

1 OPEN EXECUTIVE SESSION TO ORGANIZE FOR THE 118TH
2 CONGRESS
3 THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2023
4 U.S. Senate,
5 Committee on Finance,
6 Washington, DC.
7

8 The meeting was convened, pursuant to notice, at
9 10:49 a.m., in Room SD-215, Dirksen Senate Office
10 Building, Hon. Ron Wyden (chairman of the committee)
11 presiding.

12 Present: Senators Carper, Cortez Masto, Crapo,
13 Thune, Lankford, Johnson, Tillis, and Blackburn.

14 Also present: Democratic staff: Joshua Sheinkman,
15 Staff Director; Tiffany Smith, Deputy Staff Director and
16 Chief Counsel. Republican staff: Gregg Richard, Staff
17 Director; and Kelly McConnell, Health Policy Director.
18 Non-designated staff: Joshua LeVasseur, Chief Clerk and
19 Historian; and Susanna Segal, Deputy Chief Clerk.

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

3

4 The Chairman. Good morning to all, and I see our
5 new members are very punctual -- a good sign -- and it's
6 a pleasure to bring together the first meeting of the
7 Finance Committee in the 118th Congress. We want to
8 welcome our three new committee members. Senator Burr
9 may have left at the end of last year, but North
10 Carolinians can rest assured that Senator Tillis is
11 going to make sure that they have an important voice on
12 the committee.

13 Senator Blackburn is the first member from Tennessee
14 since the 109th Congress, when former Senator Bill Fritz
15 retired. It has been a little longer since Wisconsin
16 was represented on the committee. That goes back to the
17 end of the 96th Congress in 1980, but with Senator
18 Johnson joining us, the Badger State is represented once
19 again. So, you all have my welcome, and I'm looking
20 forward to each of the opportunities to meet with you
21 all personally and hear about your agendas and your
22 priorities.

23 From the day I was elected to the Senate, I wanted
24 to join the Finance Committee. And in effect, I had two
25 dreams in life. One of them was to get a college

1 basketball scholarship. That worked okay. The other
2 was to play in the NBA. That did not work out so well.
3 And the other, when I got to the Senate Finance
4 Committee, was to have a chance to serve here to tackle
5 big economic and health issues that matter most to our
6 people in our home states. That has worked out better.

7 That's because the committee has a history of coming
8 together. And I want to thank Senator Crapo for
9 consistent efforts to try to find common ground wherever
10 possible so that we could pass important, bipartisan
11 legislation, even during sharply divided Congresses.
12 Just in the last handful of years, we've come together
13 to pass bills cutting taxes for middle-class families
14 and small businesses, helping more people save for a
15 dignified retirement, updating the Medicaid guarantee,
16 making it easier for Americans to get mental health care
17 where and when they need it, and designing and
18 authorizing a transformational, technology-neutral
19 energy policy that rewards reducing carbon emissions.

20 So, there's a lot that we can build on, big
21 opportunity for progress on more key issues in the
22 coming months, including reducing the cost of housing
23 and health care, taking on prescription drug middlemen,
24 making more progress on mental health, and promoting
25 good-paying manufacturing jobs in America. I look

1 forward to working with the entire committee on these
2 issues and more. With that, I'll turn it over to
3 Senator Crapo and then we'll see if we can advance the
4 organizing resolution.

5 Senator Crapo?

1 OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. MIKE CRAPO, A U.S. SENATOR
2 FROM IDAHO

3

4 Senator Crapo. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I look
5 forward to working with you as we launch our Finance
6 Committee operations in this new Congress.

7 The Finance Committee plays a vital role in shaping
8 our Nation's economy, covering everything from tax,
9 trade, health care, and the national debt. Welcome to
10 our new members, Senators Johnson, Tillis, and
11 Blackburn. Your combined background and experience will
12 be a positive contribution to the policy discussions in
13 the committee's jurisdiction.

14 Senator Johnson was actively engaged in the 2017 tax
15 reform efforts and his input will be welcomed as we
16 consider the provisions that are soon expiring. Ron's
17 strong oversight background as the top Republican of the
18 Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee
19 will be invaluable as this committee ensures the
20 agencies and departments within its jurisdiction are
21 accountable to the American taxpayers.

22 Senator Tillis's experience in the public and
23 private sectors have primed him with the deep insight he
24 needs into the workings of the complex international
25 organizations and the types of tax and regulatory

1 policies that foster job growth and a healthy economy.
2 Tom has said he wants to declare a minor in
3 international tax and trade space, and we're happy to
4 let him take up that mantle.

5 Senator Blackburn has made affordable, accessible
6 health care a priority, as well as an international
7 trade landscape that creates equal opportunities,
8 especially for Tennessee businesses to compete against
9 countries like China. I also expect Marsha to exercise
10 strong oversight of the IRS, making sure that that
11 agency works for taxpayers and not the other way around.

12 Again, welcome to our new members. We look forward
13 to working with you, Mr. Chairman.

14 The Chairman. Thank you, Senator Crapo. We're
15 going to move forward with our organizational agenda
16 here very soon, but I wanted to see if any member on
17 either side of the aisle wanted to make some comments.

18 [No response.]

19 The Chairman. Okay, hearing none, I thank all my
20 colleagues. We'll be able to go on with it, and that is
21 very helpful. With that, the business at hand is to
22 organize for the 118th Congress. To organize, the
23 committee must adopt the committee rules, authorize the
24 committee budget, assign Senators to subcommittees of
25 this committee, and designate Senators to serve on the

1 Joint Committee on Taxation and its congressional tax
2 advisors on trade policy and negotiations. All Senators
3 should have copies of all the documents.

