

Statement of

# **The Honorable Patrick Leahy**

United States Senator  
Vermont  
June 9, 2011

Statement Of Senator Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.),  
Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee  
Executive Business Meeting  
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This morning we have the opportunity to make progress on a number of important nominations. We have the four judicial nominees from the hearing last month including nominees to vacancies in Texas and New York. We also have three U.S. Attorney nominees ready for Committee action, including the nominee to serve the Middle District of Alabama supported by Senator Shelby and Senator Sessions. We were able to add him to our agenda on Tuesday.

I hope that today we can also consider and report the bill we introduced before the recess to respond to the President's request that we allow him to extend the term of FBI Director Mueller for up to two additional years at this critical time. This is a matter Senator Grassley and I have worked on together. The bill is also cosponsored by the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Senator Feinstein and Senator Chambliss.

Nearly one month ago, the President requested that Congress authorize a limited extension of Robert Mueller's service as the Director of the FBI. President Obama spoke of "the ongoing threats facing the United States, as well as the leadership transitions at other agencies like the Defense Department and Central Intelligence Agency." He asked us "to join together in extending [Director Mueller's] leadership for the sake of our nation's safety and security." With the tenth anniversary of the September 11, 2001, attacks approaching, and in the face of continuing threats in the wake of the President's recent, successful operation against Osama bin Laden, I hope that we will all join together for the good of the country and all Americans.

The bipartisan bill on the Committee's agenda today provides for a limited exception to the statutory term of service of the FBI Director. It would allow Bob Mueller to continue his service for up to two additional years, until September 2013, at the request of the President. This extension is intended to be a one-time exception and not a permanent extension or modification of the statutory design.

The President could have nominated a new director of the FBI, someone who could serve for 10 years, long after President Obama's own term of office expired. Instead, the President is asking Congress to extend the term of service of a proven leader for a brief period, given the extenuating circumstances facing our country. This is the President's request and, as a patriotic American, Bob Mueller is willing to continue his service to a grateful Nation.

I, again, thank Senator Grassley for his cooperation and hope that the hearing we held yesterday at Senator Grassley's request helped focus us all on reporting the bill without any unnecessary delays. The Senate will then need to consider it, the House will need to pass it, and the President will then be able to sign it so that we can move forward in our efforts to keep America safe. I look forward to this Committee and the Congress acting favorably on the President's request.

Bob Mueller served this Nation with valor and integrity as a Marine in Vietnam and as a Federal prosecutor at all levels. He again answered the call to service when President Bush nominated him in July 2001 to serve as the Director of the FBI. As chairman of this Committee, I expedited that nomination through the Senate and he was confirmed just two weeks later. We have now taken longer to consider legislation allowing the President to extend Director Mueller's term for an additional two year than the Committee and the Senate took to consider and confirm his nomination to his current 10-year term.

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