

NEWS RELEASE

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Statement of Senator Joseph R. Biden, Jr. (D-Del.)
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary,
On the Release of: JUSTICE FOR ALL

The Brookings Task Force on Civil Justice Reform has drafted an excellent report which should have great impact in correcting flaws in our civil litigation system. The report is comprehensive, thoughtful and specific. It is substantive and innovative, and it presents a workable set of recommendations.

The 36 task force members devoted significant time, effort and thought to this project. They all realized that reaching a consensus was important and approached the project as true "Officers of the Court."

The report and its recommendations are a compilation of many ideas already familiar to those working in the area of civil justice reform. What is new, however, is the coalition of diverse interests supporting such far-reaching reforms. The Consumer Federation of America and the Business Roundtable; the American Insurance Association and the Association of Trial Lawyers of America; the Environmental Law Institute and many of America's largest corporations; various legal scholars; and major law firms from the plaintiffs' and defense bar all participated in the conferences. For that reason, the comprehensive set of procedural reforms they propose probably has a greater chance of becoming law than any other civil justice reform effort in the past.

Therefore, Congress will certainly follow the task force's lead and I can assure you that civil justice reform will be a high priority of the Senate Judiciary Committee. These recommendations are an important and encouraging start. I look forward to working on a bipartisan basis with my colleagues to develop legislation that will result in meaningful reform of the federal court system.

