

**A D D E N D U M**  
**to**  
**CONFIRMATION HEARING**  
**ON FEDERAL APPOINTMENTS**

**This Addendum is available at:**

*<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-119shrg62746/pdf/CHRG-119shrg62746-add1.pdf>*

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**Rachel Rossi**

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October 21, 2025

Senator Charles Grassley  
Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee

Senator Richard Durbin  
Ranking Member, Senate Judiciary Committee

Dear Chairman Grassley and Ranking Member Durbin,

On behalf of the Alliance for Justice (AFJ), a national association representing nearly 140 public interest and civil rights organizations, we firmly urge you and your colleagues on the Senate Judiciary Committee to reject the nomination of William “Will” Crain to the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana.

Crain’s record on the Louisiana Supreme Court reveals a pattern of ideological extremism, hostility toward civil liberties, and a contempt for defendant protections. A lifetime role on the federal bench would turn his far-right views into constitutional precedent, threatening our fundamental rights and further undermining public trust in a fair and independent judiciary.

Previously, Crain ran as “the most conservative choice” and promoted both anti-abortion and pro-gun stances. His record as a Louisiana Supreme Court Justice further deepens concerns about his ability to serve a lifetime appointment in which he must interpret the rule of law with no deference to his personal preferences. Meanwhile, Crain has consistently ruled against defendants’ rights, undermined access to justice, and shielded corporate interests from accountability. In his dissent in State v. Quandarious Rowe, he ruled against immunity for persons experiencing drug overdoses, a perspective that reflects a disregard for public health interventions designed to preserve life. Furthermore, his public statements equating social justice principles to “lawless decisions” and disparaging proponents as lacking devotion to the country reveals a worldview unconcerned with equality, dignity, and fair treatment under law.

On reproductive rights, Crain dissented from a Louisiana Supreme Court temporary injunction that protected abortion providers in June Medical Services, LLC v. Landry and called for immediate enforcement of restrictive statutes. His use of language like “alleged life” signals adherence to the extreme far-right fetal-personhood ideology, further seeking to cement a foundation that would strip away constitutionally protected rights based on his personal moral judgments. That view is incompatible with the constitutional right to reproductive freedom, and such positions risk being used to justify radical reinterpretations of law that even further eliminate critical reproductive healthcare rights.

Crain’s criminal and civil jurisprudence reveal an alarming disregard for police accountability and support for rigid punishment. In State v. Thomas, he dissented from a decision granting relief to a defendant whose counsel performed ineffectively, ignoring claims of prejudice and deficiencies that violated Sixth Amendment protections. In State v. K.B., he argued police were justified in stopping and searching a juvenile with no suspicion — an approach that conflicts with Fourth Amendment guardrails and would further harmful practices that disproportionately burden communities of color. In State v. Draughn and State v. Alexander, his dissents prioritized procedural technicalities over substantive justice, even when convictions lacked sufficient evidence or merited post-conviction review. And in State v. Pierce, he would have upheld an extreme mandatory minimum of 66 years, rejecting any consideration of mitigating circumstances such as age, addiction, or family hardship.

Throughout these decisions, Crain demonstrates an entrenched judicial approach that supports a punitive justice system, process over fairness, and the oppressive components of state power over individual rights.

Finally, Crain has sided with corporate polluters over affected communities. In State ex rel. Tureau v. BEPCO, L.P., he dissented from a decision that allowed landowners to hold fossil fuel companies accountable when their conduct damaged land. By cutting off access to accountability, Crain left Louisiana communities without a remedy for polluted land. Crain’s rhetoric and judicial opinions demonstrate a willingness to be swayed by partisan interest, to sacrifice constitutional neutrality on behalf of ideological ends, and to view certain communities with disdain.

The Senate has a duty to ensure the federal bench is reserved for jurists who will administer our laws fairly and independently — not ideologues seeking to remake constitutional law from the bench. Confirming William Crain would bestow a lifetime appointment to the federal bench for a nominee who has shown persistent hostility to civil rights and who appears prepared to wield federal authority in service of a predetermined agenda. His confirmation would erode public confidence in the judiciary’s impartiality and jeopardize the rights of litigants who come before him.

For these reasons, the Alliance for Justice firmly urges you to oppose his nomination.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rachel Rossi".

