

**Statement of Janet Hale
Nominee for Assistant Secretary
Department of Health and Human Services
Before the Senate Committee on Finance**

Mr. Chairman and Senator Grassley, it is an honor to appear before you and the distinguished Members of this Committee regarding my nomination as Assistant Secretary for the Department of Health and Human Services. I hope this marks the beginning of a close and productive partnership in which we work together to improve both the Department and the people we serve.

I have worked with several of you and your staff before and I look forward to doing so again.

I was deeply honored to be nominated in May for this position – but the importance of this position and the tremendous value and service that the Department of Health and Human Services provides struck home for me and for so many people after September 11th – the dedication of the employees, the mission of the Department and the opportunity to serve the American people as we protect the public health is paramount. From the Secretary himself, to Office of Emergency Preparedness and the Public Health Service, NIH, CDC, SAMHSA, Aging, CMS – each and every part of the department has played a valuable role. I look forward to playing my part in these efforts, should the Committee confirm me for this position

The position of Assistant Secretary for Budget, Technology and Finance embraces budget formulation and execution, financial policy and accountability, and information resources management. I have been fortunate in previous public service to have done similar work. I served in a number of budget and management positions in the Executive Branch agencies and at the Office of Management and Budget. I served as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Housing at

the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Assistant Secretary for Budget and Programs at the Department of Transportation, and as Associate Director at the Office of Management and Budget. Hopefully, having been through the budget formulation and execution process and providing oversight management from three different perspectives -- the program level, the department level and OMB -- I can foster a more effective and efficient approach to carrying out these functions at HHS. As Executive Vice President of the University of Pennsylvania and as Associate Administrator of Finance for the House of Representatives, I have overseen the development of new financial systems, one of Secretary Thompson's priorities.

My background and combination of experiences has prepared me to meet the challenges and confront the substantial issues that face the Department of Health and Human Services, and which are also so important to this Committee. I look forward to the opportunity of carrying out the management reforms proposed by the President and begun by Secretary Thompson, and working with each of you to implement the ideas and suggestions of this Committee.

Secretary Thompson is committed to creating a more unified Department of Health and Human Services with a shared mission and goal to serve the people of this great Nation. I enthusiastically support this goal and look forward to confronting the challenges that lie ahead, such as directing resources to the highest performing programs and using information technology to bring better government services to the public at reduced costs. Already, the Department is moving towards even stronger accountability by streamlining our financial management and

information systems and enhance coordination across the Department and eliminate unnecessary

duplication.

As the Department's Chief Financial Officer, I am dedicated to maintaining a clean audit opinion on the HHS financial statements.

To meet these challenges, and to better align the Department's management and budget activities, it will be important to provide a greater focus on performance and to more closely integrate performance with our budget decisions. To do this, we must identify high quality outcomes and accurately monitor the performance of our programs.

There are many other important issues before the Department of Health and Human Services that directly affect Americans in their day-to-day lives. Many are not simple issues or easy to resolve. But, they are issues that are fundamental to the American people and the health and well-being of our country. I am excited and honored to be nominated by President Bush and to serve Secretary Thompson. And I am excited to work with a cadre of truly extraordinary, dedicated public servants – men and women who are responsible for providing health and human services to so many Americans. If confirmed, this Committee, the Administration and Department and its employees will have all of my energy as we worked together on the HHS programs.

Thank you for your consideration of my nomination, and for the honor of appearing before you today. I am happy to answer any questions you might have.