

Talking Points

Judicial Nominations

The National Council of Jewish Women's (NCJW) Message

Judges confirmed to lifetime seats on federal courts have the power to influence every aspect of public policy. They make decisions every day about health care, bodily autonomy, voting rights, the environment, law enforcement, and civil rights, and these decisions impact our lives and those of future generations. NCJW supports a diverse and independent federal judiciary filled with qualified judges committed to upholding constitutional rights, such as the separation of religion and state, for all Americans. Because our district and circuit courts are the final word in the vast majority of cases, and because judges in these courts hold lifetime appointments, the careful selection of lower court judges is critical. **Senators must support a diverse and independent federal judiciary by only confirming fair-minded constitutionalists who respect equality and justice for all and who understand the impact of the law on all Americans.**

- **The Senate has a duty to confirm qualified individuals to lifetime seats on the judiciary.** The nonpartisan American Bar Association (ABA) has traditionally evaluated judicial candidates before they are nominated, and until recently, the White House and Senate Judiciary Committee have considered those evaluations before moving forward with a nomination. ABA ratings are based on objective assessments of candidates' competence, principles, and temperament. The Senate Judiciary Committee has ceased honoring these valuable evaluations, and the Senate has confirmed multiple nominees rated "Not Qualified." All Senators must protect the integrity of the judiciary by opposing unqualified candidates.
- **Now more than ever, this country needs an independent judiciary.** Because each federal judge wields so much power, nominees must be able to demonstrate that they will be impartial arbiters of the law. Meaningful consultation with home-state senators ensures a mainstream judiciary, and ignoring their historic role in the judicial nominations process harms the independence of our courts. Further, the overreach of the Trump Administration underscores the need for independent federal judges who will serve as a check on politicians in all branches of government when they break the law or violate the Constitution.
- **Diversity on the federal bench is crucial.** The federal courts should not be packed with narrow-minded elitists who will roll back the clock on protections for historically disadvantaged groups while favoring corporations and the powerful elite. Rather, nominees should come from varied professional and personal backgrounds. Such diversity helps instill confidence in our legal system; federal courts should reflect the communities they serve.