

Crapo Statement at HHS Secretary Nomination Hearing
January 29, 2025

Washington, D.C.—U.S. Senate Finance Committee Chairman Mike Crapo (R-Idaho) delivered the following remarks at a hearing to consider the nomination of Robert F. Kennedy Jr. to be Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

As prepared for delivery:

“Thank you to my colleagues and to Mr. Kennedy for being here today. Congratulations on your nomination.

“Throughout this process, Mr. Kennedy, you have been accessible to members and staff on both sides of the aisle and have demonstrated a strong commitment to fulfilling the responsibilities of this role.

“The Department of Health and Human Services oversees our nation’s largest health care programs, providing coverage for nearly two in every five Americans.

“Improving Medicare, Medicaid and CHIP, among other initiatives, presents challenges, especially in the face of a rapidly aging population, stubbornly high costs and persistent barriers to access.

“However, this also provides us an opportunity to deliver bold, transformative solutions.

“As a Committee, we share a commitment to advancing commonsense, bipartisan policies that improve the delivery of health care in this country.

“This Committee has worked to realign incentives in the prescription drug supply chain, enhance access in rural communities, expand the availability of telehealth and improve the broken clinician payment structure.

“Across these and other issues, I look forward to working with the Administration to continue pursuing meaningful reforms that serve the American people more effectively and efficiently.

“Too often, patients encounter a health care system that is a disjointed, dysfunctional maze. Complex and bureaucratic chutes and ladders have become the norm.

“Meanwhile, even as health care spending climbs, outcomes across a range of conditions continue to decline.

“Mr. Kennedy, if confirmed, you will have the opportunity to chart a new and better course for the federal approach to tackling both the drivers and the consequences of our ailing health care system.

“Your commitment to combatting chronic conditions that drive health care costs will be critical to our success.

“Prioritizing disease prevention and addressing the factors that fuel conditions such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, metabolic disease, Alzheimer’s disease, COPD and cancer will save lives, reduce costs and build a healthier, stronger country.

“Private-sector breakthroughs, from groundbreaking cancer medications to curative gene therapies, offer hope. But misguided government initiatives and market volatility risk eroding American leadership in lifesaving R&D.

“Your advocacy for health care transparency has the potential to empower consumers across the country, promoting competition to enhance quality while cutting excessive spending, both for patients and for taxpayers.

“Today’s hearing will provide a forum to hear more about your vision, particularly for the federal programs under this Committee’s jurisdiction.

“Mr. Kennedy, you represent a voice for an inspiring coalition of Americans who are deeply committed to improving the health and well-being of our nation.

“Regardless of political party, everyone in this room shares a common recognition that our current system has fallen short—as well as a common desire to make our country healthier.

“I look forward to today’s conversation, as well as to your testimony, Mr. Kennedy.”