

**Statement of Senator Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.),
Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee,
Executive Business Meeting
May 8, 2014**

There are four judicial nominations to fill emergency vacancies in Florida listed on the agenda. They were held over last week and I am glad that we can report them out today. They have the support of home state Senators Nelson and Rubio. I am continuing work with other Members of the Committee to address constructive comments from both sides about the patent legislation on our agenda.

A year ago tomorrow, we began our mark up of S.744, the Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act. This marks a year of lost opportunity.

Members of this Committee, and the Senate as a whole should be proud of the many hours, days, and months we dedicated to an open and deliberative process which resulted in the passage of this comprehensive immigration reform bill. However, we continue to have families who are torn apart every day by unforgiving deportation policies, or are kept apart due to long visa backlogs; we have businesses and farms without access to the workers they need; and we have border security policies that are increasingly turning border communities into militarized zones. This is the status quo. And nothing will change until House Republicans, who allegedly want reform, move beyond immigration principles and talking points. The cost of inaction to our families, our economy, and to our future as a Nation is greater every day.

I urge the House of Representatives to join the majority of Americans who want a brighter future, to do what is right for this great Nation and pass the Senate's comprehensive immigration reform bill, S.744.

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