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Obama Picks John Koskinen To Revamp IRS As Next Commissioner

President Obama announced he will nominate [John Koskinen](#), former chairman of [Freddie Mac](#), as the next IRS Commissioner. See [Obama Chooses John Koskinen as Next US IRS Commissioner](#). Koskinen has a long government pedigree. He was a deputy director of the Office of Management and Budget who led the government's efforts to prepare for converting computer systems for the year 2000.

“John is an expert at turning around institutions in need of reform,” President Obama said. “With decades of experience, in both the private and public sectors, John knows how to lead in difficult times, whether that means ensuring new management or implementing new checks and balances.” Koskinen is supposed to revamp the IRS after the wave of problems that forced out Steven Miller and that continue to roil the agency.



John Koskinen

President Obama continued that “our government must operate with absolute integrity and that is especially true for the IRS. I am confident that John will do whatever it takes to restore the public’s trust in the agency.” In a similar vein, Treasury Secretary Jack Lew said, “John is the right person to take on this critical position at this important time.”

So too were the comments from Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.). The turnaround theme seems prevalent, something that Republicans may or may not swallow. But Mr. Koskinen’s pedigree does seem long.

Cynical observers might characterize the mantra as let’s get this IRS train righted and rolling down the tracks. Let’s shape this line-dance unit up into a bona fide dancing with the stars video. Let’s be proud and transparent and not take the Fifth. Show me the money. Hey, can’t we all just get along?

More seriously, here are highlights of Mr. Koskinen’s experience:

- 2008-2011, Non-Executive Chairman of Freddie Mac
- 2009, Acting CEO of Freddie Mac
- 2004-2008, President of United States Soccer Foundation.
- 2000-2003, Deputy Mayor and City Administrator of Washington, D.C.
- 1998-2000, Assistant to the President and Chair of the President’s Council on Year 2000 Conversion
- 1994-1997, Deputy Director for Management of the Office of Management and Budget
- 21 years at the Palmieri Company in positions including CEO and Chairman, President, and Vice President
- Administrative Assistant to Senator Abraham Ribicoff
- Legislative Assistant to Mayor John Lindsey of New York City
- Assistant to the Deputy Executive Director of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders
- Lawyer with Gibson, Dunn and Crutcher

You can reach me at Wood@WoodLLP.com. This discussion is not intended as legal advice, and cannot be relied upon for any purpose without the services of a qualified professional.