



BIPARTISAN POLICY CENTER

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To Members of the U.S. Senate,

As former Senators and presidential appointees of both parties, we fully support the Senate's efforts to improve the nomination and confirmation process by reducing the number of political appointees who require Senate confirmation, forming a commission to make recommendations for a more efficient financial disclosure and background check process, and streamlining the Senate confirmation process for nominees to advisory boards and commissions.

The problem and the solution are truly bipartisan. Presidents of both parties and Senates controlled by both parties have experienced difficulties in the presidential appointment and Senate confirmation process. With each recent presidency, the time to select, nominate and confirm appointees has lengthened. Many people dedicated to public service are discouraged from serving in federal appointive office because of the length and extreme adversarial nature of the process.

In S. 679 and S. Res. 116, the Senate proposes modest improvements in the system. These bills will not alter the fundamental character of the appointment and confirmation process. The president will continue to make nominations and the Senate will exercise its advise and consent role for hundreds of appointments. But for some lower level nominees, the Senate confirmation process will be eliminated or streamlined and the financial disclosure and background check process will be simplified and improved.

Beyond these immediate measures, we hope that in the future the Senate will continue to work to improve the confirmation process by coordinating Senate committee financial disclosure forms with executive branch disclosure forms. And we encourage consultation between the executive and legislative branches to find ways to limit the use of the recess appointment power.

S. 679 and S. Res. 116 are small and important steps in the right direction. We encourage the Senate to pass these two measures.

Best Regards,



Secretary Dan Glickman
Senior Fellow, BPC



Senator Trent Lott
Senior Fellow, BPC



Senator Pete Domenici
Senior Fellow, BPC



Senator Dirk Kempthorne
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