary Hague; my wife, Vicki, whom I first met 52 years ago; my three children and three grandchildren.

I grew up in the Midwest, in Ohio and Michigan, before settling on the West Coast in Washington state. From my youth, I have had an interest in experiencing diverse cultures. I studied German and French in school. I lived abroad for a year in France. I joined the Peace Corps at age 22, living in Togo, West Africa for three years. Internationally, I have worked in or visited more than 75 countries. I spent much of my business career managing international matters.

During my service as a Peace Corps volunteer in Togo, I witnessed the challenges facing developing communities and the delicate balance between culture and economic growth. To this day, I am still passionate about serving developing areas. For example, I have raised funds for dozens of school construction projects, and I currently sponsor the education for 22 young African women.

I am a veteran of the international telecommunications industry. I hope to bring the full breadth of my professional background to this role should I be confirmed.

I began my career as a clerk in the U.S. Federal District Court and later as a partner at the Stokes and Lawrence law firm. From there, I entered the telecommunications industry, where I was one of the early founders of Western Wireless, a rural wireless startup. I eventually became Executive Vice President of AT&T's Global Access, which managed AT&T's connectivity around the globe.

From 2018 to 2025, I served as CEO and Vice-Chair of Tillman Infrastructure, LLC (“TI”), one of the country’s most prolific tower construction companies. Through my career at companies large and small, I learned valuable lessons in financial management, effective and efficient organization, the importance of strong interpersonal relationships, and the need for teamwork across distinct groups. I know that unleashing free market principles in the Insular Areas is the key to growing their prosperity.

The Assistant Secretary for Insular and International Affairs plays a vital role in assisting our partners and fellow Americans in the Pacific and Caribbean as they face the unique challenges of distance and island geographies. If given the opportunity to serve as Assistant Secretary, my goal would be to strengthen these relationships while growing the wealth and security of these communities.

Mr. Chairman, our relationships with the Insular Areas are more important today than ever. DOI is instrumental in protecting our territories and FAS allies from malign influence and in securing U.S. strategic interests. From addressing economic challenges to promoting democratic resilience, DOI works to ensure that U.S. investments improve the livelihoods of our island communities for generations to come. In an era of realigning U.S. foreign policy interests, this role plays a strategic part in advancing the mission of the Administration and protecting American interests abroad.

Should I be confirmed, I will work to remove the barriers to economic prosperity in our island communities, protect U.S. national security, and ensure that American taxpayer dollars are spent in a fiscally responsible manner. It will be my priority to increase financial accountability, expand economic opportunity and private-sector development, and improve energy affordability. It would be my honor and privilege to serve in a role devoted to promoting prosperity and peace at home and abroad.

I look forward to advancing the priorities of the Trump Administration, should I be confirmed. Thank you and I look forward to your questions.