Rachel Rossi  
President, Alliance for Justice



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**President and CEO**

Maya Wiley

October 21, 2025

The Honorable Charles Grassley, Chairman  
Committee on the Judiciary  
United States Senate

The Honorable Richard Durbin, Ranking Member  
Committee on the Judiciary  
United States Senate

Dear Chairman Grassley and Ranking Member Durbin:

On behalf of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, a coalition of more than 240 national civil and human rights advocacy organizations, and the undersigned national organizations, we write in opposition to the nomination of William "Will" Jerrol Crain for the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana. His record as an Associate Justice on the Louisiana Supreme Court does not demonstrate the requisite commitment to being fair-minded and upholding the civil rights and liberties of all people. Instead, it raises serious concerns. We do not believe he should be entrusted with a lifetime appointment to our federal judiciary.

The civil rights community has long understood that for there to be equal justice in America, our federal courts must serve and vigorously protect the rights of everyone. All who are selected to serve in our judiciary must be fair-minded and ethical, reflect diverse demographic backgrounds and professional experiences, and have a track record of advancing the rights of all people. This is especially important in an era in which the President has effectively declared himself king, regularly attacking the judiciary and – with the acquiescence of this Congress – declared war on our system of checks and balances. For the future of the communities we represent and our country as a whole, any and all nominees must have a compelling record for being fair-minded, well-qualified, and committed to civil and human rights. Unfortunately, Justice Crain has not met this standard.

As a candidate, Justice Crain made no effort to hide his extremely conservative views, branding himself as "the conservative choice," and running on his anti-abortion and pro-gun positions. He was not running to serve in the legislature, however – he was running to serve on the state's highest court – yet his campaign showed a willingness to let his ideology shape how he would rule, instead of striving to impartially apply the law in every case. His own campaign ads said that he would use his position on the court "to protect our beliefs." This willingness has been borne out by his record to date.

**Justice Crain routinely sides with prosecutors and against the rights of criminal defendants, often in dissent from his colleagues in key rulings.** For example, in *State v. Thomas* (2024) and *State v. Allen* (2022), he dissented from his colleagues to oppose giving relief to defendants who established that they received ineffective assistance of counsel, in violation of Sixth Amendment protections. In *State v. K.B.* (2024), he dissented from his

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colleagues to defend police stopping and searching a juvenile with no reasonable suspicion that he had committed (or was about to commit) a crime, in a case with major implications for Fourth Amendment protections, particularly for communities of color. In *State v. Pierce* (2023), he argued in defense of an extreme mandatory minimum of 66 years, three times longer than the sentence his colleagues upheld.

**Justice Crain has sided against access to reproductive care.** In *June Medical Services, LLC v. Landry* (2022), a lower court had issued a temporary restraining order on the state’s abortion “trigger” law, which banned abortion upon the U.S. Supreme Court’s overturning of *Roe v. Wade*. The Louisiana Supreme Court allowed this order to stand, so abortion clinics in the state could temporarily continue operating. Justice Crain dissented, however, arguing that “terminating alleged life during the period of the temporary restraining order is irreparable,” indicating that he adheres to the extreme legal doctrine of fetal personhood. His dissent completely ignored the medical needs and interests of the pregnant patients who would be impacted by this outcome.

**Justice Crain has shown he would side with corporations over citizens in environmental justice cases.** In *State ex rel. Tureau v. BEPCO, L.P.* (2021), the Louisiana Supreme Court held that landowners have standing to sue oil and gas companies when they violate environmental regulations and the government fails to act. Justin Tureau owned two parcels of land that were contaminated by previous oil and gas exploration and production activities, activities which he argued released toxic substances that caused extensive environmental damage and harmed Tureau’s interests. Yet Justice Crain dissented, rejecting the ability of communities to seek remedies when government enforcement fails, which strongly suggests he would place corporate interests over environmental health and public accountability.

Even on a body as conservative as the Louisiana Supreme Court, Justice Crain has repeatedly shown himself to be an outlier. His record to date raises serious doubts that he would be a fair-minded judge committed to equal justice for all. We urge you to oppose his nomination.

