

BOB CORKER, TENNESSEE, CHAIRMAN

JAMES E. RISCH, IDAHO
MARCO RUBIO, FLORIDA
RON JOHNSON, WISCONSIN
JEFF FLAKE, ARIZONA
CORY GARDNER, COLORADO
DAVID PERDUE, GEORGIA
JOHNNY ISAKSON, GEORGIA
RAND PAUL, KENTUCKY
JOHN BARRASSO, WYOMING

BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, MARYLAND
BARBARA BOXER, CALIFORNIA
ROBERT MENENDEZ, NEW JERSEY
JEANNE SHAHEEN, NEW HAMPSHIRE
CHRISTOPHER A. COONS, DELAWARE
TOM UDALL, NEW MEXICO
CHRISTOPHER MURPHY, CONNECTICUT
TIM Kaine, VIRGINIA
EDWARD J. MARKEY, MASSACHUSETTS

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6225

December 22, 2016

The Honorable Robert Menendez
United States Senator
528 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator
506 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator
127A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Udall
United States Senator
531 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Christopher Murphy
United States Senator
136 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tim Kaine
United States Senator
231 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Edward J. Markey
United States Senator
255 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
United States Senator
313 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Cory A. Booker
United States Senator
359 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senate Foreign Relations Committee Democratic Members,

I have heard from a number of you regarding the nomination of Mr. Rex Tillerson for Secretary of State, so I wanted to give you an update on where Senator Corker and I are in the process.

Senator Corker and I have talked about the nomination several times. I am pleased to report that we expect to receive standard financial disclosure forms and ethics compliance information later this week. Once received, staff will immediately review the documents submitted and advise us whether the information is complete and in compliance with committee practice.

I have not yet received 3 years' worth of the nominee's tax returns, which I have formally requested the Presidential Transition Team make available for review. Senator Corker and I have a disagreement about the need to review the nominee's tax returns. I think it is an important part of vetting this candidate because he has never made public disclosures of this type, as he has worked at ExxonMobil for his entire career and has never been in public service. Mr. Tillerson was actively engaged with many foreign governments that could become relevant if confirmed as Secretary of State. The Senate has a responsibility to review all relevant documents during the confirmation process.

Our standard questionnaire for all nominees appearing before our committee, which has been used by the committee for years, very clearly contemplates a request of this kind being made. In his response to the tax return question in the questionnaire, the nominee promised to provide such information. After receiving the financial information from Mr. Tillerson later this week, I will be in touch with Chairman Corker in an effort to resolve my request to review Mr. Tillerson's tax returns.

Until all of these materials are received and staff has had a chance to review them, it will be difficult to lock in a nomination hearing time for the committee to consider the nominee. It is our responsibility to expedite the consideration of key cabinet nominees so that the new President can have key advisers in place as soon as possible. Chairman Corker intends to schedule Mr. Tillerson's nomination hearing during the second week of January—a date I will support if all necessary and relevant information has been timely made available to our committee, and the nominee has made himself available for pre-hearing meetings with SFRC Senators.

I have also talked with Senator Corker about the need for adequate time for a hearing, and I am pleased that Chairman Corker is prepared to reserve a second day for hearings so that each Member has ample opportunity to ask about issues he or she wishes to raise with the nominee.

Sincerely,



Benjamin L. Cardin
Ranking Member