

Senator Rob Portman
February 9, 2021
HSGAC Nomination Hearing: OMB Director Nominee Neera Tanden
Opening Statement

I'm glad to join this hearing today, and Ms. Tanden, I appreciated our telephone call last week. As a former OMB Director, I know how important the role is. It's crucial that the director have an understanding of regulatory law and government management, as well as a broad awareness of the array of policy issues that the office reviews and coordinates. And because of the coordinating role OMB plays, it's imperative that the Director can work productively both within the administration and with members of Congress on both sides of the aisle.

Cooperation across the aisle is especially important as our nation confronts several crises at once. We have to work together to address the COVID-19 pandemic, including the effects on our public health, the economy, and students' education. And we have to work together to counter cyber threats to the public and private sectors like the massive cyber attack, Solar Winds—OMB plays a significant role in directing our national cybersecurity strategy.

We also should cooperate to build on the economic and regulatory progress we have made over the last several years. The Trump Administration prioritized reviewing the efficacy of regulations and created processes to ensure that the administrative state engaged in rigorous cost-benefit analysis.

Many of those regulatory changes helped job creators, like small businesses, get more people working. We need those jobs as we continue to work to emerge from the pandemic. And the Council of Economic Advisers estimated that after five to ten years, that kind of restrained approach to federal regulation would raise real incomes by \$3,100 a year. I hope the new administration will build on these efforts to reduce the regulatory burden and not unduly expand government interference in people's businesses and lives.

And I hope that the new administration and OMB will work with me on lifting the sunset on a bipartisan law I authored in 2015 called FAST-41, which helped coordinate the federal permitting process for some of the largest infrastructure projects. Again—this is about good jobs, and our infrastructure badly needs improvement.

Ms. Tanden, I look forward to hearing your thoughts today about these and other issues and your goals should you be confirmed as OMB Director.