

Prepared Statement by U.S. Senator Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa)
Ranking Member, Senate Judiciary Committee
Hearing on Nominations
Wednesday, May 25, 2022

Before we begin, I want to express my condolences to those affected by the shooting in Uvalde, Texas. The killing of innocent children is sickening and heartbreaking.

I'm going to continue pushing to pass my EAGLES Act that would give schools and law enforcement additional resources to help make sure dangerous individuals can't do what happened yesterday.

We have five nominees here today: two circuit court nominees, two district court nominees, and one to be the Director of the ATF.

I'll briefly address Mr. Dettelbach's nomination to serve as the director of the ATF. I've expressed grave concerns about his nomination in a letter to President Biden back in April based on an initial review of his record. Those concerns remain.

He's the second nominee for this position, after Mr. Chipman, who failed to garner sufficient support in the Senate.

Since then, this administration removed the former acting director, Marvin Richardson. The New York Times reported that gun control groups criticized him for "deploying agents to deal with gun violence."

Gun control advocates were frustrated that Mr. Richardson took a law and order approach to his job. But that approach is what we should expect from ATF.

I'm concerned this administration is responding to demands to focus on the ATF's regulatory responsibilities at the expense of its law enforcement duties.

We also have two circuit court nominees and two district court nominees here today.

Judge Merriam was here last year when she was nominated to serve as a district court judge.

Ms. Montecalvo worked at the Justice Department in the Tax Division and then as a public defender for the majority of her career.

Judge Wang has worked as an Assistant United States Attorney, as a partner at a firm, and currently as a magistrate judge. Ms. Cartwright has spent a decade in private practice after clerking for two judges.

Welcome to the nominees and their families.

