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Hatch Statement at Finance Committee Hearing on the Nomination of David J. Kautter to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury

WASHINGTON – Senate Finance Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) today delivered the following opening statement at a hearing entitled, “Consideration to Nominate David J. Kautter, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury”:

I'd like to welcome everyone to this morning's hearing.

Today, we will consider the nomination of Mr. David J. Kautter to serve as an Assistant Secretary of Treasury for Tax Policy.

Mr. Kautter, welcome to the Finance Committee. We appreciate your willingness to appear before us today. We also appreciate your willingness to serve in this capacity.

I am sure that the significance of this position at this crucial time is not lost on you. I know it's not lost on any member of this committee. Tax reform has been a major focus of our committee for some time now and we are grateful to have you here to discuss your thoughts on these matters.

On a number of occasions, I've stated my view that presidential leadership will be a key component to any successful tax reform effort.

Just the last week I quoted President Obama in a speech on the Senate floor. Back in 2012, he said things like “our current corporate tax system is outdated, unfair, and inefficient.” The problem was that President Obama never really got around to truly leading out on tax reform.

I expect more from President Trump on tax reform. That expectation comes, in large part, because he and Secretary Mnuchin have been talking about it so much. But, more than that, they have engaged with Congress and the public on these issues.

Mr. Kautter, I believe that your nomination is another way this President has further demonstrated his commitment to reforming our burdensome, job-killing tax code. Your experience as a practitioner tax expert will surely be a crucial part of this endeavor.

Now, before I finish up with my remarks, I also want to address another important issue, one that I try to stress with all nominees that come before the committee.

Whether we're talking about tax reform or the administration of existing tax policy, it is critically important that we have open lines of communication between both parties in Congress and the Executive Branch. My hope today is that you'll commit to providing timely and responsive answers to inquiries submitted by members, especially if they sit on this committee.

That is the expectation and, quite frankly, anything short of that is unacceptable.

With that, I want to thank you once again for being here today. I'll now turn to Senator Wyden for his opening comments.

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