

**Prepared Statement by Senator Chuck Grassley of Iowa
Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee
Executive Business Meeting
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Good morning. Today we have several nominees and one bill on the agenda.

Six judicial nominees are on the agenda for the first time. They are:

- Andy Oldham, 5th Circuit
- Alan Albright, Western District of Texas
- Thomas Kleeh, Northern District of West Virginia
- Peter Phipps, Western District of Pennsylvania
- Michael Truncale, Eastern District of Texas
- Wendy Vitter, Eastern District of Louisiana

The minority has requested they be held over, so these six nominees are held over this week.

There is also one US Attorney nominee, and three US Marshal nominees on today's agenda that we'll vote on.

I'm glad we're considering S. 2559 today, a bill to implement the Marrakesh Treaty. The United States signed the treaty in October 2013 to facilitate access to published works for blind, visually impaired, or otherwise print disabled persons. The Foreign Relations Committee held a hearing on the Treaty and is planning to move on the Treaty's ratification process.

The *Marrakesh Treaty Implementation Act* is a consensus bill that was developed by both the Judiciary and Foreign Relations Committees with stakeholders within the publisher, library and print disabilities communities. We did this in consultation with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and the Copyright Office. As such, the bill enjoys the support of all these stakeholders, as well as other interested industry, copyright and public interest stakeholders. I particularly want to commend the National Federation of the Blind, the Association of American Publishers, and the Library Copyright Alliance for working with us in reaching an agreement on legislative text and proposed legislative history. We would not be here today without their efforts.

S. 2559 makes modest adjustments to U.S. copyright law to bring us into compliance with the Treaty.

Note that the Marrakesh Treaty is based on current U.S. copyright law that provides an exception or limitation for the creation and distribution of accessible format copies for the exclusive use of blind and other print-disabled persons, subject to various safeguards. S. 2559 broadens the scope of accessible works to include previously published musical works, refines the definition of eligible persons, and creates a new section in the Copyright Act to deal with the export and import of accessible format copies.

S. 2559 would go a long way in helping to give people with print disabilities—here in the United States and all over the world—greater access to materials in formats such as braille, large print and specialized digital audio files. It is a bipartisan, consensus bill that enjoys widespread support. It is supported by the copyright community as well as by the Administration.

And most importantly, it is supported by the publishers, libraries, and print disabilities and blind stakeholders who worked so diligently with us to reach a consensus. I'd like to acknowledge several members of the National Federation of the Blind who are here, including Mr. Jerad Nylin, who is the President of the National Federation of the Blind of Iowa. Thank you for being with us today.

Without objection, I'd like to put a letter from these groups in support of the bill in the record.

Also, I want to thank Senators Feinstein, Leahy, Hatch, Harris, Kennedy, Klobuchar and Durbin for cosponsoring this important bill. I urge my colleagues to vote for S. 2559.