

**Statement of Senator Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.),
Ranking Member, Senate Judiciary Committee
Hearing on the Nomination of Loretta Lynch to Serve as
Attorney General of the United States
January 29, 2015**

Today is the second day of this Committee's consideration of Loretta Lynch to serve as our Nation's Attorney General. We will hear testimony from outside witnesses about Ms. Lynch, some of whom know her well.

Yesterday, we heard directly from Ms. Lynch. Over nearly eight hours of testimony, she testified about the values and independence she would bring to the office of the Attorney General. She testified about prioritizing national security and public safety while preserving the values Americans hold dear. I was encouraged when Republican Senators on the Committee agreed with me that the key question for voting for a nominee to be Attorney General is independence. Responding to questions on issue after issue, it was clear that Ms. Lynch is an independent lawyer of strong character and balanced demeanor.

I want to thank Chairman Grassley for his handling of yesterday's hearing. It was no easy feat with 18 votes in the afternoon to complete our work. I appreciated the tone of the hearing, and the opportunity for every Senator to ask their questions and for the nominee to respond.

Today we will hear from law enforcement officials who worked with Ms. Lynch and strongly support her nomination. Their presence today speaks to the support Ms. Lynch has among both Republicans and Democrats.

Barack Obama is not the nominee. Despite what we will hear today from some witnesses, Eric Holder is not the nominee. Loretta Lynch, the daughter of Lorine and the Rev. Lorenzo Lynch, and a U.S. Attorney twice unanimously confirmed by the United States Senate -- that is who we are being called upon to consider. I am confident that after hearing her testimony before this Committee and after reviewing her record, no one can in good faith question her integrity or qualifications.

Ms. Lynch said yesterday that she looks forward to working with Congress to confront the many issues facing Americans today. I hope we can come together in the Senate and support the historic confirmation of an outstanding public servant.

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