

1 OPEN EXECUTIVE SESSION (CONTINUED) TO CONSIDER FAVORABLY
2 REPORTING THE NOMINATION OF STEVEN MNUCHIN, OF
3 CALIFORNIA, TO BE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY; AND
4 FAVORABLY REPORTING THE NOMINATION OF THOMAS PRICE, OF
5 GEORGIA, TO BE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
6 WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2017
7 U.S. Senate,
8 Committee on Finance,
9 Washington, DC.

10 The meeting was convened, pursuant to notice, at
11 10:14 a.m., in room 215, Dirksen Senate Office Building,
12 Hon. Orrin G. Hatch (chairman of the committee)
13 presiding.

14 Present: Senators Grassley, Crapo, Roberts, Enzi,
15 Cornyn, Thune, Burr, Isakson, Portman, Toomey, Heller,
16 Scott, and Cassidy.

17 Also present: Republican Staff: Chris Campbell,
18 Staff Director; Nicholas Wyatt, Tax and Nominations
19 Professional Staff Member; Jay Khosla, Chief Health
20 Counsel and Policy Director; Mark Prater, Deputy Staff
21 Director and Chief Tax Counsel; and Jeff Wrase, Chief
22 Economist.
23

1 OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ORRIN G. HATCH, A U.S. SENATOR
2 FROM UTAH, CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

3

4 The Chairman. The committee will come to order. We
5 are here this morning under extraordinary circumstances.

6 The Senate Finance Committee has a long, storied
7 tradition for temperance and bipartisanship. In times of
8 fierce political and partisan conflict when Congress has
9 found itself facing seemingly insurmountable tension and
10 gridlock, the Senate Finance Committee has always been
11 the exception.

12 That tradition of this committee was, for the first
13 time in modern history, broken yesterday as our
14 colleagues, without notice and without warning, opted to
15 stage a publicity stunt in the hallway instead of sitting
16 here at the dais and doing their jobs.

17 Their unprecedented boycott has left us with
18 precious few options. These are important nominations to
19 positions that desperately need to be filled. It is also
20 important that we do not set a precedent that allows the
21 customary good faith that has historically governed the
22 operations of this committee to be cast aside whenever
23 one side wants to gain a political advantage.

24 With those concerns in mind, I recognize Senator
25 Isakson to make a unanimous consent request.

1 Senator Isakson. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous
2 consent that we temporarily suspend the rule for and all
3 other applicable Finance Committee rules or procedure to
4 report out the nominations of Steven Mnuchin as Secretary
5 of Treasury and Dr. Thomas Price as Secretary of Health
6 and Human Services, and that all other rules come back in
7 operation at the conclusion of today's vote.

8 The Chairman. Pursuant to Rule 2A of the committee
9 rules, the chair rules that the unanimous consent request
10 is not germane as it was not part of the original notice
11 of this executive session. The request therefore is out
12 of order.

13 I now appeal my own ruling and call for the yeas and
14 nays. The clerk will call the roll.

15 The Clerk. Mr. Grassley?

16 Senator Grassley. Aye.

17 The Clerk. Mr. Grassley aye.

18 Mr. Crapo?

19 Senator Crapo. Aye.

20 The Clerk. Mr. Crapo aye.

21 Mr. Roberts?

22 Senator Roberts. Aye.

23 The Clerk. Mr. Roberts aye.

24 Mr. Enzi?

25 Senator Enzi. Aye.

1 The Clerk. Mr. Enzi aye.
2 Mr. Cornyn?
3 Senator Cornyn. Aye.
4 The Clerk. Mr. Cornyn aye.
5 Mr. Thune?
6 Senator Thune. Aye.
7 The Clerk. Mr. Thune aye.
8 Mr. Burr?
9 Senator Burr. Aye.
10 The Clerk. Mr. Burr aye.
11 Mr. Isakson?
12 Senator Isakson. Aye.
13 The Clerk. Mr. Isakson aye.
14 Mr. Portman?
15 Senator Portman. Aye.
16 The Clerk. Mr. Portman aye.
17 Mr. Toomey?
18 Senator Toomey. Aye.
19 The Clerk. Mr. Toomey aye.
20 Mr. Heller?
21 Senator Heller. Aye.
22 The Clerk. Mr. Heller aye.
23 Mr. Scott?
24 Senator Scott. Aye.
25 The Clerk. Mr. Scott aye.

