Second, a close review of the report revealed that for noncontroversial nominees who were confirmed, there was little if any difference between the process of confirmation for minority nominees and nonminority nominees in 1997 and 1998. Only when the President appointed a controversial female or minority nominee who was not confirmed did a discrepancy arise. Third, in 1993 and 1992, when George Bush was President, the Democratically controlled Senate confirmed female and minority nominees at a far slower pace than white male nominees. Fourth, this year, over 50% of the nominees that the Judiciary Committee reported to the full Senate have been women and minorities. Finally, even the Democratic former chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Senator Joe Biden, stated publicly that the process, by which the committee under my chairmanship, examines and approves judicial nominees “has not a single thing to do with gender or race.”

As chairman of the Judiciary Committee, I take the constitutional duties of advising and consent and the responsibility for maintaining the institutional dignity of the Senate very seriously. Although the President has occasionally nominated controversial candidates, under my tenure as chairman, not one nominee has suffered a public attack on his, or her, character by this committee. Not one nominee has had his, or her, confidential background information leaked to the public by a member of this committee. And not one nominee has been examined for anything other than his, or her, integrity, competence, temperament, and respect for the rule of law.

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