



U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON

Finance

SENATOR CHUCK GRASSLEY, OF IOWA - CHAIRMAN

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Opening Statement of Sen. Chuck Grassley
Hearing on the Nomination of the IRS Commissioner
Tuesday, March 18, 2003

We meet today to consider the nomination of Mr. Mark Everson to be commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Mr. Everson currently serves as the deputy director for management at the Office of Management and Budget. His career has been one of significant business experience together with several years of public service. I would note that he started his career as an auditor.

We now consider him for commissioner of the IRS. The commissioner is an important job that directly touches every single taxpayer in this nation.

Mr. Everson benefits from following Mr. Charles Rossotti, who served ably as commissioner of the IRS. However, while Mr. Rossotti was an effective commissioner, it is clear that it unfortunately will take years to get the IRS to where it provides first-rate customer service as well as an appropriate enforcement presence that respects taxpayer rights. The baton has been passed to you, Mr. Everson, in what is a long run. I don't know if we'll finish during your five years as commissioner, but it's on you to ensure that we are much further down the road at the end of the day.

Let me be clear, the Finance Committee expects progress in modernization, customer service and enforcement while protecting taxpayer rights. We'll work with you to smooth the path before you. However, you can be certain that we won't be shy about letting you know about problems we see at the IRS, and we'll expect you to be responsive to the concerns of the Finance Committee. That said, I commend you for wanting to serve your country in this challenging job.