

**Excerpt of Prepared Statement by Senator Chuck Grassley of Iowa
Ranking Member, Senate Judiciary Committee
Executive Business Meeting
August 5, 2021**

We have on the agenda for the first time S. 1787, the State Antitrust Enforcement Venue Act of 2021, which we'd like to be held over.

Turning to nominees, I first want to address a nominee who's not before us today but is still before the Committee, David Chipman. Mr. Chipman is the nominee to be ATF director. My colleagues and I have sent Chairman Durbin two letters requesting that he be brought back to the Committee for further questioning.

As we noted in our most recent letter, it seems every day there's new information showing how unfit he is for this role. Yesterday we learned that Chipman failed to disclose a TV hit he did with a Chinese government station. Imagine if a Trump nominee had gone on Russia Today to criticize Obama's policies. That's what this is like. The video is on the Internet for anyone to see. In it he simply nods along as Chinese propagandists paint the United States as a violent war zone. His positions in the video don't seem all that different from what he says often, but it's one thing to criticize the laws and culture of your country to a domestic political audience, it's another thing entirely to do so in the service of a foreign antagonist. The Chinese Communist Party isn't interested in reforming America's gun laws; it's interested in weakening its primary global competitor by sowing political discord. This should be obvious and yet apparently it wasn't for Chipman. He needs to address this—and perhaps he would have last time had he not left the appearance off his questionnaire.

Just last week we also saw corroboration of allegations that Mr. Chipman had made racially insensitive comments while in Detroit. The chairman shot the messenger, as it were, by dismissing the corroboration as having come from a pro-Second-Amendment website, but the fact is that there are numerous agents, current and former, on and off the record, who attest to these allegations—as well as other problems with Chipman's time in Detroit.

To be clear, we didn't call for further Committee action until these rumors were corroborated by independent reporting. Now that we have that corroboration we should hear from Chipman about his time in Detroit and the chairman should help us get the secret documents we need from the Justice Department to see what really happened at the time period in question. Sunshine is the best disinfectant, after all.

As I've said many times, my constituents are very concerned about Mr. Chipman, and it's a sentiment I share. But these corroborated allegations and his Chinese propaganda video go beyond Mr. Chipman's policy views to his character, effectiveness, and judgment. If the administration is going to insist on this nominee to lead ATF, I think the Committee needs to, at minimum, ask him more questions.

Turning to today's nominees, I will be voting against Myrna Perez. While she seems very sincere in her progressive views, I think she's pretty clearly the most outspokenly liberal judicial nominee

we've seen this administration, and that's saying something. Sen. Schumer spoke of how she will forcefully advocate for the righteousness of her causes to other judges on the Second Circuit. That doesn't sound like the role of a judge to me. That should be disqualifying. Chairman Durbin said her article published the night before her hearing slamming voter-integrity legislation was the sort of thing he could say in a speech on the Senate Floor. As Sen. Cotton observed, that doesn't make the point my friend, the Chairman, intended to make! She's not running for a partisan political position.

The fact is that Ms. Perez did nearly twenty events or articles on highly controversial questions of law and policy *while being vetted by the Justice Department for this position*. She even attacked an amicus brief by Committee Republicans weeks before she knew her nomination would be in front of them. Did she not care about at least trying to look impartial? Did she just assume she could count to 51 without us? Was she so passionate she couldn't help but speak her political mind? To me there's no explanation for this truly brazen behavior that doesn't reflect poorly on Ms. Perez's judgment and cause me to question her protestations that she'd put all this aside as a judge. She couldn't stop being an advocate up through the day before her nominations hearing.

I'll also be voting against Judge Merriam, and Ms. Cobb. While they are qualified and I appreciated how forthright they were in answering my questions, their backgrounds in liberal politics and advocacy are simply too much.

I will also be voting against Matt Olsen. Like many of President Biden's Justice Department nominees, Mr. Olsen had an admirable career as a non-political public servant—until President Trump took office. Then it's like a switch got flipped and he suddenly was a full-blown partisan member of the Resistance. I'm skeptical that—returned to power—that switch will get flipped back.

Lastly I will be supporting Judges Pan and Williams. As I said at her hearing, I remember Judge Pan from her previous nomination. I think her time as a prosecutor and a judge make her well qualified for this position. She doesn't have an activist reputation. Judge Williams is similar. Her work as a magistrate doesn't appear activist like many of the others we've seen in this Committee this year and her time defending municipalities and police departments gives her a good diversity of perspective.