

**Ambassador Mull's Remarks at the Polish Market Gala
in honor of Ambassador Jerzy Koźmiński
November 7, 2014**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great honor to present the Polish Market's "Honorary Pearl" for patriotic values to Ambassador Jerzy Koźmiński.

Ambassador Koźmiński is one of modern Poland's great statesmen and a true friend of the United States.

I first met Jerzy more than 20 years ago in 1993 as a new Political Counselor here at the American Embassy in Warsaw when he worked in the office of the Council of Ministers. Someone told me, "if you want to know what's really going on in Poland, go talk to Jerzy. He knows everything, and everybody." And sure enough it was true. I spent a riveting hour that day with Jerzy, and when I finished the meeting, for the first time, I felt like I knew what was really going on in the newly democratic Poland. These days it is fashionable to talk about the importance of public diplomacy as an important component of international relations. But as Poland's Ambassador to the United States from 1994 to 2000, Jerzy set the standard that every diplomat should try to meet. His creative and imaginative work in building support for Polish membership in NATO – in state capitals, Congressional delegations, and work with key leaders and journalists in the United States – played a phenomenal role in changing broad American skepticism about NATO enlargement into enthusiastic support. And someone who has seen firsthand the benefits to the United States from Poland's membership in NATO, I, and my colleagues in the U.S. government are grateful for Jerzy's decisive leadership on the question.

In his later work as head of the Polish-American Freedom Foundation, Ambassador Koźmiński has continued to enhance Poland's unique ties with the United States, pioneering such important programs as internships for Polish graduates in American businesses, extraordinary English teaching efforts, support for young leaders from newly-democratizing countries, and the transformation of Poland's rural libraries into important community centers for all ages.

Whatever his job, for the past 25 years, Jerzy has been at the center of every important element of relations between the United States and Poland. He guided new investment into Poland just after 1989 – assuaging and erasing significant doubts about the future of this extraordinary country. Whenever we have had occasionally difficult moments in our relationship, he was centrally involved in finding a solution to put our relations back on track. He has built an unprecedented network of personal connections between our two countries in the spheres of business, the military, diplomacy, academia, and philanthropy, resulting in the unshakeable links that bind our countries together. He has promoted a strategic alliance that grows stronger and more important every year against our common enemies and in defense of our common interests. But more than that, he has built a friendship between our two nations that grows stronger with every passing year. Thanks to all that Jerzy has

achieved, I get to enjoy what has to be one of the best jobs in the world: serving as America's Ambassador to Poland.

So, Ladies and Gentlemen, I could not agree more with Polish Market's decision to recognize Ambassador Jerzy Koźmiński for his remarkable lifetime of achievement in service to Poland, and its special relationship with the United States. Please join me in welcoming Ambassador Koźmiński to the stage.