

**Statement of Senator Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.),  
On Senator Dianne Feinstein Becoming Ranking Member  
of the Senate Judiciary Committee  
January 10, 2017**

Today, the Senate Judiciary Committee convenes for the first time in the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress and we mark an historic moment in the Committee's 200 year history. Last week, Senator Dianne Feinstein was named the Committee's ranking member, the first time in American history that a woman has served in this capacity. It is striking that 352 members have served on the Committee, and only six of those -- all Democrats-- have been women. Three of those six women are proudly serving on this important Committee today: Senator Feinstein, Senator Klobuchar, and Senator Hirono, whom we welcome back to the Committee.

Senator Feinstein has long been a leading voice on this Committee. I have enjoyed working with her on countless issues ranging from national security to immigration reform to Supreme Court nominations. Senator Feinstein has broken down barriers throughout her career, and her new role as ranking member of the Judiciary Committee is only the latest example. As the Committee grapples with some of the most pressing issues facing our country, we will all be counting on Ranking Member Feinstein's leadership. We should all congratulate her on this historic moment.

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