

Opening Statement

Sherry Glied

Nominee to be Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Senate Committee on Finance

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Thank you Mr. Chairman, Senator Grassley, and members of the Committee. My name is Sherry Glied and I have been nominated by the President to be Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE) at the Department of Health and Human Services. I am pleased to appear before you today.

I would like to begin by introducing the members of my family who are here today: my husband, Richard Briffault, and our children, Olivia and Jonathan.

For the past 20 years, I have worked as a health care economist, studying the functioning of the United States health care system, and particularly its impact on vulnerable populations. I am currently a Professor of Health Policy and Management at Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health, and, for 11 years before my nomination, served as Chair of that Department.

My research has been very closely engaged with policy. I have particular expertise in modeling the effects of health care policy changes and have long served as a consultant, both formally and informally, to the Congressional Budget Office's health care team. My work in mental health policy and in addressing the problems of uninsured people has also provided me with an introduction to social welfare policy, another important component of the work of the ASPE.

As you know, the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation in HHS has a long and illustrious history. For the over 40 years that the office has existed, the ASPE has served as the secretary's principal policy advisor, with responsibility for policy coordination, implementation planning, and the evaluation of the many programs under the HHS umbrella. Many very distinguished policy analysts have served in this capacity. I am awed and humbled by this nomination to follow in their path. This is an extraordinary opportunity at a critical time to bring analysis and research to bear across the President and Secretary's broad agenda.

I am one of a number of researchers in Universities, think tanks, federal and state government agencies, and research institutes around the country who have devoted our

careers to the study of health insurance and the uninsured. I am proud that this research contributed to the Congressional debate concerning national health reform legislation that began last summer. If confirmed, I look forward to joining with my colleagues in HHS and throughout the Administration who are working closely with Congressional leaders to bring costs under control and reduce the number of uninsured Americans. An important part of that effort will be to combine insights of researchers outside government with those of the exceptionally skilled, dedicated, and knowledgeable staff within the Office of the ASPE.

Of course, the scope of work of the Office of the ASPE extends well beyond national health policy. My prior research in mental health policy and on the health of children has made me well aware of the significance of the broad spectrum of HHS programs. HHS programs provide support for needy families and to the aged and disabled, sponsor path-breaking biomedical research, ensure the safety of our food and drugs, monitor the spread of infectious disease – the list goes on and on. The health of our nation depends on the effective functioning of this extensive range of programs, and I believe the ASPE is in a unique position to promote efficiency by facilitating effective policy coordination between them. If confirmed, I look forward to contributing to providing analytic support to planning and evaluation in all these areas, and throughout the Department.

Thank you very much. I would be happy to answer questions.