

**STATEMENT OF**  
**JAMES B. COMEY**  
**BEFORE THE**  
**COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY**  
**UNITED STATES SENATE**  
**HEARING ON**  
**“THE PRESIDENT’S REQUEST TO EXTEND THE SERVICE OF**  
**DIRECTOR ROBERT MUELLER OF THE FBI UNTIL 2013”**  
**JUNE 8, 2011**

Chairman Leahy, Senator Grassley, and distinguished Members of the Committee:

Thank you for inviting me to testify today. It is a pleasure to be back before this distinguished Committee to endorse legislation extending FBI Director Mueller’s term by two years.

I know Bob Mueller well and he is one of the finest public servants this country has seen. In his decade as Director, he has made huge strides toward transforming the FBI and has contributed enormously to the safety of the American people. During my tenure as Deputy Attorney General, I spoke to him almost every day, and watched as his remarkable combination of intellect and tenacity drove the FBI’s counter-terrorism efforts. Because the Director’s standards were so high, he made everyone around him better. His relentless probing, rooted in vast personal knowledge of both the enemy and our capabilities, rippled through the Bureau, and the rest of the national security community. Everyone knew their work had to be good because the Director would test it, compare it to other work he had seen, and press hard. And the President could count on Bob to offer sound advice and take prudent action to best defend the country.

There is never a great time to change Directors. Something is always lost in a transition, as a new leader comes to know the threats, and understand the capabilities of those around him. But there are bad, and even potentially dangerous, times to change Directors, and this is one of them. I no longer have

access to threat intelligence, but common sense and the publicly available information tell me that the combination of the successful raid on Bin Laden's compound and the approaching 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of 9/11 creates an unusual threat environment. And in the middle of that, leadership is changing at two of the pillars of our national security community – Defense and CIA. At this moment, it makes good sense to extend Bob Mueller's leadership of the organization primarily responsible for protecting our homeland from terrorist attack.

To the extent there has been criticism of this idea, it has not focused on the man, but on the purpose of the ten-year term – reducing the risk of an abuse of power by a long-serving Director. But the man is the answer to that criticism. There is no person better suited to the responsible use of power than Bob Mueller. I know firsthand his commitment to the rule of law. He is what we wish all public servants could be.

There are no politics in this decision, just as there are no politics in Bob Mueller. This is, as he is, only about doing what is best for our country. Like so many of my fellow Americans, I am grateful for his willingness to continue to serve.

Thank you again for the opportunity to discuss this important topic with you today and I look forward to answering any questions you might have.