

**Statement of Senator Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.),
Ranking Member, Senate Judiciary Committee,
Executive Business Meeting
April 14, 2016**

This week I learned that several Republican members on this Committee were finally willing to sit down privately with Chief Judge Merrick Garland, but that is not the meeting that the American people care about. The American people care about the meeting that takes place in this Committee where the public is invited in to see us doing our jobs. Chief Judge Garland should have the opportunity to appear publicly before this Committee and respond to the dishonest attacks against his distinguished record. We should not be outsourcing our jobs on this Committee to public interest groups or bloggers. We need to review his record for ourselves and prepare questions to be asked in a public hearing.

Mr. Chairman, we should send Chief Judge Garland a questionnaire, as the Chairmen and Ranking Members of this Committee have done as long as I have served here. And of course the nominee should send us his updated Senate questionnaire. Democrats serving on this Committee want to do their job. We Democrats are ready to roll up our sleeves and prepare for a public Committee hearing. If this Committee follows the schedule of the Supreme Court nominees considered for the past four decades, that public hearing should be on April 27th. As Justice Sandra Day O'Connor has said, "let's get on with it." Let's do our jobs already.

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