

**Statement of Senator Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.),
Ranking Member, Senate Judiciary Committee,
Executive Business Meeting
September 17, 2015**

Today, the Committee is ready to report Senator Feinstein's Transnational Drug Trafficking Act. This bill has already passed the Senate twice, and would provide the Justice Department with important tools to combat international drug traffickers.

We also have three District Court nominations listed on today's agenda – two to fill emergency vacancies in Minnesota and New Jersey and another to fill a Maryland vacancy. All three were previously listed on agendas for August 6 and September 10, but those business meetings were cancelled. I hope that we can finally report these three nominations out today without further delay.

I also appreciate Chairman Grassley's efforts to schedule hearings for the nominees pending in our Committee. I understand that the Chairman plans to notice a nominations hearing for the last week of the month and I am hopeful that he will schedule at least two hearings in October. We now have 21 judicial nominees waiting for a hearing – including nominees from Iowa, New York California, and Rhode Island. I hope we can ensure that all of the currently pending nominees get a hearing by the end of the year.

#####