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United States Senate
PRESIDENT'S ADVISORY BOARD
ON FEDERAL TAX REFORM
COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6200

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January 7, 2005

The Honorable Connie Mack
Co-Chair
Tax Reform Advisory Panel
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20502

The Honorable John Breaux
Co-Chair
Tax Reform Advisory Panel
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20502

Dear Senators Mack and Breaux:

Congratulations on being selected as co-chairs of the President's tax reform advisory panel. We have been strong advocates for tax simplification for many years and hope that any tax reform proposal will maintain a strong focus on that objective. We applaud the President's repeated commitment to achieving tax reform in a revenue-neutral manner. To that end, proposals considered by the advisory panel and the Administration must be evaluated under a single set of scoring conventions. Congress is bound by scoring conventions employed by the Joint Committee on Taxation in determining the revenue-neutrality of any proposal. Therefore, it is essential that the advisory panel use those conventions in evaluating its proposals as well. We fear that failure to adhere to congressional estimating standards would severely undermine any proposal recommended by the advisory panel.

We would be glad to work with you and the Joint Committee on Taxation in getting estimates for your proposals. We stand ready to assist you to ensure that your recommendations meet the President's revenue-neutrality requirement.

Sincerely,


Charles E. Grassley
Chairman


Max Baucus
Ranking Member

cc: Mr. George Yin, Chief of Staff, Joint Committee on Taxation

The Honorable John W. Snow, Secretary, Department of the Treasury