

**Prepared Statement by Senator Chuck Grassley of Iowa  
Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee  
Hearing on Judicial Nominations  
Wednesday, October 21, 2015**

Good morning and welcome to the 9th nominations hearing this year.

Today we will hear from four nominees to federal district courts:

- Gary Brown, for the Eastern District of New York
- Rebecca Ebinger, for the Southern District of Iowa
- Len Strand, for the Northern District of Iowa
- Mark Young, for the Central District of California

Welcome to all of you and your families and congratulations on your nominations.

I'm especially pleased to have two nominees for vacancies in Iowa.

I'm biased of course, but I must say in my humble opinion Judges Strand and Ebinger are two of the best judicial candidates President Obama has nominated during his Presidency.

To fill the two judicial vacancies in Iowa, I set up a Judicial Selection Commission and invited all interested Iowa lawyers to apply. The applicants were vetted by highly qualified members of the Iowa legal community.

After spending hundreds of hours reviewing the applications, the Commission interviewed the 39 Iowans who submitted their applications. 11 candidates were then selected for a lengthy second round of interviews.

At the end of the process, the Commission sent their recommendations to me. In consultation with Senator Ernst, I was proud to recommend Judges Strand and Ebinger to the White House. I want to take this opportunity to thank the Commissioners for the time and effort they devoted to the process.

Just to give you a sense of the time and effort that went into the process, Cindy Moser, who chaired the Commission, logged nearly 2,000 miles driving back and forth from Sioux City to Des Moines.

And I'd like to acknowledge one of the Commissioners who came from Iowa to be here today: Jeff Goodman.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank the President and his staff, including the White House counsel, for working with me to move these nominations forward. This is how our constitutional process of advice and consent is designed to work.

And the proof is in the pudding. Judges Strand and Ebinger have the highest credentials and character and will serve the state of Iowa with honor and distinction.

I'll introduce the Iowa nominees and then will turn to the other Senators for their introductions.

Judge Strand received his B.A. from the University of Iowa in 1987 and his J.D. from the University of Iowa College of Law in 1990. Upon graduation, he joined one of the most prestigious law firms in Iowa as an associate. During his time at the law firm, he received several awards, including "Super Lawyer" for Iowa and the Great Plains Region for 6 years straight. In 2012, Judge Strand was appointed as a Magistrate Judge for the United States District Court for the Northern District of Iowa. In this capacity, he has handled hundreds of cases, which has prepared him well to handle cases as a District Court Judge.

Judge Ebinger received her undergraduate degree in 1997 from the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service and her J.D. from Yale Law School in 2004. She then served as a Special Assistant United States Attorney in the United States Attorney's office for the Northern District of Iowa in Cedar Rapids. There, she prosecuted criminal cases involving narcotics, immigration, firearms offenses, and violent crimes. She then clerked for Judge Michael Melloy on the Eighth Circuit for two years, also in Cedar Rapids.

Following her clerkship, she moved to the United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Iowa as an Assistant United States Attorney. During this time, her practice shifted primarily to white collar crime. She also handled intake for all child support enforcement cases and sex offender registry violations. Judge Ebinger received a number of awards for her work with the United States Attorneys Office.

In 2012, she was appointed to serve as a district judge in Iowa state court and she was retained as a district judge in the 2014 election. As state court judge, she presides over a court of general jurisdiction handling civil law and equity, criminal and family court proceedings. She has presided over 40 cases that have gone to verdict or trial.