

**Opening Statement of Chairman Gary C. Peters
Nomination of Neera Tanden to be Director, Office of Management and Budget
February 9, 2021**

I'm honored to preside as Chairman of this Committee for the first time today. I am looking forward to working closely with our new Ranking Member, Senator Portman, and all of my colleagues, to tackle the tough challenges our nation is facing.

I'm also excited to welcome our Committee's two newest members, Senator Alex Padilla from California and Senator Jon Ossoff from Georgia.

Welcome, we are thrilled to have you here, and I look forward to working with you.

This Committee has a longstanding tradition of bipartisanship, and coming together to get things done. Given the many serious challenges facing our nation, we have a lot we need to accomplish. I look forward to working with everyone on this Committee to find common ground, and commonsense solutions, to strengthen our national security, and ensure that government is working effectively for taxpayers.

Today, our Committee is considering the nomination of Ms. Neera Tanden to serve as the Director of Office of Management and Budget.

Welcome Ms. Tanden, good to see you, and your family, here today. Congratulations on your historic nomination. Thank you for your willingness to serve our nation.

The Office of Management and Budget, or OMB, plays a central role in developing and implementing the President's budget and policy agenda across the federal government. To put it simply, the Director of OMB is charged with ensuring that every part of the federal government is effectively serving the American people.

Ms. Tanden, this is a job that is not easy under the best of circumstances. Once confirmed, you will step into this role while our country continues to grapple with a historic public health and economic crisis. However, after our conversations, I am confident that your decades of experience in public service have prepared you to tackle this vital role.

You know firsthand the struggles that working and middle class families, small businesses, and frontline workers in Michigan and across the country confront every day.

Your experience has taught you how much the federal government can help support hardworking families, and create opportunities. In fact, you have devoted much of your career in public service to championing economic policy that benefits all Americans.

We are nearly one year into dealing with a pandemic that has decimated our economy and the livelihoods of too many Americans.

We need strong leadership at OMB to coordinate the additional support families across the country need. They need emergency relief, they need vaccines, and they need guidance to help swiftly and safely reopen our economy. As Director of OMB, you will play a key role in steering the country towards a national recovery.

You will also be responsible for coordinating efforts to address many of the long-term challenges our nation faces, including protecting our cybersecurity infrastructure, growing domestic manufacturing jobs, and even fighting climate change.

Communities in my home state of Michigan, and across the country, are also struggling to address the widespread PFAS contamination crisis. I hear from Michiganders every day about how exposure to these harmful chemicals are affecting their homes and their families. Once confirmed, you'll be responsible for coordinating the federal government's response to this monumental problem.

You will also play a critical role in ensuring that taxpayer dollars are spent responsibly. That is why I appreciate your robust commitments to transparency, accountability, and working with Congress in a bipartisan manner.

Given OMB's role at the center of the federal government, you will be charged with ensuring government is addressing the unique needs of communities of color and most vulnerable populations.

You'll also be a key player in the effort to reinvigorate a federal workforce that has been decimated in recent years.

Your perspective, and commitment, will be critical to ensuring that OMB, and the federal government, is delivering for the American people every single day.

That is why you have received support from numerous organizations, such as the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and over 100 public health experts, have written to this committee in support of your nomination.

Without objection, I will enter these letters into the record.

Today's hearing is an important opportunity for me and my colleagues to have a thorough discussion about how you plan to lead OMB, and how we can all work together in a bipartisan manner to address the serious challenges we face today.

Thank you again for your willingness to serve, and for being here with us today.

With that, I will turn it over to Senator Portman.