1 Mr. Cassidy?

2 Senator Cassidy. Aye.

3 The Clerk. Mr. Cassidy aye.

4 Mr. Chairman?

5 The Chairman. Aye.

6 The Clerk. The Chairman votes aye.

7 The Chairman. The clerk will announce the vote.

8 The Clerk. Mr. Chairman, the final tally is 14
9 ayes, zero nays.

10 The Chairman. Two-thirds of the members present
11 having voted in the affirmative, the unanimous consent
12 request is agreed to.

13 Rule 4 and all other applicable rules are hereby
14 suspended for the votes on these two nominations.

15 At this time, I would entertain a motion to
16 favorably report the nomination of Steven Mnuchin to be
17 the Secretary of the Treasury.

18 Senator Enzi. So moved.

19 The Chairman. It has been so moved. The clerk will
20 call the roll on Steven Mnuchin.

21 The Clerk. Mr. Grassley?

22 Senator Grassley. Aye.

23 The Clerk. Mr. Grassley aye.

24 Mr. Crapo?

25 Senator Crapo. Aye.

1 The Clerk. Mr. Crapo aye.
2 Mr. Roberts?
3 Senator Roberts. Aye.
4 The Clerk. Mr. Roberts aye.
5 Mr. Enzi?
6 Senator Enzi. Aye.
7 The Clerk. Mr. Enzi aye.
8 Mr. Cornyn?
9 Senator Cornyn. Aye.
10 The Clerk. Mr. Cornyn aye.
11 Mr. Thune?
12 Senator Thune. Aye.
13 The Clerk. Mr. Thune aye.
14 Mr. Burr?
15 Senator Burr. Aye.
16 The Clerk. Mr. Burr aye.
17 Mr. Isakson?
18 Senator Isakson. Aye.
19 The Clerk. Mr. Isakson aye.
20 Mr. Portman?
21 Senator Portman. Aye.
22 The Clerk. Mr. Portman aye.
23 Mr. Toomey?
24 Senator Toomey. Aye.
25 The Clerk. Mr. Toomey aye.

1 Mr. Heller?
2 Senator Heller. Aye.
3 The Clerk. Mr. Heller aye.
4 Mr. Scott?
5 Senator Scott. Aye.
6 The Clerk. Mr. Scott aye.
7 Mr. Cassidy?
8 Senator Cassidy. Aye.
9 The Clerk. Mr. Cassidy aye.
10 Mr. Wyden?
11 [No response.]
12 The Clerk. Ms. Stabenow?
13 [No response.]
14 The Clerk. Ms. Cantwell?
15 [No response.]
16 The Clerk. Mr. Nelson?
17 [No response.]
18 The Clerk. Mr. Menendez?
19 [No response.]
20 The Clerk. Mr. Carper?
21 [No response.]
22 The Clerk. Mr. Cardin?
23 [No response.]
24 The Clerk. Mr. Brown?
25 [No response.]

1 The Clerk. Mr. Bennet?
2 [No response.]
3 The Clerk. Mr. Casey?
4 [No response.]
5 The Clerk. Mr. Warner?
6 [No response.]
7 The Clerk. Mrs. McCaskill?
8 [No response.]
9 Mr. Chairman?
10 The Chairman. Aye.
11 The Clerk. The Chairman votes aye.
12 The Chairman. The clerk will announce the vote.
13 The Clerk. Mr. Chairman, the final tally is 14
14 ayes, zero nays.
15 The Chairman. The ayes have it. The nomination is
16 ordered favorably reported.
17 I would now like to entertain a motion to favorably
18 report the nomination of the Honorable Thomas Price to be
19 the Secretary of Health and Human Services.
20 Senator Burr. So moved.
21 The Chairman. So moved. The clerk will call the
22 roll.
23 The Clerk. Mr. Grassley?
24 Senator Grassley. Aye.
25 The Clerk. Mr. Grassley aye.

1 Mr. Crapo?
2 Senator Crapo. Aye.
3 The Clerk. Mr. Crapo aye.
4 Mr. Roberts?
5 Senator Roberts. Aye.
6 The Clerk. Mr. Roberts aye.
7 Mr. Enzi?
8 Senator Enzi. Aye.
9 The Clerk. Mr. Enzi aye.
10 Mr. Cornyn?
11 Senator Cornyn. Aye.
12 The Clerk. Mr. Cornyn aye.
13 Mr. Thune?
14 Senator Thune. Aye.
15 The Clerk. Mr. Thune aye.
16 Mr. Burr?
17 Senator Burr. Aye.
18 The Clerk. Mr. Burr aye.
19 Mr. Isakson?
20 Senator Isakson. Aye.
21 The Clerk. Mr. Isakson aye.
22 Mr. Portman?
23 Senator Portman. Aye.
24 The Clerk. Mr. Portman aye.
25 Mr. Toomey?

