



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Hearing Statement of Senator Max Baucus (D-Mont.)
Regarding the Nominations of Gil Kerlikowske, Paige Marvel and Tamara Ashford**
As prepared for delivery

Senator Henry Clay, who was the chairman of this committee in 1841, once said, "Government is a trust, and the officers of the government are trustees – and both the trust and the trustees are created for the benefit of the people."

The three individuals here today are dedicated public servants, in Senator Clay's words – trustees working hard for the benefit of the people. They are experts in their fields and if confirmed, they will bring an impressive array of diversity and experience to the job at hand.

Gil Kerlikowske has been nominated to serve as commissioner of the United States Customs and Border Protection, often referred to as CBP. This agency enforces the country's trade and border security laws.

If confirmed, Mr. Kerlikowske will be entrusted with developing policy that has broad effects on America's economy and safety – a charge he is highly qualified to execute.

Mr. Kerlikowske has spent his career in public policy and law enforcement. Most recently, he was the director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy. Before that, he served as the chief of police in Seattle.

His decades of experience will help ensure our nation's borders are secure, flexible, and utilizing the latest technologies.

This committee has jurisdiction over international trade, and CBP plays a crucial role in maintaining the flow of trade across our borders. CBP processes nearly \$2.5 trillion worth of goods every year, and it must ensure this process is thorough and efficient.

CBP's director must consult regularly with Congress, federal agencies, and the many businesses that rely on trade. This committee takes CBP's mandate to consult with Congress very seriously.

Senator Hatch and I introduced a customs reauthorization bill last year. The bill is intended to help CBP prioritize its trade facilitation and enforcement functions, and it provides additional tools and resources to help the commissioner do so. If Mr. Kerlikowske is confirmed, close communication with this committee will be important.

Also with us today are Tamara Ashford and Paige Marvel. Both are nominated to serve as Judges on the United States Tax Court. Judge Marvel, in fact, has been nominated to serve a second term.

The tax court gives Americans a venue and a voice to address legitimate tax concerns. It helps guarantee fair administration of our tax laws, and it hears 30,000 cases each year. It is a cornerstone of America's tax system.

Judges must be willing to put in long hours and endure a busy travel schedule. They hear cases in 74 cities across the country and they spend weeks at a time away from their homes and families. The job is difficult, but Ms. Ashford and Judge Marvel are the right people to take it on.

Prior to joining the court, Judge Marvel had a distinguished career in the private sector. She has proven herself on the tax court, and she deserves support for a second term.

Ms. Ashford currently serves as the deputy assistant attorney general for appellate and review in the Tax Division at the U.S. Department of Justice. She has a sterling track record of public service that she will carry with her to the tax court, including at the IRS and Department of Justice. And like Judge Marvel, she has valuable experience in the private sector.

With their confirmations, the tax court will have a full complement of nineteen judges for the first time since 1999.

So as we consider these nominations, let us remember Henry Clay's words – that government is a trust, and the officers of the government are trustees working for the benefit of the people. I thank all three nominees for joining us here today, and I hope this committee can act on these nominations quickly.

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