

**Opening Statement of Chairman Ron Johnson
Business Meeting, July 26, 2017**

As prepared for delivery:

Good morning.

I want to first thank my colleagues for their work and participation on our committee. Our members have been active at the dozens of hearings and business meetings we have held, and we have worked together to find areas of agreement on oversight and legislation. So far this Congress our committee has approved 27 pieces of legislation, 24 of which were approved on a bipartisan basis. We have vetted and approved 9 nominees to fill significant roles across the Federal Government.

Today we will consider 14 bills. Although these bills are varied and affect numerous different programs within the Federal Government, the one thing they have in common is that they aim to make the government run more effectively for the American people. Two bills on our agenda, for example, will bring more accountability and efficiency to the process that the Department of Homeland Security uses to make major acquisitions. The bills respond to the Inspector General of the Department's strong concerns of cost overruns, schedule delays, and billions of wasted dollars in these programs. Two other bills on the agenda would accomplish a similar aim for the Department's administration of Federal Emergency Management Agency grants and funding for states and Americans facing emergencies.

One bill on the agenda will help ensure that when federal employees are paid by the taxpayer but do work instead on behalf of federal unions – on official time – their activities are transparent and they are accountable to the American public. Other proposals would make needed incremental improvements that reduce unnecessary and wasteful spending on printing millions of documents that Congress doesn't need and oftentimes doesn't want, and give Americans the ability to better protect certain sensitive documents sent through the mail.

I'm pleased we also have an opportunity through this markup to honor our nation's first responders who put their own lives at risk to do important work for all of us.

I look forward to discussing the legislation on today's agenda with my colleagues, and finding areas of agreement to make government work better for the American people.