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## HATCH STATEMENT AT SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE HEARING CONSIDERING THE NOMINATIONS OF DAVID COHEN & JENNI LECOMPTE

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senator Orrin Hatch (R-Utah), Ranking Member of the Senate Finance Committee, today delivered the following remarks during a Senate Finance Committee hearing considering the nominations of David S. Cohen for the position of Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Crimes and Jenni LeCompte for the position of Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs at the Treasury Department:

David Cohen appears before us as President Obama’s nominee for the position of Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Crimes. He currently occupies this position in an acting capacity, where he has significant responsibility for enforcing our country’s national security policies. This position is a critical one for maintaining the integrity of our nation’s fiscal system, and the issues that come before him are ones that this Committee takes with the utmost seriousness.

Mr. Cohen’s educational background is an impressive one. After graduating from Cornell University, he went on to receive his J.D. from Yale Law School.

He has experience at the Treasury Department working in different roles, and previously developed the Department’s anti-money laundering policies. Given the importance of the position for which he has been nominated, I look forward to hearing his testimony today and evaluating his responses to inquiries from the Committee.

We will also hear from Jenni LeCompte, nominated to be Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs at the Treasury Department. Ms. LeCompte comes to us with legislative branch experience, some of which was for a member of this committee. She also has campaign experience — also partially for a member of this committee — and previous experience working within the executive branch.

In her testimony Ms. LeCompte notes that, if confirmed, she would not develop or set policy, but that at Treasury “[t]he Public Affairs team is responsible for developing and implementing communications strategy for the Department.” This is a very important job, and will play a significant part in how policies are perceived and understood by citizens, taxpayers,

businesses, and foreign nations. The Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs has an important decision to make. Is her role to inform and educate the American people, or to promote a political agenda and score political points? I think all of us agree that the best way for Americans to understand policy alternatives and make informed choices is for accurate and reliable information to be presented to them.

This is the first nomination hearing held by the Finance Committee in the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress, and the first nomination hearing where I have served as Ranking Member on this committee. This committee has a tradition of thoroughly vetting nominees, and I intend to continue that practice. I believe that the President, no matter who that person is and no matter the political party, has the right to nominate whoever he wants. He is free to nominate individuals who share his mindset.

I take very seriously, however, the Senate's independent constitutional role in this process. The constitutional power of advice and consent is a responsibility that I take with the utmost seriousness. It is not effectively exercised with either a rubber stamp, or with an axe to grind. What I promise is to make certain that the individuals selected by the President to serve our nation have a level of competence and integrity necessary to carry out their duties and responsibilities.

As Senators, the only power that we have is derived from the Constitution and our constituents, and I promise to exercise this authority with a commitment to both.

I also expect that the President will treat the Senate's role in this process with the respect that it deserves. As a coordinate branch of government, the Senate's constitutional role in the confirmation process is not to be taken lightly, and I will not tolerate its circumvention for political expediency.

The citizens of Utah, like citizens everywhere, expect that those in government will abide by the same rules and laws that they do. The vetting done by this Committee helps to deliver on this expectation. As the Senate committee of jurisdiction over the Internal Revenue Code, we examine the last three individual income tax returns, as filed, for each nominee. Though this does not constitute an audit, it does verify a basic level of compliance with rules that every single family and individual that pays income taxes must comply with.

Our constituents need assurance that their country is governed by fellow citizens who work for the people, and is not ruled by elites who live by their own set of rules.

I'm looking forward to working with the Chairman in continuing to exercise our role of advice and consent in a fair and consistent manner.

I welcome the nominees today. I look forward to their testimony and to the opportunity to ask them some questions.

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