



UNITED STATES SENATE  
**REPUBLICAN  
POLICY COMMITTEE**

Larry E. Craig, Chairman  
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*Republicans on the Record*

## **Senator Gregg on the Stalled Nomination of Eugene Scalia to Labor Dept. Solicitor**

From the *Congressional Record*, November 29, 2001, page S12129:

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I come to the floor to talk about one of the problems we have had over the last few months, which is a failure of the majority party to address the issue of nominations sent up by the President. This failure has been most blatant, of course, in the area of judicial nominations where we now have well over 100 openings in the judiciary which have not been filled, which is an extraordinary number, especially when you put it in context of the prior administration. It is almost 100 percent larger than what the prior administration experienced under a Republican Senate.

There are also, independent of the judiciary nominations, a number of other nominations critical to the operation of the Government which are being held up by the majority party.

I rise to speak to one specifically. That is the nomination of Eugene Scalia to be the solicitor of the Department of Labor. . . a significant position within a significant department.

It is the fair arbiter of the laws within the Labor Department. It is the place at which the Government represents its cases, the individual who carries forward a great deal of the policy of the Government, as it has been set forth by the Congress and the Executive.

Why is Mr. Scalia not being brought to the floor? First off, you have to understand that it is not because the nomination hasn't been pending. The nomination has now been pending for 213 days. That is the longest period of time that any nomination has been pending around this body. Ironically, I think the reason it is not being brought forward is that it is tied to something that occurred 351 days ago, and that was the case of *Gore v. Bush*, or *Bush v. Gore* – the issue settled in the Supreme Court as to how the Florida law would be applied and the prior election, therefore, resolved. You see, Eugene Scalia, through family ties, appears to be tied to that case by the majority in the Senate.

There is a lot of frustration about that case on the other side of the aisle. Many of my colleagues, with great energy, believe it was decided the wrong way. Many have taken it personally, I suspect. Obviously, they have taken it personally because they are applying it personally in the case of Eugene Scalia, a relative to one of the decisionmakers in that process – of course, [Supreme Court] Justice Antonin Scalia – and who was one of the majority in the decision of Bush v. Gore. Well, Eugene Scalia is his son.

So we now have a scenario where the son has come up for a nomination to serve in the Government. I suppose you can argue, well, maybe he is not being approved because he was sent up quickly. I pointed out it was 213 days ago. You may argue he is not qualified. Actually, he is extraordinarily well qualified. He is one of the finest attorneys in the area of labor law in the country. In fact, five former Solicitors General of the Department of Labor have said he is unquestionably an extraordinarily qualified individual. To quote them, they say:

“We are unaware of any prior solicitor nominee with his combination of academic accomplishment, prolific writing on labor and employment matters, and many years of practice as a labor and employment lawyer.”

That is five prior Solicitors of the Department. They have said this is a great nomination. It is not because he holds views that are antithetical or inappropriate to the position. In fact, he strongly is supported by some of the leading civil rights attorneys in this country; for example, William Coleman, who is one of the leading civil rights attorneys in our Nation’s history, said that Eugene Scalia would be among the best lawyers who have ever held the important position . . . of Solicitor of the Department of Labor. He went on to say:

“Eugene Scalia is a bright, sophisticated lawyer whose writings are well within the mainstream of ideas.”

So he is not being attacked because he doesn’t have the ability. He has all the ability you could possibly want. In fact, it is great that we can attract people of his talent and capability to public service. No, Eugene Scalia – Scalia the younger – is being attacked because of Scalia the elder. You might say, well, maybe he came up too quickly. We pointed out that isn’t right.

Maybe he doesn’t qualify. That is not true either.

Maybe he holds outrageous opinions. Actually, during the hearing process, the only significant attack made on his writings was a disagreement over his position on ergonomics. Eugene Scalia committed the “cardinal sin” of opposing the ergonomics

rule as put forward by OSHA, so he was aggressively attacked during the hearings – not personally but on that issue relative to policy.

Well, that is OK. You can disagree with him on that policy point, but you have to acknowledge that on that policy point he agreed with the majority of the Congress. The Congress found the regulation that was promulgated by OSHA to be too officious, bureaucratic, counterproductive, and we – the Senate and the House of Representatives – threw the regulation out.

In my experience in the Congress, that has only occurred once or twice. We as a Congress actually rejected the regulation of OSHA on the issue of ergonomics, confirming the arguments that the younger Mr. Scalia had made on that issue.

So it is pretty hard to come to the floor with a straight face and say this man should not be confirmed as Solicitor of the Department of Labor because he took a position on ergonomics, when that position was consistent with the position taken by the Congress earlier this year.

No, regrettably, the younger Scalia is being held hostage because of attitudes toward the elder Scalia. That isn't the way we should govern. We should not prejudice an individual because of their race, their ethnic background, their gender, and we certainly should not prejudice an individual because they happen to be the son of an individual who some people do not agree with and who feel antipathy toward.

Eugene Scalia's nomination should be brought to the floor of this Senate. If people want to vote against him, that is their right. Then if he is defeated on the floor of the Senate, so be it. But let's not shuttle him off and hold him hostage to try to make a point to his father. That is not right and that is what is being done by the leadership of this Senate at this time.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.