If you have any questions, please contact Rob Randhava, Senior Counsel at The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, at [randhava@civilrights.org](mailto:randhava@civilrights.org). Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights  
Alliance for Justice  
League of Conservation Voters  
National Council of Jewish Women  
National Women's Law Center  
People For the American Way  
Reproductive Freedom for All



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October 20, 2025

VIA EMAIL

The Honorable Chuck Grassley  
Chair  
U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary  
135 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Dick Durbin  
Ranking Member  
U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary  
711 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

**Re: Nomination of Justice William “Will” Crain to the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana**

Dear Senators Grassley and Durbin:

On behalf of the National Women’s Law Center (the “Law Center”), an organization that has advocated on behalf of women and girls for over fifty years, we write in strong opposition to the nomination of Justice William “Will” Crain for the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana.

Justice Crain’s record of strong opposition to reproductive rights and his dismissal of vulnerable survivors who report sexual assault demonstrates that his decision making is guided by personal ideology rather than a commitment to equal justice. Prior to the *Dobbs* decision and with blatant disregard for binding legal precedent, he prominently campaigned as an anti-abortion candidate during his race for the highest court in Louisiana, implying that he would rule based on his ideology rather than the law.<sup>1</sup> Justice Craine went on to carry out his anti-abortion campaign promise in the *June Medical v. Landry* case as one of just two Louisiana Supreme Court justices who ruled in favor of allowing the Louisiana anti-abortion “trigger” laws to go into effect in the wake of the *Dobbs* decision.<sup>2</sup> Earlier in his career, Justice Crain demonstrated his judicial

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<sup>1</sup> The Committee to Elect Appeals Court Judge Will Crain for Supreme Court, Facebook post (Oct. 11, 2019), <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1C6qbwAWrk/>; The Committee to Elect Appeals Court Judge Will Crain for Supreme Court, *The balance of the Supreme Court is in the hands of voters. We need a proven conservative judge who shares our beliefs and values. Judge Will Crain is the consensus choice.*, FACEBOOK (Sept. 3, 2019), <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1BdVAa4y8S/>.

<sup>2</sup> *June Med. Servs., L.L.C. v. Landry*, No. 2022-CD-01038 (La. July 6, 2022) (per curiam) (denying stay and writ; declining supervisory jurisdiction), <https://www.lasc.org/opinions/2022/22-1038.CD.action.pdf>; *June Med. Servs.*,

disregard for the laws and legal protections that are paramount to women and girls in *Ray v. LeBlanc*.<sup>3</sup> In *Ray*, he dismissed an incarcerated woman’s claims that she experienced retaliation for seeking to help a fellow inmate reporting sexual assault by a prison employee. Justice Crain’s anti-reproductive rights record and callousness toward survivors of sexual assault casts serious doubt on his ability to be a fair-minded jurist who treats all litigants equally.

**In his bid for the Louisiana Supreme Court in 2019, Justice Crain campaigned on being anti-abortion and pro-life even though *Roe* was binding precedent at the time.**

In his political campaign for the Louisiana Supreme Court, Justice Crain campaigned based on his partisan views on abortion, the death penalty, and religious beliefs implying they would impact his judicial decision-making.<sup>4</sup> In fact, his anti-abortion stance, more than any other issue, formed the core of his campaign message and advertisements. Although he claimed to not legislate from the bench in his campaign materials, Crain’s campaign ads heavily imply anti-abortion outcomes, asserting that “with the balance of the court in jeopardy,” Justice Crain would “protect our beliefs,” while describing himself as “pro-life.”<sup>5</sup> A fair and impartial judge may not pre-determine how they would decide cases based on their personal views. Instead, they are legally required to evaluate cases based on the facts before them and the applicable law, and to recuse themselves if there is a reasonable appearance of bias. Justice Crain’s highly visible anti-abortion campaign demonstrates both a disregard for then-applicable legal precedent, as he ran on this issue despite the constitutional protections for abortion that had been in place for nearly 50 years, and a disregard for judicial propriety. How can a party seeking to protect reproductive rights that appears before Justice Crain expect a fair hearing and unbiased decision making when he based his election campaign on this issue? The simple fact is that they cannot. And yet, Justice Crain has never recused himself from a case concerning reproductive rights.<sup>6</sup> Just the

