

Statement of
The Honorable Patrick Leahy

United States Senator
United States Senate
July 28, 2011

**Opening Statement Of Senator Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.),
Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee,
Executive Business Meeting
July 28, 2011**

Today the Committee has the opportunity to complete action on a number of matters. The first bill on the agenda is one we have considered and reported before. It is a bill that Senator Cornyn and I have worked on together for years to provide prosecutors with important new tools to go after public corruption. We have worked out a bipartisan, bicameral agreement with Congressman Sensenbrenner that I hope will enable us to make real progress in this area at long last.

The Committee also has before it Senator Cardin's and Senator Graham's Blue Alert bill, which is so important to law enforcement. I understand that concern arose late yesterday on the Republican side. To give the sponsors time to try to work through those, we will need to hold it over until our next meeting. I certainly hope that we can pass this for our law enforcement and first responders before the tenth anniversary of the September 11 attack.

We also have a group of three bipartisan bills to outlaw new and dangerous synthetic drugs. I recall when Senator Casey wrote to the DEA about the abuse of synthetic drugs months ago and the crimes there were contributed to in communities all over Pennsylvania. I believe he is also a cosponsor of Senator Schumer's bill and Senator Grassley's bill. I want to thank Senators Schumer, Grassley, Klobuchar and Feinstein for their work on these bills. Each of the bills on the agenda is bipartisan -- although we were reminded again last week that bipartisan sponsorship of a bill is apparently no guarantee of support anymore.

Before we get to those matters we need to consider the nominations on our agenda. In deference to the objections of the Kansas Senators to our proceeding on the nomination of Steve Six to the Tenth Circuit, we will not. I will include in the record our exchange of letters in which this week they objected to the Committee proceeding.

After allowing Senator Grassley an opportunity to make an opening comment, I will turn to the other nominees on the agenda and the legislation before us.

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