



Federal Bar Association

September 19, 2016

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
S-230 Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Harry Reid
Minority Leader
United States Senate
S-221 Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Action on Pending District Court Nominees

Dear Majority Leader McConnell and Minority Leader Reid:

On behalf of the thousands of lawyers who practice in the federal courts, I write to urge you to schedule floor votes on the 20 district court nominees pending on the Senate calendar. These nominees are noncontroversial and have waited significant periods of time for the Senate to act upon their nominations. They have been reported out of the Senate Judiciary Committee without dispute, and we believe that the process merits them a prompt up-or-down vote.

As you know, the Federal Bar Association is the nation's foremost bar association devoted to federal jurisprudence and the practice of law in the federal court system. We regularly have called upon the President and Congress to act promptly and responsibly in nominating and confirming nominees to the federal courts.

As lawyers, we appreciate the important role that the federal district courts play in the administration of justice. Our district courts and their judges have been rightfully described as "the workhorses of our federal court system." Vacancies on these courts place added pressure on the speed with which the courts can dispense justice, underscoring the axiom that "justice delayed is justice denied." The prompt delivery of justice is integral to public respect for the law and public confidence in our judicial institutions.

We note that the corresponding judgeships of more than one-third (7 of 20) of the judicial nominees who await a final Senate vote are considered "judicial emergencies" by the United States Judicial Conference because of their high caseloads and/or the significant amount of time the judgeship has remained vacant. Action on these nominees is especially warranted.

Plainly the lack of sufficient numbers of judges on our federal courts is costing our country in dollars and delay. It is money being needlessly wasted. This is not good for any litigant or the state of justice in our nation. We urge you to schedule floor votes on the 20 district court nominees pending on the Senate calendar before the end of the current Congress.

Thank you for your leadership and your attention to our concerns.

Sincerely,

Karen Silberman
Executive Director