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*L.L.C. v. Landry*, No. 2022-CD-01038 (La. July 6, 2022) (Crain, J., dissenting and would grant supervisory writ), <https://www.lasc.org/opinions/2022/22-1038.CD.wjc.grant.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> *Ray v. LeBlanc*, No. 2013 CA 0017, 2013 La. App. Unpub. LEXIS 592 (La. Ct. App. 1st Cir. Sept. 13, 2013), [https://scholar.google.com/scholar\\_case?case=17414568250021932336&q=Ray+v.+Leblanc&hl=en&as\\_sdt=20000006&as\\_vis=1](https://scholar.google.com/scholar_case?case=17414568250021932336&q=Ray+v.+Leblanc&hl=en&as_sdt=20000006&as_vis=1).

<sup>4</sup> The Committee to Elect Appeals Court, Judge Will Crain for Supreme Court, Facebook post (Oct. 11, 2019), <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1C6qbwAWrk/>; The Committee to Elect Appeals Court Judge Will Crain for Supreme Court, *The balance of the Supreme Court is in the hands of voters. We need a proven conservative judge who shares our beliefs and values. Judge Will Crain is the consensus choice.*, FACEBOOK (Sept. 3, 2019), <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1BdVAa4y8S/>.

<sup>5</sup> The Committee to Elect Appeals Court Judge Will Crain for Supreme Court, *The balance of the Supreme Court is in the hands of voters. We need a proven conservative judge who shares our beliefs and values. Judge Will Crain is the consensus choice*, FACEBOOK (Sept. 3, 2019), <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1BdVAa4y8S/>; The Committee to Elect Appeals Court Judge Will Crain for Supreme Court, *Judge Will Crain: Strength and Wisdom for our Supreme Court*, FACEBOOK (Oct. 12, 2019), <https://www.facebook.com/share/v/17NjP2JCZk/>.

<sup>6</sup> We note also that Justice Crain was forcibly recused from other cases with ties to the trial lawyer that funded his opponent because of his campaign activities, showing a pattern of questionably unethical behavior. Andrea Gallo and John Simerman, *At Louisiana Supreme Court, campaign style attacks and recusal wars keep erupting*,

opposite, he advocated for the Louisiana Supreme Court to take a more interventionist approach.

**Justice Crain was one of two Louisiana Supreme Court justices who would have defied court norms to intervene in a lower court’s temporary order and allow Louisiana’s anti-abortion “trigger” laws to go into effect.**

After the 2022 *Dobbs* decision, Louisiana’s three “trigger” laws went into effect, which criminalized abortion care in the state.<sup>7</sup> These trigger laws were written to enact an abortion ban if *Roe v. Wade* was overturned, but they have conflicting definitions and application, resulting in considerable confusion regarding which of the laws was in effect and what conduct would be prohibited.<sup>8</sup> Doctors filed a lawsuit challenging the conflicting laws, and the state district court granted a temporary restraining order (TRO) blocking the abortion bans until it could hold a hearing and consider whether preliminary injunctive relief was warranted.<sup>9</sup> Louisiana immediately sought to stay this TRO through a supervisory writ from the Louisiana Supreme Court. The Supreme Court denied the writ; however, Justice Crain, proving his anti-abortion bona fides, was one of two justices who dissented from the decision, instead arguing that the Louisiana Supreme Court should grant the writ and intervene to stay this temporary order.<sup>10</sup>

Under Louisiana state court rules, TROs last only until a time can be set by the court for a preliminary injunction hearing, generally within 10 days.<sup>11</sup> These orders are intended to preserve the relative positions of the parties, preventing irreparable harm, while the court determines an appropriate briefing schedule. While appellate courts have plenary power to review TROs, they are rarely subject to a full appellate review due to their brief timeline and deference to the lower

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NOLA.com (Jul. 13, 2020), [https://www.nola.com/news/courts/at-louisiana-supreme-court-campaign-style-attacks-and-recusal-wars-keep-erupting/article\\_f68692da-c2c0-11ea-9d46-9710ac2f03a0.html](https://www.nola.com/news/courts/at-louisiana-supreme-court-campaign-style-attacks-and-recusal-wars-keep-erupting/article_f68692da-c2c0-11ea-9d46-9710ac2f03a0.html).

