

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6200

September 7, 2021

Senator Ron Wyden
Chairman, Committee on Finance
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman,

The Finance Committee has a vital and time-honored tradition of fully vetting legislative proposals and voting on amendments. The Finance Committee has routinely carried out its instructed responsibilities under regular order, even in the case of bills that have resulted in a partisan outcome, such as the Affordable Care Act or the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, as well as bills with a bipartisan outcome, like the Jobs and Growth Tax Relief Reconciliation Act. Now is not the time to abandon this important tradition.

Legislation currently being contemplated and drafted behind closed doors by Senate Democrats may encompass the rewriting of business, international, energy, housing, and other significant structural elements of the tax code, along with sweeping changes to our nation's health programs, federalization of unemployment insurance, and more. Unfortunately, the scope and substance of this legislation remains unclear, as Democrats have chosen to write and discuss the bill in secret, with no Republican input or consultation.

According to S.Con.Res. 14, the Finance Committee's reconciliation instruction states that the Committee "shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction that reduce the deficit by not less than \$1,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2022-2031." This instruction, which places only a lower bound on deficit reduction, coupled with the degree of spending envisioned by Democrats means that trillions of taxpayer dollars hang in the balance. While the legislation Democrats intend to introduce has been withheld from Republicans on the Committee and from the American people, press reports indicate a far-reaching and potentially highly disruptive agenda.

Democrats' broad agenda ranges from rewriting the tax code to overhauling government assistance programs, including: international tax provisions that would favor our biggest competitors, like China, over American businesses; tax increases that would kill jobs and reduce wages; energy tax policies that would gut certain sectors of the U.S. economy; construction of an unvetted paid leave program; drug pricing legislation that could crush innovation; expansions of Medicaid and Medicare; new powers for the Internal Revenue Service to monitor bank accounts of virtually every individual American and business—all done willingly and solely along party lines.

The Senate Finance Committee's jurisdiction comprises a broad set of federal programs and policies with significant everyday impacts on all Americans. Legislation as unprecedented as the Democrats' rumored proposal should be fully vetted and afforded appropriate opportunity for debate. At this time, it does not appear that you intend to hold hearings on all provisions under consideration, or allow for discussion of, or amendments to, the Finance Committee's reconciliation package. Such a procedural scheme would circumvent standard Senate practice and would deviate from the Administration's stated goals of bipartisanship, cooperation and openness. If Senate Democrats insist on moving forward with this reckless, partisan proposal and procedure, we request that you at least act to protect the rights and jurisdiction of the Finance Committee and its members by not allowing for the marginalization of the Finance Committee through this reconciliation process.

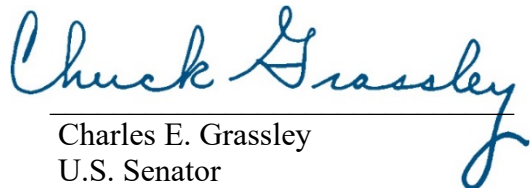
Failure to hold a full, open markup, as our House Ways and Means and Energy and Commerce Committee counterparts are doing, would amount to a massive and unfortunate concession to the House, as well as to Congressional leadership. It would also serve to further erode the American people's trust in the Senate as an open and effective institution, substituting a secretive process behind closed doors for a productive public dialogue.

We stand ready to join you and our other Democratic colleagues in an open executive session to thoroughly and rigorously examine and debate any forthcoming reconciliation proposals in the Finance Committee's jurisdiction.

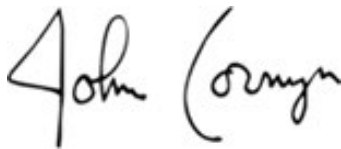
Sincerely,



Mike Crapo
U.S. Senator



Charles E. Grassley
U.S. Senator



John Cornyn
U.S. Senator



John Thune
U.S. Senator



Richard Burr
U.S. Senator



Rob Portman
U.S. Senator



Pat Toomey
U.S. Senator



Tim Scott
U.S. Senator



Bill Cassidy, M.D.
U.S. Senator



James Lankford
U.S. Senator



Steve Daines
U.S. Senator



Todd Young
U.S. Senator



Ben Sasse
U.S. Senator



John Barrasso, M.D.
U.S. Senator