

**Prepared Statement by Senator Chuck Grassley of Iowa
Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee
Executive Business Meeting
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Today, we will consider several nominations. We have a nominee to the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals, three district court nominees, a nominee to chair the Administrative Conference of the United States, a nominee to the Court of Federal Claims, one U.S. Attorney nominee, and four U.S. Marshal nominees.

I'd also like to address some of my colleagues regarding Russian interference in the 2016 election.

Some of my friends on the Judiciary Committee last week made accusations—and they were pretty aggressive and outspoken about it—that I was not doing enough in this Committee to address Russian meddling in the election.

First, I am extremely disappointed in my colleagues for not taking the simple step of talking to me. No one approached me about this topic before with any request, suggestion or recommendation.

Second, and more importantly, the claims that my colleagues have made simply aren't true. We had a subcommittee hearing on October 27, 2017. We invited Facebook, Twitter and Google to address this very topic. We asked very tough questions of those tech companies about how their platforms were penetrated by foreign interests to help sow discord in American society in the lead up to the election. We questioned them aggressively to find out what the companies were doing to prevent it from happening again.

Every Democrat on the Committee—with the exception of our newest members who weren't on Committee at the time—was at that hearing. Several Senators, including myself, asked even more questions in writing for the record. In response to some of those questions, I asked Facebook to come in to provide Committee staff a follow-up briefing where all of your offices were given a forum to ask additional questions. Facebook did that for us in January.

In July I held a hearing on FARA. The title of that hearing was "Oversight of the Foreign Agents Registration Act and Attempts to Influence U.S. Elections: Lessons Learned from Current and Prior Administrations." I think the title speaks for itself.

I introduced a bill that was a direct result of that very hearing—S.2039, the "Disclosing Foreign Influence Act." That bill will help DOJ go after those who represent foreign interests and aren't abiding by their obligations to follow the law.

We held another subcommittee hearing in May entitled "Russian Interference in the 2016 United States Election." Again, the title speaks for itself. The subcommittee held another

hearing in March on the toolbox of Russia and other autocracies for undermining democracies throughout the world.

My colleagues have also complained about the lack of legislation before our Committee. I looked at every single bill that's been introduced in the Senate on this topic. Not one of them has been referred to Judiciary. Even my FARA bill is in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

And still no one has identified for me any Title 18 provision—or any other law that would be in our jurisdiction—that could be added or supplemented to address election meddling.

Nevertheless, I'm planning on having a hearing to explore that very topic. We'll see if law enforcement needs any other tools to prosecute people who want to interfere with our elections.

I also want to comment on a letter I received last night from three members on the other side trying to criticize me for not doing enough regarding the President's son and Jared Kushner. I've made it clear that I'm willing to look into all sides of the controversy.

But, the other side is well aware of the non-cooperation I've received from them regarding Fusion GPS, the DNC and the Clinton campaign. All of these entities have dirty fingers if not whole hands involved in the Russian collusion matter.

If the Republican Party had hired a cut-out law firm and opposition research firm, who then hired a former spy, who worked with Russian officials and sources in order to dig up dirt on the Democrat candidate, we'd never hear the end of it over here.

Before we move on to the agenda today, I'd also like to take a moment and comment on the hearing the Committee held yesterday.

Ryan Petty, the father of Alaina Petty, who died in the Parkland shooting, testified before this committee. In his testimony, Mr. Petty urged this committee to put aside its partisan differences and to come together to support legislation that enjoys consensus support and that will make our schools safer and prevent mass shootings. Ms. Posada, a teacher for Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, made a similar plea.

The committee has before it a number of bills that fit this description. Fix NICS and the STOP School Violence Act enjoy broad bipartisan support. Senator Cruz and I recently reintroduced the Protecting Communities and Preserving the Second Amendment Act, which members from both parties have supported previously. And I announced yesterday that I will be introducing the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Memorial Act of 2018.

This bill will provide funding to support the Secret Service's National Threat Assessment Center's efforts to conduct cutting edge research into the prevention of school violence. It will also enable the National Threat Assessment Center to train more of our nation's schools in how to

conduct threat assessments and early interventions. I hope all of my colleagues on this Committee will support this bill as cosponsors.

These are bills that should advance to the floor for the consideration of the entire Senate. I am willing to consider other bills, and am working with Senator Feinstein to discuss how we can proceed on a bipartisan basis. If we are to make progress on this issue, we must focus on what unites us, not what divides us. I look forward to the discussion.

I'll now turn to Senator Feinstein for her remarks.