<sup>7</sup> *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Org.*, 597 U.S. \_\_\_, 142 S. Ct. 2228 (2022); La. R.S. § 40:1061 (as amended by Act 545, 2022), <https://legis.la.gov/Legis/Law.aspx?p=v&d=97020>; La. R.S. § 14:87.7 (as enacted by Act 545, 2022), <https://legis.la.gov/Legis/Law.aspx?d=1294861>; La. R.S. § 14:87.8 (as enacted by Act 545, 2022) <https://legis.la.gov/Legis/Law.aspx?d=1294863>.

<sup>8</sup> Piper Hutchinson, *Politicized language contributes to confusion over Louisiana abortion ban, experts say*, Louisiana Illuminator (Jul. 31, 2022), <https://lailuminator.com/2022/07/31/politicized-language-contributes-to-confusion-over-louisiana-abortion-ban-experts-say/>.

<sup>9</sup> *June Med. Servs., LLC v. Landry*, No. \_\_\_ (La. Civ. Dist. Ct. for the Parish of Orleans June 27, 2022) (temporary restraining order), <https://reproductiverights.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/LA-Trigger-Ban-Claim.pdf>; *June Med. Servs., LLC v. Landry*, Center for Reproductive Rights, <https://reproductiverights.org/case/post-ro-e-state-abortion-ban-litigation/june-medical-services-v-landry/>; *June Med. Servs., LLC v. Landry*, No. 2022-5633 (La. Civ. Dist. Ct. for Orleans Par. June 27, 2022) (granting TRO), <https://clearinghouse.net/doc/131561/>; *June Med. Servs., LLC v. Landry*, No. C-716741 Sec. 23 (La. 19th Jud. Dist. Ct. for E. Baton Rouge Par. July 11, 2022) (granting TRO), <https://clearinghouse.net/doc/134530/>.

<sup>10</sup> *June Med. Servs., L.L.C. v. Landry*, No. 2022-CD-01038 (La. July 6, 2022) (per curiam) (denying stay and writ; declining supervisory jurisdiction), <https://www.lasc.org/opinions/2022/22-1038.CD.action.pdf>; *June Med. Servs., L.L.C. v. Landry*, No. 2022-CD-01038 (La. July 6, 2022) (Crain, J., dissenting and would grant supervisory writ), <https://www.lasc.org/opinions/2022/22-1038.CD.wjc.grant.pdf>.

<sup>11</sup> LSA-C.C.P. Art. 3601.

courts. However, in Justice’s Crain’s dissent, he laid out a view that intervention is *always* warranted for abortion-related cases because “terminating alleged life during the period of the temporary restraining period is irreparable” and the Louisiana Supreme Court has “a constitutional duty to consider whether the trial court correctly made these determinations.”<sup>12</sup> In other words, Justice Crain would have defied usual court practice to review and overturn this TRO, due to a personal bias, instead of waiting a few days to see if the lower court would issue a preliminary injunction and whether that injunction would be appealed. The majority of the Louisiana Supreme Court, in line with the court’s typical practice, “declined to exercise its plenary supervisor jurisdiction at this preliminary stage of the proceedings.”<sup>13</sup>

Furthermore, Justice Crain was unwilling to concede in his dissent that the conflicting anti-abortion laws caused doctors any irreparable harm, and he instead argued that the only irreparable harm was to the fetuses.<sup>14</sup> Because a TRO requires a prima facie showing of irreparable harm, Justice Crain concluded that the balance of harms favored staying the TRO, writing “whether these doctors will suffer irreparable harm by being prohibited from performing abortions is debatable, terminating alleged life during the period of the temporary restraining order is irreparable.”<sup>15</sup> In his balancing of harms, he made no mention whatsoever of the impact of the confusing and conflicting abortion bans on pregnant people, thus treating them as irrelevant to the legal questions at hand and focusing only on the interests of the doctors and the state’s asserted interest in the fetuses. Justice Crain’s dissent in *June Medical* is an example of his rejection of judicial norms in favor of a commitment to his political beliefs and campaign promises. Furthermore, his disregard for the autonomy of pregnant people, even as he fixates on the harms to hypothetical fetuses, calls into question whether he can set aside his ideological biases and treat litigants in a fair and evenhanded manner.

