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## **Hatch Opening Statement at Trade, Tax Nominations Hearing**

**WASHINGTON** – Senate Finance Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) today delivered the following opening statement at a hearing to consider pending trade and tax nominations:

*Today, we will have an opportunity to hear from nominees for three trade policy positions, and two nominees to be tax judges.*

*Each of these positions are key in enforcing the work and legislation we produce from this committee.*

*Our first nominee is Mr. Jeffery Kessler, who has been nominated to serve as Assistant Secretary for Enforcement and Compliance at the Department of Commerce.*

*This is a position that is responsible for administering Anti-Dumping and Countervailing Duty trade laws, and ensures compliance with trade agreements negotiated on behalf of U.S. industries. If confirmed, Mr. Kessler will need to fully and faithfully administer U.S. trade remedy laws.*

*As I have said before, it is important that the Department of Commerce consult closely with Congress and members of this Committee.*

*And, frankly, there is room for improvement in that department.*

*I expect Mr. Kessler to be an asset in improving that relationship.*

*Today we also have two tax judges, Ms. Elizabeth Ann Copeland, and Mr. Patrick J. Urda.*

*The Tax Court is important for many reasons, not the least of which is that it allows taxpayers to challenge a liability before paying it.*

*It is a venue for everyone, from large corporations to individual taxpayers, to get a fair and impartial hearing when a disagreement arises with the Internal Revenue Service.*

*We are honored today to be joined by Chief Judge Maurice Foley, Judge Tamara Ashford, Judge John Colvin, Judge Albert Lauber, Judge Cary Pugh, and Special Trial Judge Diana Leyden.*

*Thank you all for attending today.*

*Just last year, we signed into law the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. As the largest reform of the tax code in more than three decades, we recognize there will potentially be some large questions for the Tax Court.*

*More than ever, we need brilliant minds to do this important work.*

*Given their credentials, I trust that Ms. Copeland and Mr. Urda will be just what our country needs for the Tax Court to continue to give taxpayers a fair hearing as the TCJA is implemented.*

*Finally, we also have before us two nominees to the International Trade Commission, Ms. Amy Karpel, and Mr. Randy Stayin.*

*Ms. Karpel and Mr. Stayin, as nominees to be commissioners of the International Trade Commission, you will play an important role in administering our trade remedy laws, and providing Congress and the administration with unbiased, independent analysis.*

*This work is becoming more important than ever, as trade has become an increasingly larger part of our economy, and businesses of all sizes rely on imports and exports.*

*I expect that each of you will continue the good work of the ITC in administering our trade remedy laws in a fair and unbiased manner.*

*I want to thank all five of you for your dedication to our country and your willingness to serve.*

*As I've looked through each of your respective resumes, it's clear that the president has selected individuals that are well-qualified to serve in these important posts.*

*And I hope to see each of you working to improve our country as soon as practicable.*

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