

1 OPEN EXECUTIVE SESSION TO CONSIDER THE NOMINATIONS OF  
2 SYLVIA MATHEWS BURWELL, OF WEST VIRGINIA, TO BE SECRETARY  
3 OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES; STEFAN M. SELIG, OF NEW  
4 YORK, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF COMMERCE FOR INTERNATIONAL  
5 TRADE; AND DARCI L. VETTER, OF NEBRASKA, TO BE CHIEF  
6 AGRICULTURAL NEGOTIATOR, WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR,  
7 OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE  
8 WEDNESDAY, MAY 21, 2014  
9 U.S. Senate,  
10 Committee on Finance  
11 Washington, DC.

12 The meeting was convened, pursuant to notice, at  
13 2:10 p.m. in room 215, Dirksen Senate Office Building,  
14 Hon. Ron Wyden (chairman of the committee) presiding.

15 Present: Senators Rockefeller, Schumer, Stabenow,  
16 Cantwell, Nelson, Menendez, Carper, Cardin, Bennet,  
17 Casey, Warner, Hatch, Crapo, Roberts, Isakson, and  
18 Portman.

19 Also present: Democratic Staff: Joshua Sheinkman,  
20 Staff Director; Michael Evans, General Counsel; Jocelyn  
21 Moore, Deputy Staff Director; Joshua LeVasseur, Chief  
22 Clerk and Historian; Jewel Harper, Deputy Clerk; and Matt  
23 Kazan, Health Policy Advisor. Republican Staff: Chris  
24 Campbell, Staff Director; Kimberly Brandt, Chief Health  
25 Care Investigative Counsel; and Rebecca Eubank,  
26 International Trade Analyst.

1 OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. RON WYDEN, A U.S. SENATOR FROM  
2 OREGON, CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

3

4 The Chairman. The committee will come to order.  
5 In the interest of the time of all Senators, Senator  
6 Hatch, when he arrives, and I will make brief opening  
7 statements, and then I hope that we can quickly move to  
8 the votes.

9 Today we are going to consider three nominations:  
10 Sylvia Matthews Burwell to be the Secretary of the  
11 Department of Health and Human Services; Stefan Selig to  
12 be Undersecretary of Commerce for International Trade;  
13 and Darci Vetter to be Chief Agricultural Negotiator at  
14 the Office of the United States Trade Representative.

15 Ms. Burwell is highly qualified and well-respected  
16 by Democrats and Republicans in government and in the  
17 private sector. Early last year, the Senate confirmed  
18 her nomination to be Director of the Office of Management  
19 and Budget by a vote of 96 to zero. And by all accounts,  
20 Ms. Burwell's confirmation process this time around has  
21 only reinforced that strong bipartisan support.

22 My view is that she will hit the ground running at  
23 the Department of Health and Human Services. And  
24 obviously, there are significant challenges there to  
25 address health care, child welfare, and family services.

1 That is why it is so important for the Senate to take up  
2 Ms. Burwell's nomination soon, after the Finance  
3 Committee does our part today.

4 I believe Ms. Burwell will work in a bipartisan  
5 manner and will help us forge common ground on  
6 challenging issues.

7 Stefan Selig has an important role to fill, helping  
8 American business be as competitive as possible, as the  
9 head of the International Trade Administration. He knows  
10 the ins and outs of the global economy, and he is well-  
11 suited for the job.

12 And Darci Vetter, who, I am happy to add, is a  
13 Finance Committee alum, will have an important task  
14 fighting on behalf of American farmers and ranchers in  
15 trade negotiations.

16 Both of these nominees will help to advance a trade  
17 agenda that focuses on creating jobs and a stronger  
18 economy for all Americans. I look forward to working  
19 with all three of these nominees once they are confirmed.

20 And I also want to thank Senator Hatch and our  
21 colleagues on both sides of the aisle for working with us  
22 to get these nominations cleared. Senator Hatch has been  
23 extremely helpful, and it is much appreciated.

24 As we wait for Senator Hatch, are there other  
25 Senators who would like to make brief remarks about any

1 of the nominees?

2 Senator Carper. Mr. Chairman?

3 The Chairman. Senator Carper.

4 Senator Carper. Jay, would you like to speak? Why  
5 don't you go first? Just do not talk about Sylvia  
6 Burwell; that is all I ask.

7 Senator Rockefeller. I am just so anxious to get  
8 her done here and get her done on the floor, I have no  
9 way of expressing it. Thank you.

10 Senator Carper. Mr. Chairman?

11 The Chairman. Yes.

12 Senator Carper. Jay said his piece on Sylvia  
13 Burwell, and could I speak just a minute or so?

14 The Chairman. You certainly can. Senator Hatch is  
15 about a minute away. That will be perfect.

16 Senator Carper. That is good.

17 I am privileged, as some of you know, to chair the  
18 Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, and  
19 I lead that with Tom Coburn. We both think the world of  
20 her.