4 I'll now entertain a motion on the
5 organizational -- we have to wait? Okay.

6 Senator Tillis. I'm ready to make the motion.

7 The Chairman. Senator Tillis, God bless him, is
8 ready to do this. Apparently, we have -- our new
9 members will find, from time to time, some quorum
10 challenges. If worse comes to worse, we'll have the
11 vote off the floor during a vote, but let me ask now how
12 many short are we?

13 What's the bipartisan advice? Should we wait or
14 should we adjourn and do it off the floor?

15 Senator Tillis. I don't think that we expect a lot
16 more. I'm not sure.

17 The Chairman. All right. We'll wait 3, 4 minutes.
18 If that doesn't work, we'll pass the organizational
19 resolution off the floor. And I, again, want to thank
20 our three new members for being so punctual. You'll be
21 setting a standard for all of us.

22 Senator Cardin's suggesting he's chopped liver. Not
23 on my watch. I thank him as well.

24 Senator Tillis. Mr. Chair, I want to let you know I
25 told the General Security of NATO that as much as I

1 wanted to meet with him, he was running late and I was
2 not going to be late for the organizing meeting on a
3 committee I just joined, so if we could move forward and
4 I could back to that one, I'd like to do that too.

5 The Chairman. Right. We can only wait 3 minutes
6 and then my gut tells me we'll be doing this off the
7 floor.

8 Colleagues, we're still one short. What we're going
9 to do is allow the opportunity to move forward. Senator
10 Crapo will make a motion on the organizational
11 business -- we got nine.

12 I will now entertain a motion on the organizational
13 business of the Committee on Finance en bloc.

14 Senator Crapo. Mr. Chairman, I move that the
15 committee adopt the committee organization business en
16 bloc.

17 The Chairman. Now, colleagues we are still short
18 now of being able to move forward, and the bipartisan
19 staff will make sure everybody has the time on this, but
20 we will recess now, and then we'll vote on our
21 organizational requirements off the floor today. Thank
22 you all for coming.

23 [Whereupon, at 10:58 a.m., the meeting was
24 recessed.]

1 The open executive session was reconvened, pursuant
2 to notice, on Wednesday, February 9, 2023, at 1:30 p.m.,
3 in Room S-216, The President's Room, U.S. Capitol, Hon.
4 Ron Wyden (chairman of the committee) presiding.

5 The Chairman. The committee will come to order. We
6 now have a quorum. I move that we approve the committee
7 budget, subcommittee assignments, the committee rules,
8 the designation of the members of the Joint Tax
9 Committee, and the designation of the Congressional
10 Trade Advisors, en bloc.

11 Senator Crapo. Seconded.

12 The Chairman. The Clerk will call the roll.

13 The Clerk. Ms. Stabenow?

14 Senator Stabenow. Aye.

15 The Clerk. Ms. Cantwell?

16 The Chairman. Aye by proxy.

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 Senator Brown. Aye.

25 The Clerk. Mr. Bennet?

1 The Chairman. Aye by proxy.

2 The Clerk. Mr. Casey?

3 Senator Casey. Aye.

4 The Clerk. Mr. Warner?

5 Senator Warner. Aye.

6 The Clerk. Mr. Whitehouse?

7 Senator Whitehouse. Aye.

8 The Clerk. Ms. Hassan?

9 Senator Hassan. Aye.

10 The Clerk. Ms. Cortez Masto?

11 Senator Cortez Masto. Aye.

12 The Clerk. Ms. Warren?

13 The Chairman. Aye by proxy.

14 The Clerk. Mr. Crapo?

15 Senator Crapo. Aye.

16 The Clerk. Mr. Grassley?

17 Senator Crapo. Aye by proxy.

18 The Clerk. Mr. Cornyn?

19 Senator Cornyn. Aye.

20 The Clerk. Mr. Thune?

21 Senator Thune. Aye.

22 The Clerk. Mr. Scott?

1 Senator Crapo. Aye by proxy.

2 The Clerk. Mr. Cassidy?

3 Senator Cassidy. Aye.

4 The Clerk. Mr. Lankford?

5 Senator Lankford. Aye.

6 The Clerk. Mr. Daines?

7 Senator Crapo. Aye by proxy.

8 The Clerk. Mr. Young?

9 Senator Young. Aye.

10 The Clerk. Mr. Barrasso?

11 Senator Crapo. Aye by proxy.

12 The Clerk. Mr. Johnson?

13 Mr. Johnson. Aye.

14 The Clerk. Mr. Tillis?

15 Senator Tillis. Aye.

16 The Clerk. Mrs. Blackburn?

17 Senator Crapo. Aye, by proxy.

18 The Clerk. Mr. Chairman?

19 The Chairman. Aye.

20 The clerk will announce the vote.

21 The Clerk. Mr. Chairman, the final tally is 27

22 ayes and 0 nays.

1 The Chairman. The "ayes" have it. I thank my
2 colleagues for their time. The committee is adjourned.

3 [Whereupon, at 1:57 p.m., the meeting was
4 concluded.]

	STATEMENT OF:	PAGE
1		
2	Hon. Ron Wyden,	2
3	a U.S. Senator from Oregon,	
4	chairman, Committee on Finance	
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6	Hon. Mike Crapo,	5
7	a U.S. Senator from Idaho	