

Prepared Statement by Senator Chuck Grassley of Iowa
Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee
Executive Business Meeting
June 21, 2018

Good morning. First, I'd like to take a moment and address the issue of family separations. Yesterday, President Trump signed an executive order that would halt the separation of immigrant family units. I'm glad he took that step, but we don't need to take that as a sign Congress shouldn't do anything. The plain and simple fact is that Executive Orders come and go, but legislation provides a more permanent and long term solution.

My Democratic colleagues sent me a letter earlier this week asking that we have a time-consuming, and in my opinion entirely unnecessary, hearing on family separations. As I told them on Tuesday afternoon, there's a simple, commonsense solution that will finally end this crisis while also allowing the administration to enforce the law: repealing the *Flores* settlement.

This doesn't require a hearing. We all know what needs to be done. That's why Senate Republicans have introduced not one, but two solutions to fix this issue.

On Tuesday, Senator Cruz introduced a bill that would allow DHS to keep families together and would require the expeditious consideration of asylum claims within 14 days. That's a thoughtful attempt to address this issue, and I believe he and Ranking Member Feinstein are having conversations about a bipartisan path forward.

Just yesterday, Senator Tillis introduced the *Keep Families Together and Enforce the Law Act*, of which I am a proud cosponsor. I've worked hand in hand with his office on this measure, and I think it represents the right approach. This bill would require the Department of Homeland Security to keep unauthorized immigrant families in family residential centers pending the outcome of their cases.

Senator Tillis's carefully thought out bill would also provide more immigration judges so cases are heard quicker, and provide minimum standards of care so that immigrant families are treated well pending their case completion.

Senator Tillis's bill is supported by more than 30 Senators, including Senators Hatch, Graham, Cornyn, Cruz, Flake, Crapo, Sasse and Kennedy. His bill is simple and fair. It ensures families stay together, and unlike some of the Democrats preferred approach, it doesn't codify the poor catch and release policies of the past Administration and effectively end immigration enforcement as we know it.

I hope my colleagues remain serious about the issue of family separation and weren't simply, as Senator Schumer suggested, trying to use this as a political football to keep the focus on President Trump. If they are in fact serious, and this wasn't just a politically motivated issue, then

they should join with Senator Tillis and the majority of their Republican colleagues in cosponsoring his bill and passing it by unanimous consent this week.

Let's show these families that we will keep them together, and let's demonstrate to the American people that we aren't going to return to the Obama Administration's infamous "catch and release" policies.

Turning now to today's agenda: At the minority's request, we will hold over for one week the nominees who are on the agenda for the first time today.

- David Porter, Third Circuit
- Holly Brady, Northern District of Indiana
- Andrew Brasher, Middle District of Alabama
- James Hanlon, Southern District of Indiana
- David Morales, Southern District of Texas
- Lance Walker, District of Maine

Britt Grant, nominated to the 11th Circuit, is on today's agenda again. Unfortunately, we won't be able to vote on her nomination today and will hold her over for another week while Senator Flake works out his concerns with the administration and leader's office on issues not related to her nomination.

We're also considering two nominees to the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board this week.

Finally, on nominations, I understand that the minority is requesting that the U.S. marshal nominee for the Eastern District of Missouri be held over for a week. It's unusual for these positions to be held over, but it's certainly any member's right to request a hold on any nomination, so his nomination will be held over for one week.

We also have on the agenda for the first time S. 2823, the Music Modernization Act. This bill will be held over.

Finally, the KIWI Act will be held over again for one week while the bill's sponsors continue to resolve outstanding issues.

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