

Statement of

The Honorable Patrick Leahy

United States Senator
Vermont
September 16, 2003

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Ranking Member, Senate Committee on the Judiciary
Hearing on Ensuring the Continuity of the United States Government:
The Presidency
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Today, we continue hearings on government continuity issues. Just last week I attended the Judiciary Committee hearing on the issue of congressional continuity. From the outset of our Republic we have had a presidential line of succession. Coming together to examine that line of succession at this time is appropriate.

The Senate acted earlier this year to pass the DeWine-Dodd bill, S.148, amending the Presidential Succession Act by placing the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security in the presidential line of succession. That measure has been awaiting House action for the last several months. I commend Senator Dodd, the ranking Democrat on the Rules Committee, for the leadership he has shown on these matters.

I thank the witnesses and look forward to their testimony at this joint hearing.