

Statement of Senator Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.)
Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee
Executive Business Meeting
January 16, 2014

Today, we have 30 nominations on the agenda – 29 judicial nominations and 1 executive nomination – all of which were held over last week and are ready to be reported today. I want to thank Senator Grassley and Senator Flake for working with me so that all six Arizona nominees to fill judicial emergency vacancies will be on the next nominations hearing.

Regarding the legislation, I am encouraged by the progress being made to reach a bipartisan and comprehensive compromise on sentencing reform that includes important changes to mandatory minimum sentences. I appreciate all the time that Senators Durbin, Whitehouse, Cornyn, and Feinstein are dedicating to this effort. We simply cannot ignore the unsustainable growth of our federal prison population any longer. Doing nothing means cutting funding from law enforcement, victim services and crime prevention efforts – doing nothing makes us less safe. We will soon be marking up legislation to address this important issue.

I understand we can start today by moving the ten nominees on our agenda who had previously been reported by this Committee. The seven district court nominees considered by voice vote will be considered en bloc and the remaining three will be roll call votes. Then we will turn to the remaining 20 nominees.

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