

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510

Senate Judiciary Chairman Chuck Grassley
135 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510

February 19, 2016

Dear Majority Leader McConnell and Chairman Grassley:

Though our organizations reflect a diverse array of faith traditions, we share a commitment to justice and wise leadership. These values are also cornerstones of American democracy. For this reason, even as we mourn the death of committed public servant Associate Justice Antonin Scalia, we urge you to swiftly fulfill your constitutional responsibility of providing “advice and consent” on whomever is nominated by President Obama to fill the Supreme Court vacancy.

The system of government created by the Constitution’s Framers rests on three fully functioning and co-equal branches. A seat intentionally left vacant for an extended period of time – either through a delayed nomination or delayed consideration – threatens the ability of the government to operate at full capacity, as well as the ability for justice to be served in a timely fashion. Justice delayed is anathema to us as Americans and as people of faith seeking to create a more just nation and world.

That is why we were pleased to hear President Obama make clear his intention to send you a nominee without undue delay. There is clear precedent for President Obama to swiftly put forth a Supreme Court nominee, and for the Senate to hold a fair hearing and timely vote. Since the 1980s, every Supreme Court nominee has been given a hearing and vote within approximately 100 days of his or her nomination. With well over 300 days before a new president takes office, there is ample time for the nomination and confirmation process. And though 2016 is an election year, the precedent here is clear as well: six Supreme Court justices have been confirmed during presidential election years.

While some of our denominations and organizations take positions on individual nominees, others do not. Yet, we are united in our shared commitment to the principle that the President’s and Senate’s constitutional duties regarding judicial vacancies ought to be carried out in a timely fashion. We urge you move expeditiously to hold hearings and vote on whomever is nominated to fill the Supreme Court vacancy.

Sincerely,

African American Ministers In Action
Ameinu (Our People)
Anti-Defamation League
Baptist Joint Committee for Religious
Liberty
Bend the Arc Jewish Action
Catholics for Choice
Center of Concern

Central Conference of American Rabbis
Church World Service
Franciscan Action Network
Friends Committee on National Legislation
Habonim Dror
Interfaith Alliance
Jewish Council for Public Affairs
Jewish Women International

Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
Muslim Advocates
National Council of Churches
National Council of Jewish Women
National Religious Campaign Against
Torture
NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice
Lobby
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association

Refugee & Immigration Ministries, Christian
Church (Disciples of Christ)
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice
Religious Institute
Union for Reform Judaism
Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation
United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness
Ministries
Women of Reform Judaism
Workmen's Circle

CC: Democratic Leader Harry Reid
Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee

Please contact Barbara Weinstein, Associate Director, Religious Action Center of Reform
Judaism, at bweinstein@rac.org or 202-387-2800 with any questions.