

1 EXECUTIVE BUSINESS MEETING TO CONSIDER THE NOMINATION OF
2 DOUGLAS H. SHULMAN TO BE COMMISSIONER, INTERNAL REVENUE
3 SERVICE; AND TO CONSIDER REVISING SUBCOMMITTEE
4 ASSIGNMENTS TO FILL VACANCIES
5 THURSDAY, MARCH 6, 2008
6 U.S. Senate,
7 Committee on Finance,
8 Washington, DC.

9 The meeting was convened, pursuant to notice, at
10 4:56 p.m., in room S-213, The Capitol, Hon. Max Baucus
11 (chairman of the committee) presiding.

12 Present: Senators Conrad, Bingaman, Kerry, Lincoln,
13 Wyden, Schumer, Stabenow, Cantwell, Salazar, Grassley,
14 Snowe, Kyl, Smith, Bunning, Crapo, Roberts, Ensign, and
15 Sununu.

16 Also present: Bill Dauster, Deputy Staff Director
17 and Chief Counsel; Rebecca Baxter, Tax Counsel; Mary
18 Baker, Detailed employee; Steven Schaefer, Republican
19 Chief Trade Counsel; Claudia Poteet, Republican Trade
20 Advisor; Carla Martin, Chief Clerk; Mark Blair, Deputy
21 Clerk; and Jewel Harper, Hearing Clerk.

1 OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. MAX BAUCUS, A U.S. SENATOR FROM
2 MONTANA, CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

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4 The Chairman. Today, the Finance Committee meets to
5 consider the nomination of Douglas H. Shulman to be
6 Commissioner of Internal Revenue. I support his
7 nomination.

8 At Mr. Shulman's nomination hearing on January 29 of
9 this year, I highlighted many of the challenges that he
10 will face as IRS Commissioner. These include the tax
11 gap, improving customer service at the IRS, IRS's
12 outdated computers, a global economy, an aging IRS
13 workforce, fundamental tax reform, and implementing
14 stimulus this year.

15 I told Mr. Shulman that these challenges also
16 represented opportunities to turn the IRS around. During
17 the hearing, Mr. Shulman's responses demonstrated that he
18 had given each of these challenges some thought.

19 I asked for his commitment that he would provide
20 strong leadership to take on these issues and to effect
21 change at the IRS. Mr. Shulman gave his "absolute
22 commitment." He said he was "100 percent committed" to
23 working with me to increase compliance and to help close
24 the tax gap.

25 I was pleased to hear that Mr. Shulman recognized

1 that compliance rates are highest when there is third-
2 party information reporting. And I was pleased that he
3 is looking forward to working in close partnership with
4 me on that issue.

5 I was encouraged to hear Mr. Shulman say that
6 modernizing outdated IRS technology would be a priority
7 for him.

8 I was heartened to hear Mr. Shulman say that he
9 would do everything in his power to ensure that the
10 stimulus checks go out as quickly as possible.

11 Once confirmed, he has a big job ahead of him.

12 Mr. Shulman has my support. But with that support
13 comes accountability.

14 I told Mr. Shulman that every time he comes before
15 the Finance Committee, I'm going to ask him to provide an
16 accounting of his progress in closing the tax gap. I am
17 going to go down this list of challenges again and again.

18 I put him on notice that I expect him to demonstrate
19 specific and real progress each and every time I pose the
20 question. I don't want to hear "we are working on that."

21 I want to hear real results.

22 I appreciate that Mr. Shulman is willing to take on
23 these challenges. I thank him for agreeing to serve our
24 Nation in the difficult job of IRS Commissioner. I wish
25 him well as he takes on this new role and look forward to

1 working with him throughout his tenure.

2 The second order of business is to approve revised
3 subcommittee assignments to fill vacancies.

4 The Clerk will call the roll.

5 The Clerk. Mr. Bingaman?

6 Senator Bingaman. Aye, aye.

7 Senator Kyl. So I vote "yes" on this, and "yes" on
8 that.

9 Senator Ensign. Two votes?

10 The Clerk. Yes, sir.

11 Senator Ensign. I will vote then -- aye and aye.

12 The Clerk. Thank you, sir.

13 Senator Grassley. Oh, yes. Yes.

14 The Clerk. Mr. Smith?

15 Senator Smith. Aye and aye.

16 The Clerk. Thank you, sir.

17 Mr. Crapo?

18 Senator Crapo. I vote "aye" and "aye."

19 Senator Roberts. Roberts, aye and aye.

20 Senator Cantwell. Aye and aye.

21 The Clerk. Ms. Snowe?

22 Senator Snowe. Aye and aye.

23 The Clerk. Mr. Bunning?

24 Senator Bunning. On the nomination for the IRS
25 Commissioner? Aye. On revising subcommittee

1 assignments? Aye.

2 Senator Sununu. Aye and Aye.

3 The Clerk. Mr. Chairman?

4 The Chairman. Aye.

5 The Clerk. The Chairman votes "aye."

6 Senator Lincoln. Aye and aye. I vote a "yes" vote
7 by proxy for Senator Rockefeller.

8 The Clerk. Mr. Wyden?

9 Senator Wyden. Aye and aye.

10 Senator Kerry. Is it just Shulman?

11 The Clerk. And to revise subcommittee assignments.

12 Senator Kerry. What are we doing there?

13 The Clerk. Removing Senator Lott, adding Senator
14 Sununu.

15 Senator Kerry. Oh, yes. All right. Thanks. Aye.

16 Senator Stabenow. We just have one vote, right?

17 The Clerk. Two, actually.

18 Senator Stabenow. Oh, there are two? All right,
19 yes and yes.

20 The Clerk. Mr. Conrad?

21 Senator Conrad. Aye and aye.

22 Mr. Salazar. Aye and aye.

23 Senator Schumer. I vote "aye" on both.

24 The Clerk. Mr. Hatch votes "aye" by proxy.

25 Mr. Chairman, the final tally of Members present is

1 19 ayes, zero nays. The final tally, including proxies,
2 is 21 ayes, zero nays.

3 The Chairman. Thank you everyone. The meeting is
4 adjourned.

5 [Whereupon, at 5:40 p.m., the meeting was
6 concluded.]

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