

Administration of Barack Obama, 2013

Statement on Senate Action To Block the Nomination of Caitlin J. Halligan To Be a Judge on the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit

March 6, 2013

I am deeply disappointed that despite support from a majority of the United States Senate, a minority of Senators continues to block the nomination of Caitlin Halligan to serve on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. Nearly 2½ years after being nominated, Ms. Halligan continues to wait for a simple up-or-down vote. In the past, filibusters of judicial nominations required "extraordinary circumstances," and a Republican Senator who was part of this agreement articulated that only an ethics or qualification issue—not ideology—would qualify. Ms. Halligan has always practiced law with the highest ethical ideals, and her qualifications are beyond question. Furthermore, her career in public service and as a law enforcement lawyer serving the citizens of New York is well within the mainstream.

Today's vote continues the Republican pattern of obstruction. My judicial nominees wait more than three times as long on the Senate floor to receive a vote than my predecessor's nominees. The effects of this obstruction take the heaviest toll on the DC Circuit, considered the Nation's second highest court, which now has only seven active judges and four vacancies. Until last month, for more than 4 years, the court has always had at least 8 active judges and as many as 12. A majority of the Senate agrees that Ms. Halligan is exactly the kind of person who should serve on this court, and I urge Senate Republicans to allow the Senate to express its will and to confirm Ms. Halligan without further delay.

Categories: Statements by the President : Halligan, Caitlin J., judicial confirmation, Senate action to block vote.

Names: Bush, George W.; Halligan, Caitlin J.

Subjects: Congress : Presidential nominations, confirmation process; Judiciary: Federal court nominations and confirmations.

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