

**TESTIMONY OF REPRESENTATIVE MICK MULVANEY, OF SOUTH
CAROLINA, INTENDED TO BE DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF
MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS, UNITED STATES SENATE**

Thank you, Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member McCaskill, and members of the Committee for welcoming me today. It is an honor and a privilege to be here. I am pleased to present my qualifications and my vision for the Office of Management and Budget to this committee.

Thank you to the President for nominating me, and for the confidence he showed in me by doing so.

Thank you to Senator Graham and Senator Cotton for your kind remarks.

Thank you especially to my family. As the members of this committee know better than most, the burdens of public service often fall on our families. I deeply appreciate their continued support. We don't get an opportunity to say this nearly enough, and almost never on national television, but I am very proud of the young adults my children have become, despite the fact – or maybe because of the fact? – that their dad has been away from home for much of the past several years. And that is a testament to the kind of woman my wife is. I am extraordinarily proud, and happy, to have her in my life.

Finally, I am grateful for the members of the Committee and their staff, not only for having me here today, but also for taking the time to meet with me over the last few weeks and sharing your views. Should I be confirmed, I look forward to continuing our conversations, and to getting your guidance and wisdom.

Because no one can do this job alone. Perhaps a member of Congress knows that better than most. Several former members of Congress have served at OMB – Senator Portman, Jim Nussle, Leon Panetta – they all served with distinction, set a high bar, and provided a good example of how the OMB director should interact with and serve the President, Congress, and the American people.

If confirmed, I will use them as models. You deserve the truth, as do the American people, and it is the OMB Director's responsibility to tell you – and the President – the truth, even when that might be hard to hear.

For the first time in America's history, the next generation could be less prosperous than the generation that preceded it. To me, and to the people in this room, that is simply unacceptable. We CAN turn this economy, and this country around...but it will take tough decisions today in order to avoid impossible ones tomorrow.

Our gross national debt has increased to almost \$20 trillion. That number is so large as to defy description. I choose to look at it another way: to an ordinary American family, that translates to a credit card bill of \$260,000. Families know what that would mean for them. It is time for government to learn the same lesson.

I believe, as a matter of principle, that the debt is a problem that must be addressed sooner, rather than later. I also know that fundamental changes are needed in the way Washington spends and taxes if we truly want a healthy economy. This must include changing our government's long-term fiscal path – which is unsustainable.

Part of fixing that problem also means taking a hard look at government waste...and then ending it. American taxpayers deserve a government that is efficient, effective, and accountable. American families earn their money honestly; they expect the government to spend it honestly. We owe them that much.

But fixing the economy doesn't mean just taking a green eyeshade approach to the budget. Our government isn't just about numbers. A strong, healthy economy allows us to protect our most vulnerable. My mother-in-law relied on social security when she retired; she relied on Medicare to see to her medical needs before she died of cancer. Pam and I were glad that the safety net was there for her. We would also like it to be there for her grandchildren, our triplets, as well.

All of that being said, I know many of the members of this committee will want to know what my positions will be as OMB Director. I am, of course, not yet in that position, and I do not presume to know about decisions I might make, much less what decisions the President might make after consulting his cabinet and advisors. I do know what I believe, however, and I look forward to discussing whatever topics you consider relevant today.

I recognize that good public service – whether in a state legislature, Congress, or OMB – takes both courage and wisdom. The courage to lead, and the wisdom to listen. I have learned that I do not have a monopoly on good ideas. Facts – and the cogent arguments of others – matter. I will be loyal to the facts, and to the American people whom I serve.

My commitment to you today is to take a fact-based approach to get our financial house in order.

OMB also fulfills significant management responsibilities, and plays a significant role in dealing with the regulatory environment – among several other important functions, as you all know.

I look forward to talking about any and all of those issues, as this committee sees fit. And if confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress – and serving the President – to address these challenges on behalf of the people we all serve.