

Sen. Leahy On Committee Consideration Of Bipartisan Immigration Reform Legislation

April 25, 2013

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.) on Thursday discussed the Committee's upcoming schedule for considering the Border Security, Economic Opportunity and Immigration Modernization Act of 2013. Leahy announced the first markup session on this bipartisan legislation will be on Thursday, May 9th, with amendments to the measure made publicly available ahead of time. The open and transparent process for considering this important measure comes after six Committee hearings on the issue of immigration reform featuring the testimony of 42 witnesses.

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**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
April 25, 2013**

Also on today's agenda is the bipartisan comprehensive immigration reform bill. Since February, we have held six days of hearings on comprehensive immigration reform and heard testimony from 42 witnesses. During just the last week we completed three days of hearings and heard live testimony from a variety of viewpoints from 26 witnesses on the bill. These are more hearings, more witnesses and more process than the Committee provided in 2006 when we passed the Kennedy-McCain comprehensive immigration reform bill, and three times as many witnesses as the Committee called to testify during its consideration of the Immigration Reform and Control Act in 1986.

As I discussed with Senator Grassley, I expect the bill will be held over until our next meeting. When we next meet, the bill will have been publicly available for three weeks. So before we vote on any aspect of it we and the public will have had the bill for some time.

I have thought about ways we can make our proceedings more open to the public and easier to follow. For this important legislation, I intend to make all amendments available to the public in a timely fashion by posting them on our website. To do this and to ensure a more organized, easier to follow process, I am asking that all amendments to the bill, S.744, be filed by Tuesday, May 7, at 5 p.m. This will allow us to post the amendments on our website and to organize our proceedings around amendments relating to similar subject matters and aspects of the bill. That will mean that our first consideration of amendments will be at our mark up on May 9 and that the public will be better able to follow the discussion and votes.

Since there may be dozens of amendments filed, we will likely need to continue considering them at meetings on subsequent days. Depending on the number of amendments and length of time it takes to consider them, I anticipate our continuing to meet on May 14, May 16, May 20 and every day and evening thereafter, if necessary, to complete our consideration and have a final vote on the bill.

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

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