



# Committee On Finance

Max Baucus, Chairman

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Contacts: Michael Siegel, Joshua LeVasseur  
202-224-4515

**Statement of Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus  
Hearing On Nominations  
July 31, 2001**

Today, we will consider 5 more of the President's nominees to crucial positions at the Department of the Treasury, Customs Service, U.S. Trade Representative, and Department of Health and Human Services.

The President has nominated:

Ms. Rosario Marin of Huntington Park, California to be our next Treasurer;

Mr. Robert Bonner of Pasadena, California to the next Commissioner of the Customs Service;

Mr. Jon Huntsman, Jr. of Salt Lake City, Utah to be Deputy U.S. Trade Representative with the rank of Ambassador;

Mr. Alex Azar II, of Chevy Chase, Maryland, as General Counsel for the Department of Health and Human Services and;

Ms. Janet Rehnquist of Alexandria, Virginia, as Inspector General of the Department of Health and Human Services.

I want to congratulate each of you on your selection and welcome you, your families and friends to the Finance Committee. The nominees before us today are an impressive group of individuals who – in addition to their willingness to become public servants – have an interesting array of experiences and skills that will serve them well as they undertake these new assignments.

Ms. Marin is President Bush's nominee for the position of United States Treasurer. As Treasurer she will supervise the United States Mint, the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, and the Savings Bond Marketing Office. Ms. Marin brings a strong background in banking and community relations to this position. She also has an impressive history of leadership in civic

activities. For example, in 1986 she founded FUERZA Inc., an organization dedicated the concerns of developmentally disabled Spanish speakers. She has also served as the Commissioner for the California Film Commission and Director of the Special Olympics.

On a historical note, Ms. Marin will become the 42nd Treasurer and will lead the only office within the Treasury Department older than the Department itself. We have checked with the Congressional Research Service, and they are fairly certain that Ms. Marin, who was born in Mexico City, will also be the first Treasurer born outside the United States.

Mr. Bonner is President Bush's nominee to be the next Customs Commissioner. As Commissioner, he will oversee an agency with over 19,000 employees and have responsibility for annually collecting \$20 billion in revenues.

Mr. Bonner is an seasoned trial attorney and brings a wealth of experience in law enforcement to this position. He has exceptional management and leadership skills. He previously served as Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration. He has been a U.S. District Court Judge, an U.S. Attorney, and a Navy lawyer.

Jon Huntsman is the President's nominee to be Deputy United States Trade Representative. In that position, Mr. Huntsman will be primarily responsible for East Asian affairs. Mr. Huntsman has extensive knowledge of Asia, having served as a Mormon missionary in Taiwan in the early 1980s, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce for East Asian Affairs in the early 1990s, and Ambassador to Singapore from 1992 to 1993. Mr. Huntsman also brings to this post his experience as a businessman.

The policy challenges Mr. Huntsman will face are many. His portfolio will include China's accession to the WTO, our ongoing efforts to improve market access in Korea and Japan, and negotiation of a free trade agreement with Singapore.

Mr. Alex Azar is Present Bush's nominee for General Counsel at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The General Counsel advises the Secretary on legal issues involving welfare and health care reform, tobacco regulation, fetal tissue research and nursing home quality care and Medicare and Medicaid issues.

Mr. Azar brings to the position a strong litigation background. While his experience is indeed impressive, and there is little doubt that he would make a strong addition to government in general, I am concerned about his experience for the position HHS General Counsel. Mr. Azar, by his own admission, has a "significant learning curve" at HHS. I am concerned that he has little direct experience in health care law. I am, therefore, going to ask Mr. Azar to share with us any experience he has related to issues confronting HHS. While it is clear that Mr. Azar is capable of ascending learning curves very quickly, we also hope he will discuss how he plans to do so, and ensure that this position of tremendous responsibility is carried out as capably as our nation deserves.

Ms. Janet Rehnquist is President Bush's nominee for Inspector General at the Department of Health and Human Services. Like that of General Counsel, this is a position of enormous responsibility. Ms. Rehnquist brings to this position 16 years of legal practice including at least 8 years related to health care law. Currently she serves as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Eastern District of Virginia.

The Office of Inspector General is responsible for oversight of HHS generally, conducting fraud investigations and audits to identify systemic waste, abuse, and inefficiencies. Because HHS budget totals more than \$429 billion, this IG is necessarily one of the most important in the Federal government. The IG office comprises over 1,000 auditors and investigators and support staff spread out across the country. Management skills are an essential. It is worth noting that previous HHS IGs generally have had prior experience at other IG positions, or have been acknowledged national experts in government waste, fraud and abuse.

I remember touring Montana with former HHS IG June Gibbs Brown in 1996. She had previously served as the IG of the Social Security Administration, the Navy's Pacific Fleet, the Department of Defense, NASA and the Department of Interior. Ms. Brown had a gentle glove, but was tough as nails. She also knew everything here was to know about how to beat fraud and abuse.

Given this Committee's interest in ensuring the government monies are appropriately spent, and that programs are operating effectively, we expect the HHS to have an aggressive Inspector General. I hope that Ms. Rehnquist will share her experience and concrete plans for attacking the problems confronting HHS and its 300+ programs.

We look forward this morning to learning more about our nominees and to move forward in this process. There is much work to be done, and we intend to work closely with you to achieve results for the American people.

Once again, congratulations to you all on your nominations.