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August 4, 2011

Senator Max Baucus, Chairman
Senator Orrin Hatch, Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Finance
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-6200

Dear Chairman Baucus and Ranking Member Hatch:

I am writing in regard to proposals that could emerge from the newly-created Joint Select Committee in its efforts to identify deficit-reducing measures. In particular, I am very concerned about the extent to which the Joint Select Committee may seek to include proposals on issues within our Committee's jurisdiction in its report.

As a key congressional panel, the Senate Finance Committee has the privilege and prerogative to speak clearly and forcefully on a broad range of significant fiscal- and tax-related issues. Any such provisions considered by the Joint Select Committee should be subject to strict scrutiny by the Finance Committee and no such measures should emanate from the Joint Select Committee without thorough Finance Committee assessment.

With this foremost in mind, I strongly encourage you to schedule Finance Committee action as soon as possible in order to prepare recommendations for the Joint Select Committee in accordance with the procedures set forth in the Budget Control Act of 2011. This would allow us to provide, and the Joint Select Committee to benefit from, our unique expertise and deep experience on these issues. Further, it will allow us to build on the hearings we have had so far this year; we have had at least eight on comprehensive tax reform alone, in addition to further hearings on deficits and revenues, and the Joint Select Committee would benefit greatly from the record we have built to this point.

I am eager to undertake these efforts with you and look forward to engaging on these issues at the earliest opportunity in order to prepare recommendations ahead of the October 14 deadline.

Sincerely,

OLYMPIA J. SNOWE
United States Senator

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