

doesn't seem to take the vetting done by a Senate Committee seriously is the reaction we have seen by others, including some who serve in this body. Some apparently see the due diligence and vetting done on nominees as an assembly line that produces a guaranteed outcome.

We have seen what I believe to be political operatives from outside the Senate selectively leak information in a effort to target the Finance Committee's process of vetting nominees and even the specific staffers who carry out this work. These political operatives have had a lot of work to do, as Dr. Brainard is the fifth nominee from the current administration to run into significant problems during the Finance Committee vetting process. The Finance Committee vetting process has not changed in the nearly 9 years I have been chairman or ranking member. What has changed are the specific nominees and the apparent willingness of some to tolerate and excuse issues that would have disqualified nominees from the previous administration.

Nominees in the previous administration would have had trouble garnering support if they had these sorts of problems, and I made it clear my job was not to defend a problematic nominee. Most people do not know about these problematic nominees from the past because in some cases they did not get a hearing and in others they were not nominated in the first place.

There is only one person who could tell us why the vetting process for this nominee took so long, and that person is Lael Brainard.

I have been trying to ask her questions for 9 months now without much success, so now my questions are for the critics of the Finance Committee process and those determined to see this nominee confirmed no matter what.

How long should we allow a nominee to provide incomplete and contradictory answers before we simply decide that person ought to be confirmed anyway?

Who is important enough not to be obligated to follow the same rules and obligations as all other nominees?

What high government official is so important that they ought to be exempt from the burden of routine Congressional oversight?

Is knowing the right people a substitute for simple honesty and strength of character?

As for myself, I am going to answers these questions by reiterating my opposition to the nomination.

I, Senator CHUCK GRASSLEY, do not object to proceeding to the nominations of Lael Brainard to be Under Secretary of the Treasury, Michael Mundaca to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, Mary Miller to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, and Charles Collyns to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO TARAS G. SZMAGALA

• Mr. VOINOVICH. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Taras G. "Tary" Szmagala, on the occasion of his retirement from the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority in Cleveland, OH. Tary has dedicated his life to public service and has worked tirelessly to improve the quality of life for the citizens of our community. His career demonstrates a commitment to excellence and exemplary leadership, and has earned him the respect and admiration of his friends and associates.

For 23 years, Tary has served the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority, during which time he has held a number of positions, including: director of governmental relations, manager of communications, deputy general manager, interim general manager, and executive director of external affairs. He has made significant contributions towards procuring Federal and State capital improvement funds for the RTA's major projects, including, but not limited to, the Euclid Corridor Project and the extension of the Waterfront Line, and the Walkway from Tower City to Gateway.

Additionally, Tary's distinguished career in public service includes serving as special assistant to U.S. Senator Robert Taft, teacher and administrator for the Parma Board of Education, and public and personnel coordinator for the Cleveland Regional Sewer District. Moreover, he has served numerous governmental leaders and organizations, and has devoted countless hours to civic organizations, including the Stellala Maris Board of Directors, the National Highway Safety Advisory Committee, the Ohio Public Transit Association, St. Ignatius High School and several colleges.

Tary has worked tirelessly to provide many Americans with a tangible connection to their Ukrainian heritage by serving on the Ukrainian Museum Archives Board of Directors, the Ukrainian National Association Board of Directors and as a representative of the Ukrainian-American community in many official capacities, including as Member of Presidential Delegation to Ukraine in 1991.

It is my privilege to recognize Tary for his diligent commitment and dedicated service to the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority, and to the community that he has served for over three decades.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mrs. Neiman, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages

from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations and a withdrawal which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

NOTIFICATION OF THE PRESIDENT'S INTENTION TO DESIGNATE THE REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES AS A BENEFICIARY DEVELOPING COUNTRY AND TO TERMINATE THE DESIGNATIONS OF CROATIA AND EQUATORIAL NEW GUINEA AS BENEFICIARY DEVELOPING PROGRAMS UNDER THE GENERALIZED SYSTEM OF PREFERENCES PROGRAM—PM 39

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report and papers; which was referred to the Committee on Finance:

To the Congress of the United States:

The Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) offers duty-free treatment to specified products that are imported from designated beneficiary developing countries. The GSP is authorized by title V of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (the "Act").

In accordance with sections 502(f)(1)(A) and 502(f)(2) of the Act, I am providing notification of my intent to add the Republic of Maldives to the list of beneficiary developing countries under the GSP program and my intent to terminate the designations of Croatia and Equatorial Guinea as beneficiary developing countries under the GSP program.

In Proclamation 6813 of July 28, 1995, the designation of Maldives as a beneficiary developing country for purposes of the GSP program was suspended. After considering the criteria set forth in sections 501 and 502 of the Act, I have determined that the suspension of the designation of Maldives as a GSP beneficiary developing country should be ended.

