



Senate Committee on Finance
U.S. Senator Orrin Hatch (R-UT), Chairman

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Hatch Statement at Finance Markup of Miscellaneous Tax Bills

WASHINGTON – Senate Finance Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) today delivered the following opening statement at a committee markup of 17 miscellaneous tax bills:

I want to welcome members of the committee to this Executive Business Meeting on various pieces of tax legislation.

This markup is in many ways a continuation of a process that Senator Wyden suggested last year. For the first time in the modern era of the Senate Finance Committee, we're meeting to act on miscellaneous tax bills. As far as I'm aware, no current member of this committee has been present for this kind of business meeting.

In other words, we'll all be learning as we go. While this may be the first markup of this kind, it shouldn't be the last. Indeed, Senator Wyden and I plan to hold other markups like this in the near future. I hope today's meeting can serve as a good template for how these markups will proceed going forward.

At the time we announced this meeting, Senator Wyden and I laid out several criteria for bills to be considered.

First, we said that the bills had to fall squarely within the jurisdiction of the Finance Committee.

Second, the bills had to have bipartisan support and be non-controversial to both sides.

Third, they had to have little or no budgetary impact and any bill scored as losing revenue had to have an acceptable offset.

Fourth, the bills had to address thoroughly-reviewed subject matter.

Fifth, they could not be actively opposed by either the Senate leadership or the White House.

And, finally, they could not be considered a limited tax benefit under Senate Rule 44.

With these criteria in mind, we combed through a number of bills submitted by members of the committee and came up with the ones included in the chairman's mark today.

Members from both sides submitted bills that would modify certain tax extenders.

However, in each of those cases, the underlying laws had already expired. So, we asked those members to defer their submissions until the time the committee takes up extenders.

Likewise, there were a number of pension-related proposals submitted by members on both sides. And, though those proposals likely have merit, they require more work. That being the case, we asked those members to wait until we held a meeting to specifically address pension issues.

So, after going through that process, we have before us 17 separate pieces of tax legislation to consider. Once again, these are non-controversial and we should be able to move through them quickly.

I thank my colleagues for their attendance today and I look forward to working through each of these bills.

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