

1 BUSINESS MEETING ON PENDING NOMINATIONS

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3 THURSDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2017

4 United States Senate,
5 Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry,
6 Washington, D.C.

7 The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:19 p.m., in
8 Room S-216, The Capitol, Hon. Pat Roberts, Chairman of the
9 Committee, presiding.

10 Present: Roberts, Boozman, Hoeven, Ernst, Grassley,
11 Thune, Daines, Strange, Stabenow, Leahy, Brown, Klobuchar,
12 Bennet, Donnelly, Heitkamp, Casey, and Van Hollen.

13 OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN ROBERTS

14 Chairman Roberts. I now call to order a business
15 meeting of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition,
16 and Forestry.

17 The purpose of this meeting is to consider the
18 nominations of Gregory "Greg" Ibach to be the Under
19 Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs, and William
20 "Bill" Northey to be the Under Secretary for Farm and
21 Foreign Agricultural Services.

22 Let me point out that Mr. Ibach's experience leading
23 the Nebraska Department of Agriculture and Mr. Northey's
24 experience as the Secretary of Agriculture for the State of
25 Iowa, combined with their testimony before this Committee

1 and answers to the members' questions for the record,
2 demonstrate that they are abundantly qualified to take on
3 these roles at the Department. They will be vocal advocates
4 for our farmers and ranchers and I fully support both of
5 these nominations.

6 The Ranking Member and I have written the Department of
7 Agriculture to seek clarity on Mr. Northey's position. I
8 will enter it into the record, with no objection.

9 [The information follows:]

10 / COMMITTEE INSERT

1 Chairman Roberts. To be clear, there is no question of
2 either nominee's qualifications and the letter should not
3 slow down this process.

4 I now recognize the distinguished Ranking Member for
5 any comments that she may have.

6 OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR STABENOW

7 Senator Stabenow. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I
8 apologize, I am losing my voice.

9 I am happy to support two very qualified nominees, Mr.
10 Northey and Mr. Ibach. And we are looking forward to
11 getting them down to the Department as soon as possible. So
12 I am glad we are all here right now.

13 I want to thank Chairman Roberts for working in a
14 bipartisan way to address the confusion surrounding Mr.
15 Northey's position. As many of you know, Mr. Northey was
16 nominated to serve as the Under Secretary for one position.
17 However, USDA has said it intends for Mr. Northey to serve
18 in a different role than the position he was nominated for.

19 Chairman Roberts and I are working with the USDA to
20 clarify the titles and positions of the under secretaries
21 during this ongoing reorganization.

22 I am happy to support the nominees, Mr. Chairman.

23 Chairman Roberts. A motion would now be in order to
24 approve the nominations of Gregory "Greg" Ibach to be the
25 Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs and

1 William "Bill" Northey to be the Under Secretary of Farm and
2 Foreign Agricultural Services.

3 Senator Grassley. I move it.

4 Senator Stabenow. Second.

5 Chairman Roberts. All those in favor, say aye.

6 [A chorus of ayes.]

7 Chairman Roberts. All those opposed, say no.

8 [No audible response.]

9 Chairman Roberts. The ayes have it. The nominations
10 are approved.

11 The business meeting is now adjourned.

12 [Whereupon, at 2:21 p.m., the Committee was adjourned.]