

**Business Meeting Statement**  
Chairman Joe Lieberman  
April 25, 2012

Good morning and welcome to this unusually late-in-the-year first mark up for the Committee. As you all know, we were quite busy in the first work period, and our work has not let up since. We have passed two significant bills, and hope to pass more in the next work period, building on this Committee's record of bipartisan legislating.

In March, we debated and passed the STOCK Act, which was necessary to assure the public that their elected officials did not come to Congress for personal profit. And just yesterday, we passed the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Postal Act to help restore the financial standing of the United States Postal Service so millions of customers who rely on it can continue to do so. We have also been preparing for floor debate, and I hope eventual passage, of legislation to secure the electronic networks of the nation's most critical and insecure infrastructure. That debate likely will occur in the third work period.

So, as a result of that work schedule, several bills are backed up in the queue and ready to be reported out of Committee. Seven of them are on our agenda today. We also have a resolution, three nominations, and 11 postal naming bills. You will all be pleased to hear that none of our seven bills is controversial, so this meeting should not take up too much of your time.

Among the bills we will consider today is one offered by Senators Brown, Carper, and Johnson to improve the financial condition of the Department of Homeland Security. The Department of Homeland Security Improved Financial Accountability Act of 2011 would require the Department to take the steps necessary for auditors to complete a clean, accurate audit. We also will take up Senator McCaskill's Non-Federal Employee Whistleblower Protection Act to extend whistleblower protections to the employees of all federal contractors. Senator Akaka has two bills: the Hatch Act modernization Act, which would modify the penalty structure for federal employees and eliminate the prohibition against state and local government employees running

for political office. Senator Akaka also authored the Safeguarding American Agriculture Act of 2011, which, among other things, would strengthen the relationship between the Department of Agriculture and Customs and Border Protection, two agencies that work together on plant and animal confiscations at the border.

The resolution on the agenda is timed for Public Service Recognition week and would commend public servants for their dedication and continued service to their nation. This resolution is particularly important now because of the misconduct of Secret Service agents and employess of the General Services Administration. With headlines and attention focused on a few bad actors, we should remind the American people that most federal employees are hard working, patriotic, and more than honest.

I want to mention one other bill: the Brian Terry Memorial Act that pays tribute to the Border Patrol agent killed by drug smugglers in Arizona in December 2010 by a gun that was traced back to the Fast and Furious

program. The bill would rename the Bisbee, Arizona, Border Patrol Station in honor of Terry.

As I said, these bills are not controversial and have broad support, so we should be able to agree to report them out so they can be passed by the full Senate. Let's get to work and add these seven bills to the list of Committee accomplishments.