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Hatch Statement at Finance Nominations Hearing

WASHINGTON – Senate Finance Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) today delivered the following opening statement at a hearing to consider a number of pending Department of Treasury and Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) nominations:

Today we will consider the nominations of Eric Hargan to serve as Deputy Secretary of Health and Human Services; David Malpass to serve as Under Secretary for International Affairs of the Treasury; Andrew Maloney to serve in a position to be designated as Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs of the Treasury; and Brent McIntosh to serve as General Counsel for the Treasury.

Welcome, all of you, to the Finance Committee.

We appreciate your willingness to serve in these important positions.

Before I get too far along, I want to thank all of my fellow Senators for their support and presence today. As we all know, the government is like a giant clock with many important pieces, gears, and cogs. Today we are taking an important step toward adding several more important pieces to keep that clock functioning as it should.

It is also good to see that, despite some frustrations over the past few months, we have been able to return to normal working order for processing nominees. As we all know, that process includes bipartisan input, comity, good faith, and a fair and robust vetting process. I would like to thank my colleagues, particularly Senator Wyden, for working to move this process along.

Each of these nominees will have important roles in the administration, and we'll talk more about the individual posts and our nominees' excellent credentials and experience as the hearing goes on.

But, before we get to that, I want to be very clear about my expectations regarding

responsiveness to congressional inquiries.

Regardless of party affiliation, it is essential that the administration make it a top priority to respond to inquiries from members of Congress.

Let me say this a bit differently to make sure I'm clear: It does not matter who the President is, nor does it matter which Member of Congress is making the request. When an inquiry is submitted to any administrative agency, we rightly expect to receive a timely and responsive answer in return.

In the years that I have been the lead Republican on this committee, I have asked virtually all of our nominees to commit to being cooperative and responsive to congressional inquiries. I have full confidence in each of the nominees that are before us today. I don't have any reason to believe that they intend to stonewall members of Congress. But, I will ask all of them to make a similar pledge to provide timely and responsive answers to questions coming from members of this committee.

With that, I look forward to hearing from each our nominees as they share their visions and views here today. I also look forward to what I hope will continue to be a full and fair committee process that allows us to process these nominations and report them to the full Senate in short order.

I'll now recognize Senator Wyden for his opening statement.

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