

**Statement of Senator Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.),  
Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee  
Executive Business Meeting  
September 18, 2014**

Today, we have 10 judicial nominations on the agenda, including nine for district courts and one for the Court of Federal Claims. Each nomination is ready to be reported to the Senate floor.

Also on today's agenda we have four bills. The Second Chance Reauthorization Act (S. 1690) and the Runaway and Homeless Youth Trafficking Act (S.2646) were held over last week and are ready to be reported.

The Second Chance Reauthorization is a bipartisan, bicameral effort to ensure that offenders coming out of prison have the opportunity to turn their lives around, rather than returning to a life of crime. Investing in reentry programs improves public safety and saves taxpayer dollars. It is also the right thing to do.

Senator Portman and I heard concerns from last Congress' attempt to reauthorize this program and in response to these concerns we reduced the overall authorization from \$165 million to \$100 million and repealed or consolidated several programs. Many of the states represented on this Committee have benefitted from these programs and seen reductions in their recidivism rates. That is why it enjoys the support of law enforcement, the faith community, and members of both parties in the House and Senate.

I introduced the Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act with Senator Collins. This year marks the 40th anniversary of this Act, but despite four decades of work on this issue, there are still approximately 1.6 million homeless teens in the United States, and nearly 39 percent of the nation's homeless population is under the age of 18. It is critical we provide these vulnerable kids with the resources and support they need. Over 250 organizations from across the country have expressed their support of this legislation.

Listed for the first time this week is the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). FOIA is one of our most important laws promoting transparency and accountability in government, and I am proud to work yet again in a bipartisan fashion with Senator Cornyn to make improvements to this law. I understand a few Committee members have concerns with one provision of this bipartisan bill, and I hope to work with those offices before we return to legislative session in November to address their concerns.

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