

Statement for the Record of Senator Chuck Grassley of Iowa
Chairman, Senate Committee on the Judiciary
Hearing on the Nominations of:

Michelle K. Lee, to be Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of
the United States Patent and Trademark Office

Daniel Henry Marti, to be Intellectual Property Enforcement Coordinator, Executive Office of
the President

Alfred H. Bennett, to be a United States District Judge for the Southern District of Texas

George C. Hanks, Jr., to be a United States District Judge for the Southern District of Texas

Jose Rolando Olvera, Jr., to be a United States District Judge for the Southern District of Texas

Jill N. Parrish, to be a United States District Judge for the District of Utah

Wednesday, January 21, 2015

Welcome, everyone, to the first Nominations hearing of the 114th Congress. I look forward to the committee considering well qualified, consensus men and women to serve in the judicial branch.

Although Ms. Lee and Mr. Marti are appearing before this Committee for the second time, it is the first time they are appearing before the Committee under regular order. As I indicated last Congress, in my view it was not appropriate to hold the hearing last year during the lame duck session of Congress. It is important to give the new members of the Judiciary Committee the opportunity to ask the nominees questions and review their qualifications in person, before they are asked to cast a vote. Moreover, the Senate reviews not only each nominee's legal and professional qualifications, but reviews a thorough FBI background investigation as well. It is not unusual for there to be additional follow-up questions that our staffs must ask a nominee regarding this investigation and we typically do not move forward with a nomination until that follow-up work is completed. And the fact of the matter is that with one of today's nominees, an issue with respect to the background investigation was not resolved until just this week.

In sum, getting the Senate back to regular order and respecting process matters to our side. And that is why we are here today.

We are also hearing from four District court nominees today. Congratulations on your nomination and on the trust that both the President and your home state Senators have shown in you with their support. I look forward to reviewing your answers to our questions.