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## Hatch Opening Statement at Executive Session to Consider Commerce, HHS Nominees

**WASHINGTON** – Senate Finance Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) today delivered the following opening statement at an executive session to mark up the nominations of Gilbert B. Kaplan to be Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade, Matthew Bassett to be an Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services and Robert Charrow to serve as General Counsel of Health and Human Services:

*Today, the committee will consider and hopefully report three nominees: Gilbert B. Kaplan, to be Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade; Matthew Bassett, to be an Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services, and Robert Charrow to be General Counsel of the Department of Health and Human Services.*

*This committee last met with each of these nominees just before the Senate broke for recess. I think they each provided meaningful and candid responses that demonstrate the seriousness and even-temperedness that will be required in each of the positions for which they have been nominated.*

*We will start today by considering Mr. Kaplan, who's prior government experience and private sector know-how make him an ideal candidate for the position at the Department of Commerce. As we all know, there is a lot going on over there, and I think the administration can use the help of a knowledgeable and capable leader like Mr. Kaplan.*

*Second on our list is Mr. Bassett. As we heard from our good friend and fellow Sen. Boozman, Mr. Bassett is highly qualified for the position within HHS at this crucial time. I think he will make a significant impact once he's confirmed.*

*Finally, we will consider Mr. Charrow, who has considerable government experience dating back to his time as a Principal Deputy General Counsel at HHS during the Reagan*

*administration. The role of General Counsel at HHS is trusted with interpreting the law as written, and I feel confident that Mr. Charrow will do just that.*

*I am grateful for the bipartisan work we have done to move each of these nominees through the committee process up until this point. These appointments are especially important at this time as we work to deal with the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey and as we prepare for and respond to other potential crises in the near future. And I look forward to reporting each of these nominations to the full Senate where, with any luck, they will be confirmed in short order.*

*I believe each of these nominees has broad support among both parties on the committee. That being the case, I'm hoping we can move through this process expeditiously.*

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