In addition, I have determined that Croatia and Equatorial Guinea have each become a "high income" country, as defined by the official statistics of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. In accordance with section 502(e) of the Act, I have determined that the designations of Croatia and Equatorial Guinea as beneficiary developing countries under the GSP program should be terminated, effective January 1, 2011.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, December 23, 2009.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 1:42 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) has signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 4284. An act to extend the Generalized System of Preferences and the Andean Trade Preference Act, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 1242. An act to amend the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 to provide for additional monitoring and accountability of the Troubled Asset Relief Program; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

H.R. 3639. An act to amend the Credit Card Accountability Responsibility and Disclosure Act of 2009 to establish an earlier effective date for various consumer protections, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4151. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a violation of the Antideficiency Act that occurred within the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency in fiscal year 2003, and has been assigned National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency case number 08-03; to the Committee on Appropriations.

EC-4152. A communication from the Deputy Secretary, Division of Corporation Finance, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Proxy Disclosure Enhancements" (RIN3235-AK28) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 17, 2009; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4153. A communication from the Director of Environmental Policy and Compliance, Office of the Secretary, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Implementation of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969" received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 17, 2009; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4154. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Tier II Issue: Cost Sharing Stock Based Compensation Directive No. 2" (LMSB-4-1109-040) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 10, 2009; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4155. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a petition to add workers from Oak Ridge Hospital in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, to the Special Exposure Cohort; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4156. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a petition to add workers from Piqua Organic Moderated Reactor in Piqua, Ohio, to the Special Exposure Cohort; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4157. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a petition to add workers from the Hanford site in Richland, Washington, to the Special Exposure Cohort; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4158. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a petition to add workers from the Metals and Controls Corporation in Attleboro, Massachusetts, to the Special Exposure Cohort; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4159. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a petition to add workers from the Brookhaven National Laboratory in Upton, New York, to the Special Exposure Cohort; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4160. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Community Services Block Act Discretionary Activities: Community Economic Development and Rural Facilities Programs; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4161. A communication from the Director, Strategic Human Resources Policy Division, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Adverse Actions" (RIN3206-AL39) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 17, 2009; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4162. A communication from the Director, Strategic Human Resources Policy Division, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Training; Supervisory, Management, and Executive Development" (RIN3206-AK75) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 17, 2009; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4163. A communication from the Director, Strategic Human Resources Policy Division, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Examining System" (RIN3206-AL51) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 17, 2009; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4164. A communication from the Chief of the Border Security Regulations Branch, Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Importer Security Filing and Additional Carrier Requirements; Correction" (RIN1651-AA70) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 17, 2009; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4165. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) for a report relative to the FY2009 Agency Financial Report; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4166. A communication from the Secretary of the Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Fiscal Year 2009 Agency Financial Report"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4167. A communication from the US-VISIT Program Director, National Protection and Programs Directorate, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant

to law, the report of a rule entitled "United States Visitor and Immigrant Status Indicator Technology Program ("US-VISIT"); Enrollment of Additional Aliens in US-VISIT; Authority to Collect Biometric Data From Additional Travelers and Expansion to the 50 Most Highly Trafficked Land Border Ports of Entry" (RIN1601-AA35; RIN1600-AA00) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 17, 2009; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. LIEBERMAN, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, without amendment:

S. 69. A bill to establish a fact-finding Commission to extend the study of a prior Commission to investigate and determine facts and circumstances surrounding the relocation, internment, and deportation to Axis countries of Latin Americans of Japanese descent from December 1941 through February 1946, and the impact of those actions by the United States, and to recommend appropriate remedies, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 111-112).

By Mr. DORGAN, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, with amendments:

S. 1178. A bill to extend Federal recognition to the Chickahominy Indian Tribe, the Chickahominy Indian Tribe-Eastern Division, the Upper Mattaponi Tribe, the Rappahannock Tribe, Inc., the Monacan Indian Nation, and the Nansemond Indian Tribe (Rept. No. 111-113).

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. BAUCUS for the Committee on Finance.

*Lael Brainard, of the District of Columbia, to be an Under Secretary of the Treasury.

*Ellen Gloninger Murray, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services.

*Bryan Hayes Samuels, of Illinois, to be Commissioner on Children, Youth, and Families, Department of Health and Human Services.

*Jim R. Esquea, of New York, to be an Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services.

*Michael W. Punke, of Montana, to be a Deputy United States Trade Representative, with the rank of Ambassador.

*Islam A. Siddiqui, of Virginia, to be Chief Agricultural Negotiator, Office of the United States Trade Representative, with the rank of Ambassador.

*Charles Collyns, of Maryland, to be a Deputy Under Secretary of the Treasury.

*Mary John Miller, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury.

*Michael F. Mundaca, of New York, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first