

**Statement Of Senator Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.),
Chairman, Senate Committee On The Judiciary,
On Committee Consideration Of
The Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act, S.744
May 9, 2013**

I will be brief so that we can begin consideration of the immigration bill by voting on amendments this morning. After recognizing the Ranking Member for his opening remarks, I had intended to call upon Senator Schumer to offer the first amendment, one he and the other sponsors of the bill filed and circulated last week to perfect the underlying bill. If it is adopted, the bill as amended will then be open to further amendment. Instead, I will accommodate the request from Senator Grassley to recognize other members of the Committee for brief opening remarks of up to 4 minutes.

Senators have previously spoken at our earlier meetings and during the six days of hearings we have held this year on comprehensive immigration reform. Many have also given floor statements and press conferences.

Now, in my view, it is time for the Committee to get to work marking up the bill. Earlier this week Senators filed hundreds of amendments. They are posted on our Committee website to make it easier for the public to follow and understand our discussion. I hope that Senators will seriously consider which of their filed amendment they intend to offer so that we can make progress and report the bill in the next couple of weeks.

As I said when we began our discussion of the bill two weeks ago, I anticipate continuing our meeting next Tuesday and Thursday. Depending on the progress we have made going through amendments by next Thursday, we may need to continue meeting on Friday.

This morning we begin with a series of brief remarks by Senators. Then we will consider the sponsors' perfecting amendment and then we will start with amendments filed to the beginning sections of the bill, which include the much discussed triggers for the pathway to citizenship. Then we will move on to amendments filed to the first title of the bill on border security. I hope we can complete work on those aspects of the legislation in today's session.

I look forward to the cooperation of all Senators and to a productive and transparent process as we proceed to debate and vote on amendments to this historic legislation.