1 Senator Toomey. Aye.
2 The Clerk. Mr. Toomey aye.
3 Mr. Heller?
4 Senator Heller. Aye.
5 The Clerk. Mr. Heller aye.
6 Mr. Scott?
7 Senator Scott. Aye.
8 The Clerk. Mr. Scott aye.
9 Mr. Cassidy?
10 Senator Cassidy. Aye.
11 The Clerk. Mr. Cassidy aye.
12 Mr. Wyden?
13 [No response.]
14 The Clerk. Ms. Stabenow?
15 [No response.]
16 The Clerk. Ms. Cantwell?
17 [No response.]
18 The Clerk. Mr. Nelson?
19 [No response.]
20 The Clerk. Mr. Menendez?
21 [No response.]
22 The Clerk. Mr. Carper?
23 [No response.]
24 The Clerk. Mr. Cardin?
25 [No response.]

1 The Clerk. Mr. Brown?

2 [No response.]

3 The Clerk. Mr. Bennet?

4 [No response.]

5 The Clerk. Mr. Casey?

6 [No response.]

7 The Clerk. Mr. Warner?

8 [No response.]

9 The Clerk. Mrs. McCaskill?

10 [No response.]

11 The Clerk. Mr. Chairman?

12 The Chairman. Aye.

13 The Clerk. Mr. Chairman aye.

14 The Chairman. The clerk will announce the vote.

15 The Clerk. Mr. Chairman, the final tally is 14
16 ayes, zero nays.

17 The Chairman. The ayes have it. The nomination is
18 ordered favorably reported.

19 With that accomplished under the previous order,
20 Rule 4 and all other suspended rules are now once again
21 in effect.

22 For those who might be confused, let me explain what
23 we have done here.

24 The rules of the Finance Committee require a quorum
25 to conduct any committee business, including the

1 reporting of nominees. Specifically under Rule 4, to
2 achieve a quorum, one-third of committee members,
3 including at least one member from each party, must be
4 present. However, under Rule 19 the committee may opt to
5 suspend any of its rules at any time.

6 Senator Isakson asked for unanimous consent to
7 suspend Rule 4 and all applicable rules for the purpose
8 of voting on these nominees. The request was agreed to
9 after a successful appeal to my ruling on its
10 germaneness, making the quorum requirements of Rule 4 and
11 all other rules that could prevent a vote on these
12 nominations, inapplicable.

13 We then proceeded to vote on the nominations. For
14 the record, I will note that the Senate Parliamentarian
15 Office has confirmed that this course of action is
16 consistent with both the committee and Senate rules.

17 I will also note for the record that every
18 Republican member of the committee was present and
19 voting, exceeding the one-third requirement for a quorum
20 under Rule 4.

21 The only thing missing was a member from the
22 minority side. But as I noted, they, on their own
23 accord, refused to participate in the exercise, so they
24 have nobody to blame but themselves.

25 I think it is really one of the most pathetic things

1 I have ever seen that they would not even come to vote on
2 these two nominees, both of whom are going to pass
3 regardless of all of them voting no, which is probably
4 what they would do.

5 Senator Grassley. Mr. Chairman?

6 The Chairman. Yes, Mr. Grassley?

7 Senator Grassley. To ratify and affirm what you
8 said, the 10 years that I and Senator Baucus were either,
9 respectively, ranking member or chairman of this
10 committee, we had exactly the cooperation of the minority
11 that you talk about, that is a bipartisan tradition of
12 this committee. And I would put a fuller statement in
13 the record on this point.

14 The Chairman. Without objection, that will go in
15 the record.

16 [Two statements by Senator Grassley appear at the
17 end of the transcript.]

18 The Chairman. Now that the committee has finally
19 done its job and voted on these nominees, I would like to
20 make just a short statement.

21 First, I will remark on the action that was just
22 taken because I am fairly certain our colleagues will try
23 to characterize it as some kind of nefarious breach of
24 protocol. So before the Democrats call another press
25 conference, here are the facts.

1 Throughout the process of vetting and considering
2 these nominations, I made a good-faith effort to address
3 my colleagues' concerns, including extended questioning
4 periods, both during the hearings and in writing. Yet at
5 every step, the nomination process has been undermined by
6 political gamesmanship.

