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Wyden Opposes HHS and USTR Nominees *As Prepared for Delivery*

I'd just like to say a few words before the Finance Committee votes on three more nominees later today.

I'm going to start off with Michael Stuart, who is nominated to be General Counsel of HHS. The health department's top lawyer is responsible for calling balls and strikes and making sure the department follows the law. Something that Robert Kennedy and Donald Trump have shown little interest in doing.

During his confirmation hearing, Mr. Stuart provided this committee no assurances that he would follow federal laws like EMTALA, which make sure emergency departments provide life-saving medical care to patients.

Robert Kennedy – who the Committee will hear from later this morning – is speedrunning our country into the worst measles outbreak in decades. He's gutted vaccine panels, cancer research, and is overseeing the biggest blow to Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act in history.

Mr. Stuart has given this committee no reason to believe he would be anything other than another rubber stamp for Robert Kennedy's crusade against health and science.

Next up, Gustav Chiarello's, nominated to be the Assistant Secretary for Financial Resources at HHS. If confirmed, Mr. Chiarello will be responsible for the department's \$1.7 trillion budget, as well as the distribution of grants and other financial issues.

Mr. Chiarello doesn't have a single day's worth of experience managing the finances of an organization, let alone one of the largest in the country.

This is an important role, especially in light of the Trump administration's weaponizing of federal funding.

Between February's disastrous funding freeze and Trump's latest rescission of funds that Congress already appropriated, the Administration is making a mockery of congressional authority, and my Republican colleagues seem perfectly happy to go along with it.

If confirmed, Mr. Chiarello would oversee unprecedented funding and staff cuts and budget shortfalls at HHS, not to mention the biggest cut to health care in our nation's history. He's shown no intention of pushing back against Donald Trump, and taking a blowtorch to the programs and resources that millions of Americans rely on to stay safe and healthy.

Finally, Bryan Switzer, who is nominated to be Deputy U.S. Trade Representative with jurisdiction over Asia, textiles, investment, services, and intellectual property.

From day one, Donald Trump's trade agenda has been disastrous. His tariffs and trade flip-flopping has left American farmers, businesses, and workers on an economic rollercoaster.

Prices are up, small businesses and farmers are struggling. For the sixth straight month in a row US manufacturing has declined.

That's the message I heard all over Oregon this past month as I traveled around some of the most rural parts of our state talking with business owners, farmers, and ranchers.

American families and businesses need transparency and consistency from Trump's trade agenda. Mr. Switzer will provide neither.

I urge my colleagues to vote no on these nominees.

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