



For Immediate Release
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**SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN RESPONDS
TO PRESIDENT'S STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS**

*Baucus calls for quick cooperation on Senate economic stimulus efforts,
insists that assistance for American workers must be top trade priority*

Washington, DC – Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) tonight issued the following comments after President George W. Bush's final State of the Union address. Earlier today, Baucus unveiled an economic stimulus proposal that will be considered by the Finance panel on Wednesday of this week. More information can be found on the Finance Committee website at <http://www.finance.senate.gov/press/Bpress/2008press/prb012808a.pdf>.

ON ECONOMIC STIMULUS:

"I'm pleased the President has shown a willingness to work together with Congress to boost America's economy. I hope that his desire to work together will extend to the proposals the Finance Committee will consider this week. The President should be able to get behind a tax rebate for America's seniors. Seniors have worked hard for this country. Seniors contribute to our economy with significant consumer spending, and they deserve to be part of the stimulus effort. The President should also support additional tax relief for the businesses struggling the hardest in today's economy. The proposals I've unveiled in the Senate should help the whole Congress answer the President's call for an economic stimulus bill by mid-February."

ON TRADE POLICY:

"Reauthorizing and improving Trade Adjustment Assistance is my number-one trade priority this year. America's workers should come first when Congress considers trade. I was pleased to hear the President's call to pass TAA legislation, and I look forward to working with him in the coming weeks to do so.

"Pending free trade agreements with Colombia, Korea, and Panama have value in terms of expanding America's export opportunities with key regions. But it's hard to imagine how Congress can consider these agreements prior to a meaningful expansion of Trade Adjustment Assistance. Even after a new TAA law is in place, each country has work to do before these agreements are ready for Congress. Korea, in particular, cannot expect Congress to approve a free trade agreement as long as it unfairly bans U.S. beef."

ON HEALTH CARE:

"The President rightly recognizes the importance of health care reform to the lives of everyday Americans, and to the competitive future of our country. But we must move beyond proposals that will not do much to help regular Americans afford health insurance, and look for the right mix of private and public solutions to deal with the rising costs that ail our system. I will hold an aggressive series of hearings in the Finance Committee this year to lay the groundwork for future comprehensive health reform."

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