

**Markup of the Nomination of Julie Myers to be Assistant Secretary of Immigration
and Customs Enforcement at the Department of Homeland Security**
Senator Joseph Lieberman
September 26, 2007

The primary item on our agenda today is the nomination of Julie Myers to continue as Assistant Secretary for the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Bureau at the Department of Homeland Security.

Ms. Myers appeared before this committee for her nomination hearing on September 12, at which time I joked – only partially in jest – that she had matured significantly since the last time she came before the Committee.

I opposed her nomination when she originally appeared before us in 2005 because I was concerned that she lacked the managerial experience to head an agency as complex as ICE. She was nevertheless elevated to the post through a recess appointment.

During her more recent confirmation hearing, she spoke confidently and with great expertise about her responsibilities at ICE. She has headed the agency for more than a year and a half,

and, based on her record, and a series of interviews with those who know her work best, I am now prepared to support her nomination.

I do want to note that Senator McCaskill asked that we delay a vote on Ms. Myer's nomination until the Senator received information from ICE about, among other things, the number of employers arrested for hiring undocumented immigrants. As I understand it, the Department has not historically collected this data but is now working to collect it for the Senator and into the future.

I am sympathetic to Senator McCaskill's request and I will continue to work with her on the matter but I have decided to press on with the nomination, based on the significance of the position and because I believe that, with less than 18 months left in the Bush Administration, ICE needs the stability that Ms. Myers leadership has provided. Ms. Myers' family has also made sacrifices so that she can serve in this position, and out of fairness to them I believe the Senate should proceed with considering her nomination expeditiously.

I have been impressed by Ms. Myers' knowledge of the complicated issues facing ICE. She provided thoughtful answers to our Committee's policy questions on a range of topics. And, for the most part, she is described by co-workers and outside interest groups as a talented executive with a strong work ethic and good management abilities

As I said during her confirmation hearing, however, ICE remains an agency with many problems. The integration of employees, missions, and cultures of two core programs from two different departments remains incomplete. Employee morale is shockingly low. ICE's treatment of undocumented immigrants in detention continues to raise questions about whether we are treating detainees humanely and with appropriate care. I spoke about all of these issues at greater length at Ms. Myers' confirmation hearing.

In short, ICE has a daunting combination of missions and daunting problems to match. Ms. Myers has not only indicated her

willingness to work with us on many of them in the limited time this administration has left, she has already begun to make needed reforms. Therefore, I will vote in favor of her nomination.

Senator Collins would you like to make any remarks concerning the nomination?

-30-