7 One of many examples includes leaking typically
8 private disclosures from the nominees to the media in
9 order to build public cases against them. Not very good
10 public cases, by the way.

11 There have been challenges made about the nominees'
12 ethics, finances and integrity. Yet in each case, the
13 allegations proved to be misleading and dramatically
14 overstated.

15 Case in point: With Dr. Price, we have heard
16 repeatedly that he was offered and accepted a sweetheart
17 investment deal from an Australian biomed company. But
18 the truth is that the company had a very small group of
19 initial U.S. investors at that time and everyone in that
20 group, you can call it a, quote, "select group," unquote,
21 if you want, were all offered the same access to the
22 stock purchases. Dr. Price's account of the investment
23 has not really been substantially refuted, let alone
24 disproven.

25 But my colleagues claim, there on the other side,

1 claim that their misinterpretation of his testimony is
2 grounds for an indefinite delay on his confirmation.

3 With Mr. Mnuchin, we have heard a lot about, quote,
4 "robo-signing," unquote, in the past couple of days.
5 What we have not heard is a fixed definition as to what
6 constitutes, quote, "robo-signing," unquote. That is
7 because no fixed definition exists. It is a vague label
8 casually thrown around to refer to a broad set of
9 practices. There is no agreed-upon standard, legal or
10 otherwise, as to what constitutes, quote, "robo-signing,"
11 unquote. Therefore, any question that simply throws out
12 the term without specifically explaining what is meant by
13 it is not only poorly written, it is inherently vague.

14 In his answer to a colleague's vague written
15 question, Mr. Mnuchin stated that OneWest did not engage
16 in the practice and referred to a government review of
17 practices that provide an analogue for the loose notion
18 of, quote, "robo-signing," unquote.

19 According to the measures utilized in that review,
20 OneWest did not engage in, quote, "robo-signing,"
21 unquote. In other words, Mr. Mnuchin provided an honest
22 answer. This is the level of minutiae we are dealing
23 with here. It is damned irritating.

24 My colleagues are using their own parsed words and
25 vague questions as justification for their refusal to

1 even vote on these nominations. As a result, we are
2 currently in the midst of the longest transition period
3 without a confirmed treasury secretary in our nation's
4 history.

5 And the process for vetting and reporting Dr.
6 Price's nomination has taken longer than that of the last
7 two HHS secretaries combined. Of course, Democrat
8 secretaries. At every turn, my colleagues' arguments
9 change, but their answer is always the same: Delay.

10 And then yesterday, my colleagues took the
11 unprecedented step of boycotting a Finance Committee vote
12 on nominations. Long story short, we took some
13 unprecedented actions today due to the unprecedented
14 obstruction on the part of our colleagues.

15 As I noted earlier, the Senate Finance Committee has
16 traditionally been able to function in even the most
17 divisive political environments. That all changed
18 yesterday.

19 Personally, as a longtime member of this committee,
20 I have been proud of that distinction. And in my time as
21 both ranking member and chairman of this committee, I
22 have bent over backwards to preserve its unique status as
23 one of the few places where Republicans and Democrats not
24 only work together, but achieve results. And I defy
25 anyone to give an example of a time when I have done

1 otherwise.

2 Now, I get that my colleagues think these nominees
3 are controversial. I get that they do not want to see
4 them confirmed. We have all been in that situation. It
5 comes part and parcel with the job of being a senator,
6 and this is hardly the first time a nominee deemed to be
7 controversial has come before this committee.

8 I will remind everyone that nine years ago this
9 committee processed a treasury secretary nominee that was
10 highly controversial. He had an outstanding tax bill of
11 nearly \$40,000, as much as many Americans make in a year,
12 and for some of our colleagues his explanation for the
13 unpaid taxes did not seem to add up. And he was
14 appointed by a president that our side did not support
15 and with whom we had serious, and I mean serious,
16 disagreements. Yet even then, Republicans on this
17 committee showed up to do their jobs.

18 Yesterday, rather than accept anything less than
19 their desired outcome, our Democrat colleagues chose to
20 cower in the hallway and hold a press conference. To
21 make matters worse, our colleagues did all of this
22 despite the fact that the ranking member and I had worked
23 through the process together on these nominations and had
24 agreed upon a timeline for votes.

