

**Opening Statement of Chairman Thomas R. Carper  
Nomination hearing of Brian C. Deese to be  
Deputy Director, Office of Management and Budget  
May 13, 2013**

*As prepared for delivery:*

Today we meet to consider the nomination of Brian Deese, President Obama's choice to serve as Deputy Director of the Office of Management and Budget. I am pleased to note at the outset of this hearing that the nomination process in this case is proceeding as it should. The position for which Mr. Deese is nominated became vacant in February of this year, when OMB Deputy Director Heather Higginbottom took a new assignment at the Department of State with incoming Secretary John Kerry. By early April the President submitted the nomination of Mr. Deese, and Dr. Coburn and I have worked to review and bring the nomination before the full Committee expeditiously.

In terms of process, I think this nomination has worked well at both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue. And I hope it is a model that the White House and the Senate will continue to follow often. In recent decades, through both Democratic and Republican Administrations, the nomination and confirmation processes have become unacceptably slow. At any given time, there are far too many vacant senior positions throughout the federal government. This lack of critical leadership undermines the effectiveness of the government. And a slow, partisan process discourages talented people from wanting to serve in our government.

This problem has become so prevalent that I have started referring to it as Executive Branch 'Swiss Cheese.' And that is why I believe it is so important for our Committee to move forward promptly on nominations that fall within our jurisdiction. Nominations for the senior positions at the Office of Management and Budget are among the most important that our Committee will consider this year.

As most of you know, on April 24, by a vote of 96 to 0, the Senate confirmed the nomination of Sylvia Mathews Burwell to be Director of the Office of Management and Budget. She will be a strong leader, and now the President and the Senate share the job of surrounding her with a great team.

Following today's consideration of Mr. Deese's nomination, we will soon consider the nomination of Howard Shelanski to be Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs. And I hope that in short order the President will submit a nomination for the position of Deputy Director for Management, which was recently vacated by Jeff Zients. Having strong leadership at the Office of Management and Budget is important at any time, but particularly at this moment, when our nation is so desperately in need of a long-term budget plan to rein in our federal deficit and debt.

I've said it before, but something this important bears repeating often. The grand budget compromise that we need in order to address this fiscal crisis must have three essential elements.

It must address both spending and revenues in a balanced approach. It must rein in the costs of our entitlement programs in a way that doesn't savage the poor or the elderly. And it must ensure that, through better management of government programs, we deliver better services to the American people at a lower cost.

This Committee is an important partner with the Office of Management and Budget in all of these areas, but especially in ensuring that our government achieves better results for less money. We have a full agenda, then, and Dr. Coburn and I are working in full partnership. For example:

- We can save billions of dollars by shedding federal property that is no longer used.
- We can save billions of dollars every year by reducing the amount of improper payments that the government makes.
- We can bring in billions of dollars of revenues by doing a better job of collecting taxes that are owed but not paid.
- We can save billions of dollars in federal contracting every year through efforts such as the so-called strategic sourcing initiative, which involves buying more in bulk.
- We can save billions of dollars through better management of the information technology that the government buys.
- We can improve the transparency of government spending so that the American people have a better understanding of how their tax dollars are used.

These are just a few examples of the ways this Committee and the Office of Management and Budget, in concert, are striving to make our government work better.

“I am that we have before us today a nominee who has a firm grasp of the role of both the “M” and the “B” in OMB. With respect to the “M” – the management – Mr. Deese understands the importance of driving innovations and efficiencies across the government so that agencies not only save money, but deliver better services to the American people. And with respect to the “B,” he is someone who is committed to achieving a comprehensive deficit reduction plan that will help our economy grow.

Mr. Deese comes well-prepared for these challenges from his two positions at the National Economic Council – first as a Special Assistant to the President for Economic Policy and then as Deputy Assistant to the President and Deputy Director of the National Economic Council. Mr. Deese has earned a well-justified reputation as someone who can absorb a tremendous amount of economic data, synthesize it, and translate it into viable options for the President and his economic team. On issues ranging from the auto bailout to housing issues to tax policy, Mr. Deese has helped our country recover from the recession that hit our economy before President Obama took office. He is someone who understands that our fiscal policies are intrinsically linked to the prosperity of the American people.

Brian's father is a college professor and his mother is an engineer. He clearly has inherited their smarts. He has an undergraduate degree from Middlebury College and a law degree from Yale Law School. Before going to law school, he spent time doing policy analysis for the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, the Center for Global Development, and the Center for American Progress.

I think anyone who meets Brian quickly realizes that he has the brainpower to pursue whatever profession he chooses. But he has a passion for public policy – specifically, a passion for finding ways for our government to make smart choices so that individuals and businesses can prosper.

In short, he is someone who quickly impressed his colleagues in the Administration, and I believe he will quickly impress my colleagues in the Senate.

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