

Prepared Statement by Senator Chuck Grassley of Iowa
Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee
Executive Business Meeting
April 7, 2016

I'd like to share a few thoughts from my meetings with Iowans during the last couple weeks.

I spent the past couple weeks in Iowa with constituents. I had three town meetings and 16 visits to schools, businesses, factories, and hospitals. It's no surprise that the public is concerned about the future of the Supreme Court these days. That may be why national advocacy groups like NARAL sent representatives to my Iowa town meetings. The Iowans I met over the past couple of weeks told me that they're concerned about it, too.

Everyday Iowans want the opportunity to weigh in on the direction of the Court for a generation. That's not the story the press wants to write, but it's true.

They've also told me they're concerned that the Court makes politically-based decisions about important constitutional rights. These decisions have a real impact on their families, their ability to practice their faith, and their freedom to bear arms.

So, I came away from those meetings feeling positive about the position we had taken before the recess. In other words, the recess reinforced my thinking.

Now, turning to today's agenda, we have a number of bills and nominees to consider which we will do if we have a quorum after all the Senators who want to have spoken.

We're also considering the FBI Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act, S. 2390. This has been a truly bipartisan effort with Ranking Member Leahy. The bill takes what we learned from our hearing last year. For the first time, the bill protects disclosures made to supervisors, and establishes a fair and independent review process. The bill is being considered for the first time and it will be held over.

S. 2613 and S. 2614 will be held over as well. The first bill, known as the Adam Walsh Reauthorization Act, would extend the authorization for several key programs that exist to protect missing and exploited children. These programs make resources available to states for implementation of their sex offender management programs and for the apprehension of sex offenders who fail to register as such. This bill has the support of John Walsh, the father of the boy for whom the Adam Walsh Act is named, as well as the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

The other bill, Kevin and Avonte's Law, will help protect some of our nation's most vulnerable citizens: developmentally disabled children and seniors with dementia. I cosponsored this bill with Senators Schumer and Tillis. It has the support of the Alzheimer's Association, the American Society on Aging, Autism Speaks, the Autism Safety Coalition, The Arc, the National Autism Association, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, the Autism Society of Iowa, and Safe Minds.

S.247, the Expatriate Terrorist Act, will also be held over.

We have three nominees to be Judges for the Court of International Trade who are ready to be reported out:

- Elizabeth Drake, Jennifer Groves, & Gary Katzmman

The nominee to the District Court of Hawaii, Clare Connors, is being considered today for the first time, so she'll be held over.

We'll turn to those nominees when we get to the agenda.

With that, I'll turn to Ranking Member Leahy.