

Prepared Opening Statement by Senator Chuck Grassley of Iowa
Ranking Member, Senate Judiciary Committee
Executive Business Meeting
June 9, 2022

Today, we're voting on a number of judicial nominees. We'd ask that the nominees up for the first time other than the U.S. Attorneys be held over.

One of those nominees up today is Judge Stephen Locher, who has been nominated to serve as a District Judge on the United States District Court for the Southern District of Iowa. I'm pleased to support Judge Locher, an Iowan who represents the best and brightest of our legal community.

As I noted a few weeks ago, the Judicial Selection Commission that Senator Ernst and I set up unanimously supported Judge Locher. Since Judge Locher's nomination, we've learned about his impeccable credentials, his experience in both civil and criminal law, his trial experience, and his experience as a federal magistrate judge.

He's also shown that he understands the proper role of a judge. He'll enforce the Constitution and the laws as we write them. With such a glowing record to stand on, there's no doubt why Judge Locher received support from both of his home-state senators. Judge Locher is an exceptional nominee who is well-qualified to serve as a federal district court judge. It's my pleasure to support his nomination.

Last week, while I was meeting with my constituents in Iowa, I sent a [letter](#) to the Justice Department and FBI. I also sent a [letter](#) to the Department's Inspector General. In those letters, I provided evidence of extreme left-wing bias shown by an Assistant Special Agent in Charge at the FBI's Washington Field Office. His name is Timothy Thibault.

This FBI agent's left-wing political bias was exposed by his LinkedIn and Twitter accounts. There, he posted highly partisan material relating to his superiors, matters under the FBI's purview and matters under his purview. According to his Twitter feed, which is also under his name, he mocked the election of Senator Tuberville and Mississippi at the same time. He said, "Thank God for Mississippi – state motto of Alabama."

He recently tweeted "Can we give Kentucky to the Russian Federation?" In response to a Catholic priest's tweet critical of abortion, he tweeted an anti-Catholic slur to both the Catholic priest and then-President Trump: "Focus on the pedophiles."

After my letters were made public, he reportedly set his tweets to protected mode and deleted his LinkedIn profile. I fear that his political bias has infected years of FBI investigations. Since I issued my letters, I've had whistleblowers reach out to me about Thibault and others. I'll have more to say about that in the coming weeks.

But, I'll say this now: if I hear of any retaliation, the Justice Department and FBI can expect a swift and powerful congressional response.

I'd also like to note my concern that the Justice Department continues to ignore this committee's oversight requests. One example is the Department's infamous October 4, 2021, school board memo. That memo essentially compared concerned parents to domestic terrorists. Attorney General Garland has refused to withdraw it despite the National School Boards Association renouncing the letter.

On January 18, 2022, I sent Attorney General Garland questions about his memo. I've yet to receive a response. He issued his memo 5 days after the National School Boards Association letter. So, he's capable of responding quickly when he wants to.

And a final example for now: On January 19, 2021, then-President Trump issued a memo declassifying certain Crossfire Hurricane records for public dissemination. Since February 2021, my and Senator Johnson's staff have repeatedly requested an update from Attorney General Garland as to when the records will be produced to Congress. To date, the Department has failed to produce declassified records to Congress. It's now June 2022.

I appreciate the Chairman's attempts to achieve some respect from the Justice Department, but it unfortunately hasn't been very successful. I believe it was stated that I'd received responses to most of my requests by letter. That's just not accurate. I've received letters, but they have little or no substance to them. That's not a response.

I also haven't received requested document productions. I think that says it all with respect to how the department views this committee.

Finally, I want to address the news that law enforcement arrested a man near Justice Kavanaugh's home who intended to murder him. He should be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

I've said repeatedly that the leak of the Supreme Court's draft opinion was dangerous. The rhetoric from far-left activists aimed at the Supreme Court that followed only enflamed the situation. And publishing the justices' home addresses and calling for action is irresponsible.

Because of clear threats to the safety of the justices and their families, the Senate acted quickly to authorize protection for the justices' families. The House has delayed acting for weeks. I hope they'll act now.

The Justice Department should also reconsider its refusal to prosecute protestors outside of justices' homes. The administration cannot continue to send the message that disrespecting the rule of law is acceptable when someone disagrees with the Court's decisions.