

**Prepared Statement by Senator Chuck Grassley of Iowa  
Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee  
Executive Business Meeting  
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Good morning. Today, we have a number of nominees on the agenda, all of whom are ready for a vote. They are:

- Greg Katsas, DC Circuit
- Jeffrey Beaverstock, Southern District of Alabama
- Emily Marks, Middle District of Alabama
- Brett Talley, Middle District of Alabama
- Holly Teeter, District of Kansas

There are also 2 US Attorney nominees on today's agenda on whom we'll vote and a bill we'll hold over.

Today, we'll be voting on the nomination of Greg Katsas to serve as a Judge for the DC Circuit Court. Of course, there's no disputing that he's very well qualified for this job. He has degrees from Princeton and Harvard, and he clerked for the Third Circuit, the D.C. Circuit, and the Supreme Court. He has years of experience in the public sector—where he led divisions at the Department of Justice—and in the private sector—where he was a partner at Jones Day. He currently serves as Deputy Counsel to the President in the White House Counsel's Office.

I assume that we'll hear today Senators explaining that they cannot support Mr. Katsas' nomination because he works for the Trump Administration generally and because of his ties to the Federalist Society. Of course, my colleagues should always vote their conscience on judicial nominees. But I will say that I don't see either of these as good reasons to vote against a nominee. Mr. Katsas works in the White House Counsel's Office. His client is the President of the United States. As in all attorney-client relationships, Mr. Katsas's job is to provide legal advice to the President. He's not responsible for the President's policy decisions. Thus, any disagreement with this Administration's policies is no basis for voting against Mr. Katsas, who has served his country with distinction for many years.

My Democratic colleagues have also made an unfortunate habit of criticizing nominees for their affiliations with the Federalist Society. But the Federalist Society is a large national association of lawyers with a variety of political and ideological views. If we were to reject all nominees affiliated with the Federalist Society, we would disqualify scores of talented lawyers from serving on the judiciary.

Moreover, the Federalist Society has no agenda besides advocating for faithful interpretations of the Constitution and the laws passed by Congress. The Senate has confirmed many nominees with much stronger connections to more ideological groups. For example, the Senate confirmed Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg despite her many years of left-wing advocacy at the ACLU. Mr. Katsas's involvement with the well-respected Federalist Society is similarly not disqualifying.

Turning to District Court nominees: Since our markup last week, we received ratings from the American Bar Association for two of the District Court nominees on today's agenda. The ABA rated both Ms. Teeter and Mr. Talley as "not qualified" by the ABA due to their lack of "requisite trial experience or its equivalent."

Sometimes, when nominees are rated "not qualified" the Committee invites the ABA to testify and explain their reasoning. In this case, the ABA informed my staff that coming to testify on these two particular ratings was not necessary because the reasoning behind the ratings was "very straightforward" and that there simply isn't much about which to ask the ABA.

Senators can decide for themselves if the ABA's metric of what makes a nominee qualified is proper in these cases. I'll note that the ABA did clarify they didn't have any issues with either nominee's "integrity or temperament."

I'll be voting for both these nominees today. Both of them enjoy the strong support from their home state Senators. These Senators believe the nominees can do the job of District Court Judge, and I value their perspective.

Furthermore, I don't see extensive trial experience as the sole factor in deciding whether a nominee is qualified. For example, Ms. Teeter has served as a career law clerk to federal judges for 6 years. In this capacity, she has assisted federal district court judges handle every aspect of federal trials for years. This is a unique experience that I'm sure will make her transition to a federal judge easier than it will be for others.

And Mr. Talley has a wide breadth of various legal experience that has helped to expose him to different aspects of federal law and the issues that would come before him.

Finally, "not qualified" ratings by the ABA have certainly not deterred a positive Committee recommendation in the past. In fact, most nominees who have received this rating came out of Committee with a unanimous vote or by voice vote.

I'll be supporting all of the nominees on the agenda today.