



UNITED STATES SENATE
**REPUBLICAN
POLICY COMMITTEE**

Larry E. Craig, Chairman
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The Historical Record on Judicial Nominations

President Bush has nominated judges at a record pace for a new President – and he has selected some of the finest lawyers in America. Each has the character, reputation, competence, capacity, and experience to become an outstanding Federal judge.

With the 15 nominations made yesterday, the President has made 44 nominations to the United States circuit courts and district courts. His first 11 nominations were made on May 9, almost three months ago.

Eight of the 11 individuals named on May 9 were nominated to positions that had been designated as “judicial emergencies” by the Administrative Office of the United States Courts. Yet, only one of those 11 has had a hearing in the Senate Judiciary Committee!

President Bush is moving more quickly to fill judicial vacancies than did his predecessors. In part, this is because of the large number of vacant Federal judgeships.

By this time in their presidencies, President Clinton had made 13 nominations (in 1993); President George H.W. Bush had made 8 (in 1989); and President Reagan has made 14 (in 1981).

The Senate moved promptly in former years. In the presidencies of Mr. Clinton, Mr. G.H.W. Bush, and Mr. Reagan, all but one of the nominees who were nominated before the end of the August were confirmed during the first year of that presidency. To maintain this consistent record, the Senate is going to have to pick up its pace considerably.

As of the Senate’s adjournment last night, only four Federal judges had been confirmed this year: William J. Riley to the 8th Circuit (on August 2); Roger L. Gregory to the 4th Circuit, and Richard F. Cebull and Sam E. Haddon to the District of Montana (all on July 20). (Judge Gregory was first nominated by President Clinton and then renominated by President Bush. That renomination may have been unique in American history, but President Bush took the action to demonstrate a spirit of cooperation and bipartisanship in judicial nominations.)

When the Senate returns, there should be prompt action on the President’s judicial nominees. These nominees deserve the same prompt and responsible consideration that was given to nominees in earlier years.

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Historical data provided by U.S. Department of Justice.