

**Opening Statement of Chairman Ron Johnson  
Business Meeting, May 17, 2017**

*As prepared for delivery:*

Good morning.

Over the last few months, Congress has worked to roll back some of the midnight rules issued at the end of the previous administration using the Congressional Review Act (CRA). Altogether, we successfully repealed 14 regulations, stopping regulatory costs over the next 10 years. This kind of retrospective work is necessary, but it is only a small portion of the more than 2,500 new rules President Obama's administration issued in its last six months, or the more than 4,000 during his final year. A bill we will consider today, the Midnight Rules Relief Act, would allow Congress to consider regulations issued in the waning days of an outgoing President together, rather than one at a time, to strengthen the CRA process.

We also must work to prevent future regulatory overreach, so today we begin the hard work of reforming the regulatory system itself. Legislation we will consider today includes the REINS Act, which puts Congress back in charge - and on the hook - for regulatory policymaking instead of unelected bureaucrats. We will also consider bipartisan structural reforms such as the Regulatory Accountability Act, which puts into law longstanding principles for guiding regulatory analysis - principles embraced for more than 20 years by presidents of both parties, and legislation to increase transparency and public engagement.

The remaining bills on the agenda are as important as they are varied and ambitious. I look forward to approving legislation that will give formerly incarcerated individuals a fair chance to compete for federal jobs, help ensure firefighters are available to respond to local emergencies, assist U.S. business people travelling across Asia and the Pacific, and honor the life of Boris Nemtsov, a prominent critic of Russia's war in Ukraine who was murdered near the Kremlin in 2015.

I'd also like to highlight a couple items relating to homeland security. The first, the Department of Homeland Security Blue Campaign Authorization Act, is an important step toward combatting human trafficking. The bill would authorize the Department of Homeland Security's efforts to utilize a victim-centered approach to fight the problem, and provide more stability and formal leadership to the anti-trafficking program. The second, the Boots on the Border Act of 2017, will help the Department hire qualified local, state, and federal law enforcement officers, as well as separating service members, to fill the thousands of open border patrol agent and office of field operations officer positions across the country. This will bolster national security and promote legitimate trade and travel.

I look forward to discussing the legislation on today's agenda, and to sending important regulatory, homeland security, and good-government reforms to the full Senate for its consideration.