



U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON

Finance

SENATOR CHUCK GRASSLEY, OF IOWA - CHAIRMAN

<http://finance.senate.gov>

MEMORANDUM

To: Reporters and Editors
Re: Nomination of a new FDA commissioner
Da: Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Sen. Chuck Grassley, chairman of the Committee on Finance, today made the following comment on the President's nomination of acting Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Andrew von Eschenbach as his nominee to become the permanent commissioner of the agency. The Senate must consider the nomination. Grassley has expressed concern about the agency's handling of several key issues, most recently whether it allowed a blood substitute study to proceed without meaningful patient consent.

"The FDA has an enormous mission. It needs a permanent commissioner who's willing and able to take on its entrenched cultural problems and turn them around. That task is like turning around an aircraft carrier, and it'll take a very determined, reform-minded individual to do it. The next commissioner can't accept business as usual at an agency that protects the well-being of all Americans. I look forward to learning more about Dr. von Eschenbach's plans for assuring people that they can trust what's in their medicine cabinet. This nomination will offer a good opportunity for the Senate to take a good look at how the FDA operates and I hope, to reward its successes and address its shortcomings."