

PRESS STATEMENT**Senator Joe Lieberman**

CONFIRMATION HEARING OF

MARK W. EVERSON

TO BE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF MANAGEMENT AT OMB

July 17, 2002

Good morning, Mr. Everson and welcome to this hearing. Today, we are considering your nomination to be the Deputy Director of Management for the Office of Management and Budget - the third highest ranking position at the department and one that gives you responsibility for establishing management policies for all executive agencies in the areas of finance, human capital, procurement, and information technology. These duties will take on added significance in the coming months.

As you know, the President and Congress are intent on establishing a new Department of Homeland Security this year by consolidating a number of existing agencies and by creating some new programs. That means that careful management of these agencies and programs will be needed more than ever if we are to minimize overlap and maximize efficiency. I am eager to learn how the OMB is preparing for this monumental re-organization and I look forward to working with you and OMB as we proceed with this important work.

As chairman of the President's Council on Integrity and Efficiency, you play an important role in interacting with IGs on behalf of the administration. This Committee has a longstanding role in ensuring that inspectors general are able to do their jobs - independently and with adequate funding - as they are central to the principles of good, efficient, consumer-oriented government.

Your current portfolio as Controller at OMB has acquainted you with the inadequate financial systems and controls now in place at many agencies. As you know, the General Accounting Office has identified financial management at the Department of Defense, the Forest Service, the Federal Aviation Administration, and the IRS as high risk because of massive systemic problems.

One of the most significant problems is the outdated financial

systems many agencies have which often do not meet the most basic accounting requirements, depriving federal managers of the timely and accurate information they need for daily decision-making. This Committee has been particularly concerned about improper payments that agencies estimate they've made in recent years. This type of waste is unacceptable and constitutes a major loss of funds the government will need in the coming years for important security functions.

Finally, I would like to commend the Administration for recognizing the importance of improving the government's ability to communicate electronically with the public and between agencies, and for working with the Committee to pass an electronic government bill out of the Senate last month. Our work is far from complete, however, and I hope the Administration's cooperation with this Committee is extended to the House, where consensus on a bill has not yet been achieved.

I have seen your responses to the Committee's pre-hearing questions and I appreciate the care with which you have answered our questions. Again, I welcome you to this Committee today. I look forward to working with you in the coming years. Thank you.

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