

Statement of
The Honorable Chuck Grassley

United States Senator
United States Senate
January 26, 2012

I welcome five nominees to today's hearing: one nominated to the Ninth Circuit and four nominated to district courts.

Andrew David Hurwitz is nominated to be United States Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit. Upon graduation from Yale Law School, Justice Hurwitz clerked for Justice Potter Stewart on the Supreme Court. Following this clerkship, Justice Hurwitz joined the law firm presently known as Osborne Maledon. Justice Hurwitz has also served under two Arizona governors as Chief of Staff: Governors Babbitt and Mofford.

In 2003, then Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano appointed Justice Hurwitz to the Arizona Supreme Court. In 2009, he became Vice Chief Justice.

Kristine Berhard Baker is nominated to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Arkansas. She graduated from University of Arkansas School of Law in 1996 and clerked for the Honorable Susan Webber Wright of the US District Court for the Eastern District of Arkansas upon graduation. In 1998, she became an associate at Williams & Anderson. In 2000 she joined the law firm Quattlebaun, Grooms, Tull & Burrow. There, she has focused on complex commercial litigation cases.

John Z Lee is nominated to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Illinois. He received his JD from Harvard Law School in 1992. Mr. Lee began his legal career as a trial attorney for the US Department of Justice for the Environment and Natural Resources Division. In 1994, he joined the private sector and is currently a partner at Grippo & Elden. He handles cases involving complex commercial disputes and represents clients in criminal investigations of antitrust and financial regulations violations.

George Levi Russell, III, is nominated to be United States District Judge for the District of Maryland. Judge Russell received his JD from University of Maryland School of Law in 1991. He began his legal career as an associate attorney and became an Assistant United States Attorney for the District of Maryland in 1994. He rejoined the private sector in 2000 for two years. Then, in 2007, he was appointed to be an associate judge on the Circuit Court of Maryland. In 2008, he was elected to a 15 year term. Judge Russell has sat on each of the four dockets of this court: Criminal, Civil, Family, and Juvenile.

John J. Tharp Jr. is nominated to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Illinois. Prior to law school, Mr. Tharp served in the Marine Corps for 6 years, receiving several military honors. Mr. Tharp received his JD from Northwestern University School of Law in 1990. Upon graduation, Mr. Tharp clerked for Judge Glaum on the Seventh Circuit Court of

Appeals. He spent the next year as a litigation associate at Kirkland & Ellis. From there, he became an Assistant United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois for five years. Mr. Tharp returned to the private sector in 1997, joining his current law firm Mayer Brown where he handles complex commercial litigation.

Again, I welcome the nominees and their families. I look forward to reviewing the testimony.

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