

STATEMENT OF SYLVIA MATHEWS BURWELL

**Nominee to Serve As
Director of the Office of Management and Budget**

**UNITED STATES SENATE COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS**

April 9, 2013

Thank you Chairman Carper, Ranking Member Coburn, and Members of the Committee for welcoming me today. It is a privilege to be considered by this committee as the President's nominee to be Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

I want to thank Senators Rockefeller and Manchin for their support of my nomination. West Virginia is fortunate to have two such great Senators who were also strong governors of our State.

I am pleased that my family could join me today: my husband Stephen and my brother-in law Joe. My 5 year old daughter Helene and 3 year old son Matthew were not able to join us today. I understand the sacrifices entailed by public service, and I recognize that the biggest burden falls on one's family members. So I deeply appreciate their support as I seek to take on this new challenge.

I am also grateful to President Obama for nominating me to serve as the next Director of the Office of Management and Budget. It is an honor to be considered for this position at this important time.

Finally, I want to thank the Members of the Committee and their staffs for meeting with me over the last few weeks and for sharing your insights. If I am confirmed, I very much look forward to continuing our conversations.

I believe in the greatness of our nation. As a second generation Greek American, my family and I have benefitted greatly by the opportunities this country offered.

Our nation has made important progress over the last four years. We pulled out of a deep economic downturn. Our financial markets have stabilized. Businesses are hiring again. And we began the long journey to put our fiscal house in order.

The President and the Congress have made progress on the deficit, but there is more to do. We need to focus on making the economy work for middle class families and American business, in the short and the long term.

If I am confirmed, my primary focus will be to contribute to achieving balanced deficit reduction, increased efficiency and effectiveness in how government works, and targeted investments that grow the economy and create jobs.

The President is actively engaged with Members of Congress on this subject. If I am confirmed, I will do everything in my power to keep this dialogue going and to continue to build on the relationships between the Administration and Members on both sides of the aisle.

From my experience in the Clinton Administration – at OMB, the White House, and the Treasury Department – I learned the importance of working together in a bipartisan fashion to get things done. I saw first-hand how the deficit reduction agreements of the late 1990s were reached. I know that we all come to the table with firm convictions and the belief that we know the right answer. We also come with the same conviction to serve the American people, which I hope will drive us to find common ground to move the country forward.

There is no question that the road ahead will be difficult. The challenges we face are sobering. But I am confident we can come together on a comprehensive plan.

I am pleased with the prospect of returning to OMB. I have tremendous respect for the institution and the incredibly talented men and women who work there. I am hopeful that, if confirmed, I can contribute to ensuring OMB is a place where talented people want to go and that the institution is strong for other Administrations. Although OMB is most well-known for its work on the Federal budget, the management side of OMB is also critical.

In the current fiscal environment, it is more important than ever that we are operating the government in the most efficient and effective manner.

I want to credit this Committee and Acting Director Zients for their strong leadership in these areas. If I am confirmed, I will work to build on these efforts and continue to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of taxpayer dollars. By governing smartly and being good stewards, we can reduce the deficit and increase the value of what is delivered.

As someone who has been out of the government now for 12 years, I am hopeful that I can bring a fresh perspective to the fiscal debates underway. From my positions at the Walmart Foundation, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and as a Director at MetLife, I have seen the important role that both the government and private sector play in the lives of the American people.

If I am confirmed, it would be an honor to dedicate myself to using the tools at OMB to ensuring that our government delivers for the American people.

Again, I want to thank the President for giving me this opportunity and the Committee for considering my nomination. I look forward to answering any questions you may have.