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### **Hatch Statement at Finance Executive Session to Consider CMS Administrator Nominee**

WASHINGTON – Senate Finance Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) today delivered the following opening statement at an executive session to consider the nomination of Seema Verma to head the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS):

*I want to welcome everyone to this morning's markup. Today the committee will consider – and hopefully report – the nomination of Seema Verma to be the Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.*

*I want to be brief in my comments today so that we can move more quickly toward a vote.*

*Regarding Ms. Verma, I think she is a highly qualified nominee. I really don't think there's anyone who reasonably disputes that.*

*She has vast experience working with state governments to improve and modernize their Medicaid systems. And, she has the knowledge and temperament necessary to lead this important agency at this critical time.*

*It bears repeating that CMS currently processes over a billion healthcare claims a year. It is the world's largest health insurer and has a budget of over a trillion dollars a year.*

*Long story short, if we're going to make the needed changes to fix our healthcare system, we need competent and willing partners at CMS who will work with Congress to find the best solutions and then effectively implement those solutions.*

*Moreover, if we're ever going to tackle our growing entitlement crisis and preserve our federal health programs – as well as Social Security – for future generations, we need to take hard looks at the system now and find common ground on improvements that will extend the life of these important programs. Therefore, we need leadership at CMS that will both recognize the problems these programs face and understand the importance of the programs to the populations they serve.*

*I believe Ms. Verma will be that kind of leader at CMS. And, I think there is bipartisan agreement on that point.*

*During Ms. Verma's hearing, I remarked on the recent conflicts and contention we've had to deal with on the committee. I have been very pleased to see that, for the most part, we have been able to overcome that with regard to this nomination.*

*I want to commend my colleagues for what has generally been a smooth process for this nomination. I'm hoping to see at least a few of my Democratic colleagues vote in favor of Ms. Verma today. Looking forward, I hope that this goodwill can continue into the future as we have many more nominations to consider in the coming months.*

*In conclusion, I just want to reiterate my support for this nomination, and I urge all of my colleagues on the committee to vote in favor of reporting the nomination today.*

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