

## **Opening Statement of Senator Tom Carper: Committee Business Meeting October 7, 2015**

*As prepared for delivery:*

“I’d like to start today’s business meeting by thanking Chairman Johnson for bringing us together again today to attempt to move a number of mostly bipartisan bills to the full Senate. My thanks as well to our colleagues and all of our staffs for the hard work that went into preparing us for what I believe will be a successful mark up.

“Among the bills we’ll be considering today is the bipartisan “Fraud Reduction and Data Analytics Act,” sponsored by myself, Chairman Johnson, and Senators Tillis and McCaskill. This bill would require stronger financial controls for federal programs that should help agencies to better identify and prevent fraud.

“These new financial controls would be based on new standards released in July by the Government Accountability Office. These standards are actually based on successful practices in the private sector. The bill would also strengthen accountability through regular reports that Congress can use to better target our oversight of anti-fraud efforts.

“Finally, the legislation would foster the sharing among federal agencies of best practices in combatting fraud, including for the use and development of cutting edge data analysis, that can help spot efforts to scam government programs or misuse federal funds. This is timely, common sense and bipartisan legislation. I urge my colleagues to support this important bill.

“I am also pleased that the agenda includes S. 2120, the Fair Chance Act, sponsored by Senator Booker and the Chairman. In a job interview process, one of the most common early questions is: “Have you been convicted of a crime?” This seemingly harmless question often means lifelong discrimination and exclusion from the job market for men and women who may have made a mistake in their past. The Fair Chance Act would ensure that applicants for federal jobs or jobs with federal contractors have a meaningful opportunity to get their foot in the door, interview, and prove themselves without questions early on in the process about their past.

“This type of “ban the box” policy has already been adopted in many states, including Delaware. It would give those trying to re-enter the workforce the chance to be judged on their current merits and not just their past wrongdoing. But the bill would also provide important exceptions so that question can be asked early on when it makes sense – for positions in national security and law enforcement, for example. I will be pleased to support this bill.

“I would also note that there are a number of bills on the agenda today that would change various aspects of the regulatory procedures that federal agencies must follow. I appreciate all of the hard work that has gone into these bills. Although I am supportive of S. 1817, the Smarter Regs Act of 2015, which would require retrospective review plans to be built into future regulations, I have serious concerns with the other regulatory reform bills on the agenda. I worry that many of these proposals would add additional hurdles to the regulatory process that would make it even

more complicated and lead to significant regulatory delays, rather than helping to make the process more efficient. I believe other members of the Committee have similar concerns.

“In our past markups, Chairman Johnson, you have emphasized that you believe it is important that we work together to find common areas of agreement and move those pieces of legislation. This has worked well on other bills, such as Senator Portman’s permitting bill that we worked hard on to find areas of agreement. I am concerned, however, that so many controversial regulatory reform bills are on our agenda today. I would prefer that we focus on bills where we can find agreement, like for instance, Senator Heitkamp’s bill.

“As I close, I would also like to make note of the fact that we have several nominees who were reported out of this Committee in June of this year who are still awaiting consideration by the full Senate. They include two excellent nominees to be Associate Judges on the Superior Court of the District of Columbia. They continue to wait for the Senate to act. Both Judge Nooter and Judge Wellner were originally nominated back in 2013. The Senate should not treat well qualified nominees like this and I ask that we do everything we can to get these nominees moved through the Senate.

“Given the agenda we have before us, I will refrain from any additional remarks so we can start right into the business at hand and get to work.”

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