

Opening Statement
Nomination Hearing for Dr. Ge Bai, PhD, CPA
Senate Finance Committee
Chairman Mike Crapo
September 15th, 2026

Chairman Crapo, Ranking Member Wyden, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am deeply honored and humbled by President Trump's nomination to serve as Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation at the Department of Health and Human Services.

I would like to thank President Trump and Secretary Kennedy for their confidence in me. I am also grateful to my mentors, who have inspired and guided me; to my colleagues, friends, and students, who have supported me; and, most importantly, to my co-authors. I have learned so much from each of you, and together we've built a body of scholarship of which I'm deeply proud. It has been a blessing to have you all with me throughout my career, and I'm forever indebted to you.

As a Certified Public Accountant and a professor of accounting and health policy at Johns Hopkins, my focus has been on letting the numbers speak. My expertise is in following the money, especially in complex transactions and financial systems. Since I conducted my first healthcare study during my doctoral program at Michigan State University, I have studied U.S. healthcare for almost twenty years. I have published numerous studies in leading academic journals, testified multiple times before Congress, and researched issues in hospital, clinician, pharmaceutical, and insurance markets. My scholarship reveals how healthcare financing, regulation, and payment systems affect patients, healthcare providers, employers, taxpayers, investors, and other market participants.

The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, ASPE, has always held a special place in my heart. My mentor, Professor Gerard Anderson at Johns Hopkins, often says that he is most proud of his years at ASPE. Several of my exceptional former colleagues from Hopkins and the Congressional Budget Office, where I served as a visiting scholar, speak warmly of their time at ASPE and of how much they learned there. I long hoped to have that opportunity myself.

This spring, I was fortunate to experience firsthand the institution they had taught me to admire when I stepped into the role of Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation. Over the past six months, I have developed a deep understanding of ASPE's mission, potential, and the challenges it faces. ASPE serves as the Department's principal research and policy analysis office for the Secretary and HHS leadership, providing timely, evidence-based analysis and recommendations to advance the Administration's priorities, particularly to lower healthcare

costs for American patients. Its work consists of three core functions: planning—estimating the likely impacts of policy actions before they are implemented; evaluation—assessing the actual impacts of policy actions after they have been implemented; and education—identifying and analyzing underexplored and emerging issues.

If confirmed, I will seek to lead ASPE in conducting rigorous, evidence-based analysis to support policy planning and evaluation. Our nation's healthcare system faces substantial challenges. We spend roughly \$17,000 per person each year on healthcare—about \$1,400 every month for every man, woman, and child in America. These costs might not be visible to every American, but someone is paying for them—through high out-of-pocket costs, high premiums, high taxes, and a growing national debt. Despite this level of spending, the United States remains one of the sickest countries in the world.

Addressing this low return on investment in U.S. healthcare demands rigorous, evidence-based research to guide informed policymaking. ASPE is uniquely positioned to meet these challenges and unleash American dynamism that discovers new therapies, pioneers innovative care delivery models, and fosters vibrant competition and innovation that advance affordability and access for all Americans. I believe that, under the leadership of President Trump and Secretary Kennedy, and by working together with you, other lawmakers, and the great American people, ASPE can play an important role in this journey to Make America Healthy Again.

Twice a day, I bike past the Washington Monument and the Jefferson Memorial on my way to work. They remind me why I'm here and of our duty to the American people. Twice a day, I also pass Americans who come to visit our magnificent capital from every corner of our country. The admiration and awe in their eyes, and their love for this great country, humble me. If I'm confirmed, I'll give my very best effort to be worthy of your trust, serve the American people, and honor this God-given opportunity.

Thank you.