



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **Hatch Statement at Finance Committee Mark Up on Highway Trust Fund**

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senator Orrin Hatch (R-Utah), Ranking Member of the Senate Finance Committee, today delivered the following opening statement at a committee mark up on the Highway Trust Fund:

*Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your cooperation on this matter. As I have said many times, I am not a fan of pension smoothing. But in the context of this bipartisan highway mark, which is of critical importance to the country, I have given my agreement.*

*And I will further pledge to work with you, Mr. Chairman, and others on the Committee, to deal with these other important issues before the end of the year. I'm talking about the issues like: the multiemployer plans, the abandoned mine land, or AML, fund; secure rural schools, or SRS; and payment in lieu of taxes, generally referred to PILT.*

*It is, of course, not possible to know with certainty today how these issues will be paid for. But I will do all that I can to get to a resolution that is satisfactory to everyone.*

*I want to commend you for your willingness to reach across the aisle on this important issue. The Finance Committee has a tradition of working through funding for the Highway Trust Fund in a cooperative, bipartisan fashion and I'm glad we're able to continue that tradition with today's markup.*

*We've already gone through the contours of the Chairman's mark. So, I won't spend any more time detailing the agreement. Instead, I want to say a few words about what we've been able to accomplish here.*

*It's important that we act on this. And, it's important that we act quickly so that states can continue to plan their highway projects without unnecessary interruptions or delays. We all know the timeline.*

*And, as I said two weeks ago when we first convened this markup, it is important that the committee act to get something done on this, but it's even more important that we get it done right.*

*While I won't say that I've gotten everything I wanted out of this deal, I think we've reached an agreement that can work for both Republicans and Democrats, which, given the state of the Senate these days, is quite an accomplishment.*

*This is, as we all know, just the first step in a process that will hopefully yield a legislative product that can pass through both the House and the Senate and be signed by the President. As we all know, the House Ways and Means Committee marked up their version of the Highway Bill earlier today.*

*I do have to say that I'm disappointed that we weren't able to come to an agreement with Ways and Means Chairman Dave Camp. I think having a bicameral agreement at the outset would have helped speed this process along.*

*Still, looking at their proposal and the one we're marking up today, it doesn't look like we're all that far apart on the issues.*

*I think Chairman Camp has put together a good bill. It's not perfect, but it's good. I think we have done the same.*

*And, I am confident that we'll be able to find a path forward and get a bill across the finish line in time to prevent any undue problems or delays for our states.*

*Mr. Chairman, I am particularly glad that you have gotten assurances from the Senate Majority Leader that the package we report today will not be altered before it is brought to the floor. That assurance will help protect the product and should bode well for this and any future efforts we undertake here in the Finance Committee.*

*Once again, I'm grateful that the committee has found a way to operate in a bipartisan fashion. As I've said numerous times, I think the Finance Committee can and should serve as an example for the rest of the Senate as to how both parties can work together and get things done for our constituents.*

*Thank you, once again, Mr. Chairman for your work on this legislation and for convening this executive session today.*

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