

**Opening Statement of the Honorable Jim Nussle**  
***Nominee, Director of the Office of Management and Budget***  
**Senate Budget Committee**

July 26, 2007

*As Prepared for Delivery*

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member, for your introductions. I appreciate this opportunity to come before your Committee. I also want to thank both of you for the time you have taken in the past few weeks to meet with me and give me your advice and counsel. I look forward to continuing those meetings on a regular basis.

Thank you also to my two home state Senators for testifying at the Homeland Security Committee on Tuesday, and I am honored and grateful to have Senator Grassley here again today to support me. Thank you Senator Grassley not only for today, but for your leadership and guidance throughout my career, and for your devoted service to the state of Iowa. We are all proud to have you serve us with dedication and passion.

I would also like to thank my good friend, Chairman John Spratt, for making the long haul over to this side of the Capitol to support me. Some of my fondest memories during my time as House Budget Chairman relate directly with time spent with you and your dedicated staff director, Tom Kahn. More than anything, I thank you for your friendship and I am truly honored that you are here today.

I'd also like to thank the staffs of both the committee and OMB. Your professionalism, hard-work and dedication to public service may go unnoticed by the public, but for myself, and I believe I can speak for all public officials, what you do each day is very much realized. Much, if not most, of the work would not get done without you. Thank you.

Thank you also to my wife Karen, for being here today, and every day, to support me. I know it can't always be easy but you do it with grace, understanding and patience and I am grateful to have you by my side.

As I stated on the day the President nominated me, I feel truly humbled and privileged for this opportunity. If confirmed, I look forward to helping develop policies that will keep us on track to balance the budget by 2012, keep our economy growing, and address the biggest budgetary challenge we face: the unsustainable growth in entitlement spending for programs like Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security.

If I should be confirmed by the Senate, I intend to work day in and out with Members of Congress to honor the awesome responsibility placed upon me.

I also have to tell you that it feels good to be back here in my second home – Congress. It was in these halls that I experienced amazing things, learned valuable lessons, met incredible people, and formed friendships that will last throughout my lifetime.

I feel a special allegiance not only toward the building just across the street from here, but for my former colleagues – Democrats and Republicans – who are still working here

each day. Many of you I have worked with in the past, and I'm excited for the opportunity you might give me to work with you in the future.

If confirmed, I'd have the honor of following in Rob's footsteps, my former vice-chair; and to continue my professional relationship with Josh, who provided excellent leadership at OMB and continues to serve the President well as Chief of Staff in the White House.

These two individuals give public service a good name with their steadfast devotion to it. And I intend to continue that way of working should I be confirmed.

As I sat to write my opening remarks for today I could not help but get a little nostalgic. I hope you will indulge me for a bit.

It was almost 30 years ago that I sat in the classroom of one of my college political science classes when my professor decided to teach us about the budget. At the time I remember thinking to myself, "When in the world am I ever going to use this information?" "Do I really need to know this stuff?"

But then something happened. I got hooked. Yes, I'll admit it – I love the budget, the budget process and everything else that goes along with it.

But never, in a million years, would I, as a 19 year old Luther College Student, have ever thought that I would have been chosen by my peers to become the House Budget Chairman, let alone have this opportunity to sit before you as you consider me to be the next director of OMB.

It is truly an awesome thought for me and I hope my teenage daughter and son are paying attention today. My story is a lesson of listening and learning, even at times when you don't know exactly why you are doing it. It is because you truly never know where life is going to take you.

Listening and learning was also something I took to heart for the 16 years I was blessed to represent Iowa in the House. I believe that we govern better when we listen and learn from those we represent. Should I be confirmed by the Senate, I intend to continue those philosophies my parents first taught me were important, and that the people of Iowa cemented for me – listening, learning, teamwork and being open and honest.

Mr. Chairman, I am eager to answer your questions and the Committee's questions. I want to thank you once again for this opportunity and I look forward to you considering my nomination. Thank you.

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