25 I had, of course, foolishly assumed my colleague was

1 operating in good faith. Worse still, the decision to
2 boycott yesterday's meeting was not conveyed to anyone on
3 our side until literally seconds before we were scheduled
4 to begin. And the decision was not even conveyed to us
5 by the ranking member in person.

6 While clearly I am frustrated by this turn of
7 events, I am actually more confused than anything else.
8 The senator who led this boycott is the same ranking
9 member who worked with us on the committee to report and
10 eventually pass a record number of bipartisan bills in
11 the last Congress. It is the same ranking member that
12 defied many of his own party to draft support and help
13 pass historic trade legislation in 2015. It is the same
14 ranking member with whom we have been able to navigate a
15 number of dicey political issues, including, for example,
16 our investigation into the IRS targeting schedule.

17 Today, the ranking member, who did all of those
18 things, is nowhere to be found. For all intents and
19 purposes, the Democrat seats on the Finance Committee are
20 all now occupied by the Senate minority leader and all of
21 them appear ready to leap off whatever cliff he
22 designates, even if it means breaching the good faith
23 that has long been the hallmark of this committee.

24 Needless to say, this discussion is not over. I
25 intend to get the committee back to where it once was and

1 I will use every tool at my disposal, procedural or
2 otherwise, to make sure this does not become the new
3 normal for the Senate Finance Committee.

4 And I want to personally congratulate and thank
5 every one of my colleagues who have shown up here today.

6 The Republicans have been here uniformly and every one
7 of us. Thank them for being here and being able to help
8 conclude this committee business that is very, very
9 important.

10 Does anybody else have any comment?

11 Senator Heller. Mr. Chairman?

12 The Chairman. Senator Heller.

13 Senator Heller. Mr. Chairman, thank you. I want to
14 thank you for your leadership on this committee.

15 I do have a statement for the record, with your
16 approval.

17 The Chairman. We will put it in the record.

18 [The prepared statement of Senator Heller appears at
19 the end of the transcript.]

20 Senator Heller. Thank you.

21 The Chairman. We will keep the record open for an
22 hour and anybody who has any statements can put them in
23 the record.

24 Anybody else?

25 Senator Isakson. Mr. Chairman?

1 The Chairman. Yes, Senator?

2 Senator Isakson. As the member who introduced Dr.
3 Price to the committee and sat beside him the entire time
4 of the hearing, I want to thank you for the time you gave
5 the committee to thoroughly vet the nominees. I think we
6 have thoroughly vetted them and I appreciate the action
7 the committee has taken today and appreciate your
8 leadership.

9 The Chairman. Well, thank you. We appreciate your
10 leadership and we appreciate your introduction here
11 today. It means a lot.

12 Anybody else?

13 With that, we will recess until further notice.

14 [Whereupon, at 9:55 a.m., the meeting was
15 adjourned.]

Chuck Grassley
Opening Statement
SFC Executive Session to Consider the Nomination of Steven Mnuchin and Dr. Price

The Treasury Secretary plays a critical role in carrying out a president's economic agenda. The President has set out an aggressive agenda to grow the economy, create jobs, and increase wages.

In order to be successful in this agenda, his Treasury Secretary is going to have to work closely with this Committee on a number of important matters, including tax policy, the public debt, and trade. From my meeting with Mr. Mnuchin, as well as his hours-long nomination hearing, I am confident that he is up to the task.

Additionally, with his extensive business background, the nominee has a unique perspective on how the government's actions and regulations affect business leaders of all stripes. From the mom and pop shop on Main Street to large financial institutions, the Treasury Secretary needs to have an intimate understanding of how the heavy hand of government stifles economic activity and innovation.

Mr. Mnuchin has rightly rejected the notion that we must accept tepid economic growth as the new normal. He has made it clear that pro-growth tax reform will be the centerpiece of an agenda to turn our economy around.

Having a Treasury Secretary that is fully behind an effort to reform our outdated tax code will be critical to its success. I look forward to working with Mr. Mnuchin to make tax reform a reality, as well as on the many other important issues facing our country.

The Secretary of Health and Human Services plays a critical role in a government agency whose mission is to enhance and protect the health and well-being of all Americans.

As the healthcare system continues through transition, the HHS Secretary must understand budgetary, regulatory, legislative, and administrative processes. To successfully navigate this transformative time, the Secretary must work closely with this Committee on a number of important matters.

Dr. Price understands these processes and has given me his word that he will be responsive to all members of this Committee.

Finally, Dr. Price has the firsthand knowledge of how to care for a patient. Preservation of the doctor-patient relationship is important to Dr. Price and I believe that is an important quality in the next Secretary of HHS.