21 When she was first nominated by the President, I  
22 noted she had worked in the Clinton administration. And  
23 I called Erskine Bowles, with whom she had worked very  
24 closely in the 1990s, and I said, "Tell me about Sylvia  
25 Burwell." He said, "You mean Sylvia Mathews Burwell?" I

1 said, "Yes." And he said, "I have known people as smart  
2 as Sylvia. I have known people who were as good at  
3 working with other people. I have known people as good  
4 enough, you give them an assignment, they will get it  
5 done." He said, "I have known people who are as good as  
6 her and different people in individual instances. I have  
7 never known anybody who is good as she is in doing all  
8 those things."

9 We got to work very closely with her on OMB, the  
10 management stuff that she works on Oversight. She is  
11 just a joy and a real pro.

12 The Chairman. The Coburn-Rockefeller introduction  
13 was resounding, and maybe we can hear a little bit more  
14 from Senator Rockefeller on that.

15 Would you care to add anything, Senator Rockefeller?

16 Senator Rockefeller. I hope that minute passes  
17 quickly for Senator Hatch to get here. [Laughter.]

18 There is a distinguished Senator over there, Mr.  
19 Chairman, who wants to say something.

20 The Chairman. Oh, excuse me. Senator Isakson, of  
21 course.

22 Senator Isakson. Mr. Chairman, I took the  
23 opportunity during the confirmation in the Finance  
24 Committee and in the HELP Committee to seriously question  
25 Ms. Burwell over an issue that was parochial in nature to

1 Georgia, but really commanded someone with a tremendous  
2 knowledge of OMB and somebody who would be willing to  
3 take on a tough question.

4 I just want for the record to show that she did so.  
5 She was forthright, and she was honest. I did not  
6 support the Affordable Care Act, but I believe with her  
7 in place, we will get answers to questions when they are  
8 asked, we will get accountability and honesty from the  
9 management of the Department, and that is a step in the  
10 right direction, and I intend to vote for Ms. Burwell.

11 The Chairman. Are there other colleagues who would  
12 like to say anything?

13 Senator Stabenow.

14 Senator Stabenow. Well, if we are waiting for  
15 Senator Hatch, I just want to lend my support as well for  
16 Sylvia Burwell and share with Senator Isakson my complete  
17 confidence that she will be responding to each and every  
18 one of us in working with us.

19 I had a chance to meet with her yesterday. It was a  
20 very, very impressive meeting, and I am very excited  
21 about her nomination and her taking control as Secretary  
22 of HHS.

23 And also, I spoke about Darci Vetter as the USTR  
24 Chief Ag Negotiator before, Mr. Chairman, and she will do  
25 a tremendous job in that position. And so all three of

1 the nominees I think are outstanding, and I look forward  
2 to supporting them.

3 Senator Warner. Mr. Chairman?

4 The Chairman. Senator Warner.

5 Senator Warner. Mr. Chairman, I just want to add I  
6 have known Sylvia for over 20 years, and she has a  
7 remarkable list of places that she has worked.

8 I would like to ask Senator Rockefeller -- her first  
9 listed employment was as a waitress at Kirk's Home of the  
10 Hungry Smile in Hinton, and I wondered if you could make  
11 any comment on that establishment.

12 Senator Rockefeller. Yes. Sharon, my wife Sharon  
13 and I honeymooned there.

14 Ms. Burwell. Did you take a rest stop?

15 Senator Rockefeller. Now, if you can tell me where  
16 it was, I would appreciate it. [Laughter.]

17 The Chairman. All right. I will now entertain a  
18 motion that the committee favorably report the  
19 nominations.

20 [The motion was agreed to and seconded].

21 The Chairman. We now have a motion and a second.  
22 I think what we will do, because Senator Hatch has asked  
23 that we wait so that he can be here for Sylvia Mathews  
24 Burwell, is move on to the other two nominations.

25 And unless members insist on a roll call vote, we

1 will take a voice vote on each of the two nominations.

2 Is there a request for a roll call vote on either of the  
3 other two?

4 [No response.]

5 The Chairman. Hearing none, the committee now will  
6 consider the nomination of Stefan M. Selig of New York to  
7 be Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade.  
8 All those in favor, say aye.

9 [A chorus of ayes.]

10 The Chairman. All those opposed?

11 [No response.]

12 The Chairman. Hearing none, the ayes have it, and  
13 the nomination is favorably reported.

14 The committee now will consider the nomination of  
15 Darci L. Vetter of Nebraska to be Chief Agricultural  
16 Negotiator in the Office of the United States Trade  
17 Representative, with the rank of Ambassador.

