

UNITED STATES SENATE
COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

U.S. SENATOR ORRIN HATCH (R-UT), CHAIRMAN

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CONTACT: [Nicole Hager](#)

202-224-4515

Hatch Opening Statement at the Markup of SSA and PBGC Nominees

WASHINGTON – Senate Finance Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) today delivered the following opening statement at a markup of the nominations of Andrew Saul to be Commissioner of the Social Security Administration, Gordon Hartogensis to be Director of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC) and Gail Ennis to be Social Security Administration (SSA) Inspector General:

This morning we are meeting to discuss the nominations of Andrew Saul, to be commissioner of the Social Security Administration, Gordon Hartogensis, to be director of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation and Gail Ennis, to be Inspector General of the Social Security Administration.

If confirmed, Mr. Saul would become the first confirmed commissioner at the Social Security Administration since 2013. I believe that having a confirmed Commissioner is a welcome step towards addressing many of the operational challenges the agency is facing. Should he be confirmed, Mr. Saul's sustained leadership will benefit the Administration, its operations, its employees and the American people.

The commissioner oversees one of the nation's largest and most important domestic programs, and with decades of experience in both financial decision-making and successfully managing customer-service focused organizations with large field office structures, I have no doubt Mr. Saul's strong leadership will serve the Administration and all Americans who rely on its services well.

Before moving on to our next nominee, let me briefly address the fact that the President has nominated Mr. Saul to serve the remainder of the six-year term that expires January 19, 2019, and also to serve the following six-year term that expires January 19, 2025.

To be clear, during today's executive session, we will be voting on the first nomination to serve the remainder of the six-year term that expires January 19, 2019, and will not vote on the second nomination, which involves service for the following six-year term that expires January 19, 2025.

This does not, in any way, reflect poorly on Mr. Saul, however we do not want to set a precedent of voting for nominations that are under the next Congress's jurisdiction. I fully

expect that action on the second nomination will occur promptly at the beginning of the next Congress.

We will also vote on Mr. Gordon Hartogensis today. If confirmed, Mr. Hartogensis will serve as director of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation. His nomination comes during a precarious time for the PBGC, as multiemployer pension plans, like other retirement savings programs, have faced a number of challenges in recent years.

In his role, Mr. Hartogensis would lead the organization, as well as assist Congress and other executive agencies in evaluating possible policy changes to the multiemployer system. This is just an overview of a rather complex job, one with serious and critical duties. But I believe he is up to the task and possesses the analytical skills necessary to evaluate complex pension systems.

As mentioned, we also have another important nomination for the Social Security Administration before us today. Ms. Ennis has built an impressive career over the years with deep experience in managing large teams, building reporting structures, and investigating allegations of fraud.

If confirmed, Ms. Ennis will serve as Inspector General for the Social Security Administration. The knowledge and expertise she has gained over her career will aid her in fulfilling her obligation to ensure that the agency runs efficiently and effectively, while also remaining independent in her duties to prevent and detect instances of fraud, waste and abuse. I am confident in her qualifications for this position, and know she will be committed to working diligently with the administration and the committee.

Together, these nominations represent examples of highly-qualified candidates being nominated to key positions within the executive branch. Confirming these nominees will help us to fulfill the promises we have made to the American people.

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