

## **Crapo Statement at Executive Session to Vote on HHS Nominees**

*March 1, 2022*

**Washington, D.C.**—U.S. Senator Mike Crapo (R-Idaho), Ranking Member of the U.S. Senate Finance Committee, delivered the following remarks at an executive session to vote on the nominations of Robert Gordon, for Assistant Secretary for Financial Resources; January Contreras, for Assistant Secretary for Children and Families; and Rebecca Jones Gaston, for Commissioner for the Administration on Children, Youth, and Families.

*The text of Ranking Member Crapo's remarks is below.*

“Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

“Today, the Finance Committee will vote on three nominees to serve in vital roles at the Department of Health and Human Services.

“As Assistant Secretary for Financial Resources, Mr. Gordon would act as the chief financial officer for HHS. With eleven operating divisions, HHS is an expansive department. Scrutinizing its use of resources would far exceed the abilities of any one individual, or even office.

“Partnership with Congress is vital to ensuring that HHS effectively, appropriately, and lawfully leverages and oversees the trillions of taxpayer dollars in its budget. As we look to return to normalcy in the wake of the pandemic, Congress will need clear and consistent communication from the agency on the duration of the COVID-19 public health emergency, as well as the Department's plans for ensuring certainty, stability, and predictability for health care providers and patients across the nation.

“Good stewardship of taxpayer resources will also necessitate a thorough and comprehensive accounting of how funds and authorities tied to the emergency have been used. A fair accounting along these lines will require assessing the tremendous costs imposed by pandemic restrictions and mandates, as well as the provision of grants and loans. I appreciate Mr. Gordon's commitment to respond to all relevant inquiries from Members of Congress, which he made both during his hearing and in response to questions submitted for the record.

“Regarding the other nominations before us today, Ms. Contreras and Ms. Jones Gaston would, if confirmed, oversee critical programs that protect and support families and children. I appreciate the outreach and commitments both nominees have made, in the hearing, to staff, and in response to questions for the record, to ensure foster youth have all appropriate and safe options available to them, including faith-based placements. In a number of states, faith-based providers play a leading role in providing these services and ensuring adequate capacity.

“Last month, we held a hearing on mental health, focusing on the health of children and youth. The hearing demonstrated interest that both Republicans and Democrats have in promoting health and well-being of the most vulnerable.

“If confirmed, I look forward to working with them to improve health care outcomes and provide an effective safety net for vulnerable children and at-risk youth.”