18 All those in favor, say aye.

19 [A chorus of ayes.]

20 The Chairman. All those opposed, say nay.

21 [No response.]

22 The Chairman. The ayes have it, and the nomination  
23 is favorably reported.

24 Colleagues, we are glad to have Senator Hatch here.

25 Senator Hatch, we are prepared to vote on Sylvia Mathews

1 Burwell. If you would like to make some opening  
2 comments, we would welcome that, and then we will move to  
3 that vote.

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1 OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ORRIN G. HATCH, A U.S. SENATOR  
2 FROM UTAH

3

4 Senator Hatch. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
5 Sorry I am just a little bit late, but I just wanted to  
6 note that I believe we have acted quickly on this  
7 nomination with a level of urgency that is probably  
8 appropriate for a nomination of this importance.

9 There were some delays in receiving Ms. Burwell's  
10 paperwork from the White House, which I believe created  
11 more tension and delays on this nomination than was  
12 necessary, and I hope that in the future we can get more  
13 cooperation from the administration on these nominations,  
14 particularly when the hope is to process them in an  
15 expeditious manner.

16 Let me just say this. I like Sylvia Burwell. I  
17 think she is an excellent choice. I think we have a  
18 chance of having a really great administrator in this  
19 area. I hope that she will cooperate with the committee.

20 I hope she will work with both sides, and I believe she  
21 will. I think she has that kind of personality and that  
22 kind of capacity. And I very much support her, as I have  
23 these other nominees as well.

24 The Chairman. Thank you, Senator Hatch.

25 And I want to thank you for the cooperation. You

1 and the staffs on both sides worked very constructively,  
2 and I appreciate that.

3 The committee will now consider the nomination of  
4 Sylvia Mathews Burwell, of West Virginia, to be the  
5 Secretary of Health and Human Services. A recorded vote  
6 is appropriate. The Clerk will call the roll.

7 The Clerk. Mr. Rockefeller?

8 Senator Rockefeller. Aye.

9 The Clerk. Mr. Schumer?

10 Senator Schumer. Aye.

11 The Clerk. Ms. Stabenow?

12 Senator Stabenow. Aye.

13 The Clerk. Ms. Cantwell?

14 Senator Cantwell. Aye.

15 The Clerk. Mr. Nelson?

16 Senator Nelson. Aye.

17 The Clerk. Mr. Menendez?

18 Senator Menendez. Aye.

19 The Clerk. Mr. Carper?

20 Senator Carper. Aye.

21 The Clerk. Mr. Cardin?

22 Senator Cardin. Aye.

23 The Clerk. Mr. Brown?

24 The Chairman. Aye by proxy.

25 The Clerk. Mr. Bennet?

1 Senator Bennet. Aye.  
2 The Clerk. Mr. Casey?  
3 Senator Casey. Aye.  
4 The Clerk. Mr. Warner?  
5 Senator Warner. Aye.  
6 The Clerk. Mr. Hatch?  
7 Senator Hatch. Aye.  
8 The Clerk. Mr. Grassley?  
9 Senator Hatch. Aye by proxy.  
10 The Clerk. Mr. Crapo?  
11 Senator Crapo. Aye.  
12 The Clerk. Mr. Roberts?  
13 Senator Roberts. No.  
14 The Clerk. Mr. Enzi?  
15 Senator Hatch. Aye by proxy.  
16 The Clerk. Mr. Cornyn?  
17 Senator Hatch. No by proxy.  
18 The Clerk. Mr. Thune?  
19 Senator Hatch. No by proxy.  
20 The Clerk. Mr. Burr?  
21 Senator Hatch. Aye by proxy.  
22 The Clerk. Mr. Isakson?  
23 Senator Isakson. Aye.  
24 The Clerk. Mr. Portman?  
25 Senator Portman. Aye.

1           The Clerk.    Mr. Toomey?

2           Senator Hatch.  Aye by proxy.

3           The Clerk.    Mr. Chairman?

4           The Chairman.  Aye.

5           The Clerk will report the tally.

6           The Clerk.    Mr. Chairman, the final tally is 21  
7 ayes, 3 nays.

8           The Chairman.  The nomination is approved.

9           That concludes our business for the day.  I want to  
10 thank Senator Hatch and all members on both sides for  
11 their cooperation.

12          The committee is adjourned.

13          [Whereupon, at 2:21 p.m., the meeting was  
14 concluded.]

I N D E X

PAGE

STATEMENT OF:

THE HONORABLE RON WYDEN  
A United States Senator  
from the State of Oregon 2

THE HONORABLE ORRIN G. HATCH  
A United States Senator  
from the State of Utah 10