

HHS, Treasury, USTR Noms Markup -- Weds, Nov. 17th, 2021

As Prepared for Delivery

The Finance Committee meets this morning to vote on six nominations for important roles in three federal agencies. I'll have brief remarks on each before I turn it over to Senator Crapo and any other members who wish to speak.

María Pagán is President Biden's nominee to serve as a Deputy U.S. Trade Representative and our envoy to the WTO in Geneva. She currently serves as USTR's Deputy General Counsel, and she's also been a WTO litigator for the U.S. She's an ideal nominee and she knows exactly what it takes to get the best possible outcomes in high-stakes trade negotiations for American workers and businesses.

Chris Wilson is President Biden's nominee to serve as USTR's Chief Innovation and Intellectual Property Negotiator. This position was created by the Finance Committee in a bill called the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015, and today marks the first time the committee will vote on a nominee for this role.

This is about ensuring that our trade policies reflect our modern, high-tech economy, and balance the interests of IP owners, innovators, tech users and the public at large. Mr. Wilson's decades of service in a variety of roles at USTR make him a highly qualified nominee for this new position.

Joshua Frost is President Biden's nominee to serve as Assistant Treasury Secretary for Financial Markets. He brings to his nomination 20 years of experience at the Federal Reserve, during which he's worked on the responses to economic crashes and unemployment spikes. He's nominated to a role that's all about protecting the integrity and stability of our economy and our financial system, which makes his experience highly valuable.

Dr. Brent Neiman is President Biden's nominee to serve as Deputy Under Secretary of the Treasury for International Finance & Development. One of the issues he'll work on when he's confirmed is fixing global supply chains that are still tangled and bottlenecked as a result of the pandemic. This is one of the most urgent economic issues out there today, and it affects just about every American household right up to the largest businesses in the country. That means there's no time for the Senate to waste on moving this nomination forward.

Sam Bagenstos is President Biden's nominee to serve as General Counsel to the Department of Health and Human Services. Mr. Bagenstos is a highly accomplished lawyer and public servant. He's argued cases before the Supreme Court dealing with protections for workers and Americans with disabilities. He's served as Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights. He is currently the General Counsel to the Office of Management and Budget. He's highly qualified to serve as HHS General Counsel and he'll be a valuable member of Secretary Becerra's team.

Finally, Christi Grimm is the president's nominee to serve as the Inspector General for the Department of Health and Human Services. There's no questioning her qualifications for this role. She's served within the Office of the Inspector General for more than two decades. Currently she serves as Principal Deputy Inspector General, and she's been performing the role of the IG for more than a year. This committee takes its oversight role very seriously and believes in good government, so we look forward to working with Ms. Grimm in the months and years ahead.

All six of these nominees are highly qualified and highly experienced. I'm happy to support all of them today, and I urge my colleagues on both sides to do the same.

Senator Crapo.