

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator. Senator Robb, welcome.

STATEMENT OF HON. CHARLES S. ROBB, A U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF VIRGINIA

Senator ROBB. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator Thurmond, other members of the Judiciary Committee.

As a Virginian, Senator Warner and I are frequently extended the courtesy of introducing for Senate confirmation residents of our State that the President has nominated to high level positions in the Federal Government, notwithstanding the fact that in most cases they have burnished their credentials while bearing true faith and allegiance to a political party other than the one that at least I happen to represent. In that capacity, I was pleased to introduce Judge Thomas when he was nominated to his current judgeship with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

Recognizing the importance of a lifetime appointment to the highest Court in our land, however, and the prospect that, if confirmed Associate Justice of the Supreme Court at his age, he could well serve for 30 years or more, I don't suggest that any prior examination of his credentials ought to substitute for the thorough examination you are about to begin or that our prior vote to confirm Judge Thomas ought to obligate us necessarily to confirm Justice Thomas.

Therefore, like most of our Senate colleagues, I am going to withhold final judgment until these confirmation hearings have been completed and your committee has acted. I would be less than candid, though, if I didn't observe at the outset that I have had two very good meetings in my office with Judge Thomas, one for each of his nominations, and I am very much impressed with the way he has dealt with the challenges that he has faced. I am impressed with his life story and the way he has persevered against the odds. I am impressed by the way he has thought about the way society works—and doesn't work—and I am impressed by his sense of conviction about the ideas and principles in which he believes.

I care deeply about the issues most often cited by those individuals and organizations that have announced their opposition to Judge Thomas. And because I am more often aligned with them than against them, I simply ask that they join me in withholding final judgment until they have actually heard Judge Thomas respond to direct questions about those issues which concern all of us.

I believe based on my own conversations with him that he will respond to many of those questions and concerns in ways that will be far more reassuring than inferences that have been drawn solely from fragmented comments and speeches where the questions have not been squarely joined.

In short, I find Judge Thomas more difficult to stereotype than his public image might suggest, and I believe almost everyone will discover a few surprises during the confirmation process.

Mr. Chairman, you have an important responsibility to fulfill, and I wish you well.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, gentlemen.

Now, we will move west of the Mississippi, to a State in which our distinguished nominee has worked and has friends, and one of his friends is the junior Senator from the State of Missouri, Senator Bond.

Senator Bond, welcome. We are very anxious to hear what you have to say.

**STATEMENT OF HON. CHRISTOPHER S. BOND, A U.S. SENATOR
FROM THE STATE OF MISSOURI**

Senator BOND. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee.

It is a great honor and a pleasure for me to come before this committee today to join in the multifaceted presentation of Judge Clarence Thomas, the President's nominee for Associate Justice to the United States Supreme Court.

Coming from Missouri, I have to make a major effort to claim him for the State of Missouri, but we do so with a great deal of pride.

I had the real pleasure first of meeting Judge Thomas when we both worked in Jefferson City, MO, in the early 1970's. Both of us began our career in State government as assistants attorney general under Jack Danforth. It was an exciting and intellectually challenging place for a young lawyer to work. The outstanding caliber of the other people that Jack Danforth brought to that office is best illustrated by the jobs that some of them now hold—Federal judges, Chairman of the FCC, and we hope soon a Supreme Court Justice.

Even among a cast of stars like that, Clarence Thomas shone as a lawyer. He was not content simply to move cases through the office, but, instead, worked to use his position to accomplish change and to improve the lives of people in our State.

His legal work and his intellect were noticed, not just by Jack Danforth, but by many others, as well. When Jack was elected to the Senate, Clarence Thomas came to Washington and applied his skills to a series of jobs, ranging from corporate lawyer to the Chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, giving him the opportunity to learn firsthand about a wider range of legal areas than most recent nominees to the Court.

I say, Mr. Chairman, that if you look at the group of people who know Clarence Thomas best, you will find his most ardent supporters. I only hope that those who do not know him as well as we do may have the opportunity during the course of these hearings to gain the knowledge and the respect that we have.

Though his skills as a lawyer and a judge are obvious, they are not, in my view, the only reason that this committee should vote to approve Judge Thomas' nomination. Just as important is his compassion and understanding of the impact that the Supreme Court has on the lives of average Americans.

We are all familiar with Judge Thomas' background as outlined by our distinguished colleague from Georgia. It is an inspiring story. There is no doubt that he can be proud of his achievements.

But it is also important to focus on his continuing efforts throughout his life to live up to the values and principles that his