

**Prepared Statement by Senator Chuck Grassley of Iowa  
Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee  
Executive Business Meeting  
May 21, 2015**

Today, we have 4 district court nominees on the agenda, as well as one piece of legislation, S. 1137, the PATENT Act.

The nominees on the agenda are:

- Dale Drozd, for the Eastern District of California;
- Ann Donnelly, for the Eastern District of New York;
- Lawrence Vilardo, for the Western District of New York;
- and LaShann DeArcy for the Eastern District of New York.

There's a request to hold over these nominations, so at the appropriate time, I'll ask that they be held over.

The PATENT Act is also on the agenda for the first time, and at the appropriate time, I'll ask that this bill be held over. I'd like to say a few words about it.

The bipartisan PATENT Act will address abusive patent litigation tactics which harm innovation and entrepreneurship, cost jobs, and are a drag on every segment of our economy. I'm sure all my colleagues have heard from their constituents about the need to do something about "patent trolling."

I think that we struck the right balance on the reform measures currently in the bill. However, other concerns have been raised by certain stakeholders – primarily in the life sciences community – about perceived abuses at the Patent and Trademark Office. They say that the post grant proceedings at the Patent Office are being gamed and are stacked against patent holders. On the other hand, other stakeholders believe that the inter partes review (IPR) and post grant review (PGR) proceedings have been successful in weeding out weak patents.

I've been working with the Ranking Member and a number of my Judiciary Committee colleagues on a path forward to address these issues. We've been getting input and trying to craft something that threads the needle to instill more confidence in the PTO's proceedings. Let me make clear that no one will get everything they want – our goal is to strike the right balance in a way that doesn't gut the Patent Office proceedings, and at the same time makes improvements to address the perception that these proceedings are biased and being abused. It's my hope that we'll get to a place where most folks are comfortable.

I'll have more to say about the PATENT Act when we mark it up after the Memorial Day recess, so I'll stop here.

I'd like to close by mentioning that the House this week passed S. 178, the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act. As we all know, the full Senate passed this bill by a vote of 99-0 last month,

after this Committee reported the bill in March. Its enactment is a must to help human trafficking victims heal and protect others from exploitation.

Committee members on both sides of the aisle, led by Senator Cornyn, made important contributions to this trafficking bill's development, and its passage is a major accomplishment for this Committee. I applaud my colleagues for their efforts and am pleased that this measure now is on its way to the White House for the President's signature.