I look forward to working with Dr. Price as Secretary of HHS.

Chuck Grassley
Mnuchin-Price Markup

I am disappointed in the actions of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle. Denying this Committee the opportunity to process two members of the President's cabinet is unprecedented. This is blatant obstruction, plain and simple.

The Finance Committee has a long tradition of collegiality and bipartisanship. As someone who has served as both Chairman and Ranking Member of this Committee, this tradition of the Committee is something I have long taken pride in.

Senator Baucus and I always worked together to ensure the proper functioning of this Committee regardless of who was Chairman or which party controlled the White House. In fact, Senator Baucus and I had an agreement that each would provide the needed minority member if necessary at a markup.

This is why I am so disgusted that rank partisanship has infected this Committee as evidenced by the political stunt by our colleagues on the other-side.

When President Obama was elected in 2008, many on our side were deeply disappointed. But, we did not seek to impair the functioning of this Committee.

In fact, we diligently got to work to ensure President Obama had the appointees in place that were necessary for his Administration to function.

A nomination hearing of Treasury Secretary Geithner was held the day after President Obama was inaugurated. Within 24 hours of Secretary Geithner's hearing, the Committee once again met to report his nomination to the floor.

I voted against Secretary Geithner, as did several other Republican members. But, we showed up and allowed the Committee to conduct its business in unprecedented speed.

I understand many of our colleagues on the other side have policy differences with the nominees. That is well within their rights. But, the proper course of action is to come here today, voice your concerns, and vote no if that is your position. Not obstruct and delay.

Stonewalling a newly elected administration's cabinet nominees is unacceptable. The President must be allowed to put his cabinet in place to effectively do the job he was duly elected to perform.

I hope my colleagues will come to their senses and end their obstruction. Their actions threaten the bipartisan tradition of this Committee.

This is sad, because it is a tradition that has allowed this Committee to tackle important issues in the past and must be retained for it to function properly going forward.

**Mark-up of Steven Mnuchin for Treasury Secretary and
Tom Price for Secretary of Health and Human Services
Statement for the Record
Senator Heller**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I understand why you needed to move forward with this markup today. This committee has a proud history of bipartisanship and it is unfortunate that the Minority on this committee have left us with no choice. I am hopeful that this is not indicative of where this committee will go moving forward in this new Congress.

Reporting each of these nominees out of Committee, this morning, will allow us to start working on the issues that the American people sent us to Washington to do.

After many discussions with Treasury Secretary nominee Steven Mnuchin, I received answers to my specific concerns pertaining to the devastating housing crisis in Nevada. As we all know, this was a very difficult time in Nevada's history, and any time a home is foreclosed on, it is a painful experience for those affected. That's why I want to look forward and ensure this doesn't happen again. We can either stare at the darkness of the past or we can focus our attention forward to the future where a strong economy and job creation are placed at the top of the Administration's new pro-economic agenda. I secured the nominee's commitment to help struggling Nevadans by supporting commonsense initiatives, such as the Mortgage Debt Relief Act, and in relieving the tax burden of the middle class by committing to help repeal the Cadillac tax. I look forward to working with him as our Treasury Secretary as we enact policies focused on a devotion to economic growth not just in Nevada, but across our the entire nation.

I also want to thank Congressman Price for his willingness to work with Nevada on the important issue of protecting access to health care for all Nevadans, and please know that if confirmed, as HHS Secretary, I will hold you accountable for the promises made to me and to Nevadans that you will work to protect access to quality, affordable health care, including those on Medicaid. In his answers to my questions in the hearing, as well as in his written answers, Congressman Price emphasized that he will work with Congress and States to protect access to care for all patients, including patients with a pre-existing conditions or on a fixed income. In the hearing last week, Congressman Price also made it clear that he believed that the Cadillac tax was a tax on the middle class and said he would work with Congress to repeal it. This tax would affect 1.3 million Nevadans. This includes culinary and service industry workers on the Las Vegas strip, public employees in Carson City, small business owners, seniors, and teachers. With nearly unanimous support in Congress and a commitment from the Treasury Secretary and the Health Secretary, I am confident that together we can repeal the 40 percent excise tax.

With that, I thank the Chairman and the Ranking Member for the time to discuss issues important to the Silver State. I look forward to working with Mr. Mnuchin and Dr. Price to enact policies which spur economic growth, create jobs, and protect access to health care in Nevada.