**Justice Crain dismissed an incarcerated woman’s claims of retaliation after she was transferred to a maximum-security prison for supporting another incarcerated woman who asserted she was sexually assaulted by a prison employee.**

In *Ray v. LeBlanc*, Justice Crain wrote that opinion for the court, which dismissed an incarcerated woman’s claims of retaliation after helping a survivor of prison sexual assault. In this case, the complainant, Jeanne Ray, was disciplined for copying down prison employee regulations that prohibited sexual misconduct.<sup>16</sup> For this offense, Ms. Ray lost her job, was

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<sup>12</sup> *June Med. Servs., L.L.C. v. Landry*, No. 2022-CD-01038 (La. July 6, 2022) (Crain, J., dissenting and would grant supervisory writ), <https://www.lasc.org/opinions/2022/22-1038.CD.wjc.grant.pdf>; LSA-C.C.P. Art. 3601.

<sup>13</sup> *June Med. Servs., L.L.C. v. Landry*, No. 2022-CD-01038 (La. July 6, 2022) (per curiam) (denying stay and writ; declining supervisory jurisdiction), <https://www.lasc.org/opinions/2022/22-1038.CD.action.pdf>.

<sup>14</sup> *June Med. Servs., L.L.C. v. Landry*, No. 2022-CD-01038 (La. July 6, 2022) (Crain, J., dissenting and would grant supervisory writ), <https://www.lasc.org/opinions/2022/22-1038.CD.wjc.grant.pdf>.

<sup>15</sup> *Id.* at 2.

<sup>16</sup> *Ray v. LeBlanc*, No. 2013 CA 0017, 2013 La. App. Unpub. LEXIS 592 (La. Ct. App. 1st Cir. Sept. 13, 2013), [https://scholar.google.com/scholar\\_case?case=17414568250021932336&q=Ray+v.+Leblanc&hl=en&as\\_sdt=20000006&as\\_vis=1](https://scholar.google.com/scholar_case?case=17414568250021932336&q=Ray+v.+Leblanc&hl=en&as_sdt=20000006&as_vis=1).

assigned 90 days of solitary confinement, and was moved from a minimum to a maximum security prison. Ms. Ray was serving as a counsel substitute for another incarcerated woman who reported that she was sexually assaulted by a prison employee. Counsel substitutes are not attorneys but individuals who help inmates prepare and present claims.<sup>17</sup> Ms. Ray brought a claim alleging unconstitutional retaliation, which the district court dismissed, stating that prisoners do not have a constitutionally protected right to a specific work interest (serving as a counsel substitute) and the Due Process Clause did not protect against the change in her housing conditions.<sup>18</sup>

Justice Crain’s opinion in *Ray* on behalf of the Louisiana First Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed the lower court decision and demonstrated a striking disregard for vulnerable women who are reporting assault. His opinion concluded that the “right she was exercising at the time (serving as counsel substitute) was not a constitutional right; and the punishment she received (loss of her job, administrative segregation, and a change in security status) did not prejudice a substantial right.”<sup>19</sup> In other words, the court did not find there was no retaliation; it found that Ms. Ray did not have a right to challenge retaliation, even if it did occur. What is especially concerning is the language of this opinion which intentionally diminishes the retaliation Ms. Ray received. Solitary confinement and transferring an incarcerated woman from a minimum to maximum security prison are clearly disproportionate punishments for violating a trivial rule against copying publicly available prison regulations. Yet rather than look into this extraordinary response to the violation of a questionable prison rule,<sup>20</sup> a response that would tend to have the effect of protecting a prison employee alleged to have sexually assaulted a prisoner, Justice Crain validated the Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections’ cruel and disturbingly punitive response. The appellate court decision also discounted any harm that the woman who had been sexually assaulted may have suffered as a result of this retaliation against her counsel substitute. Justice Crain’s demonstrated callousness towards Ms. Ray’s case raises concern about his bias against incarcerated people, and in particular, incarcerated women, as well as suggesting a disregard for the seriousness of sexual assault.<sup>21</sup>

## Conclusion

Justice Crain’s statements during his political campaign and judicial decisions demonstrate a disregard for the autonomy of pregnant people and for the legal protections for women reporting

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<sup>17</sup> La. Admin. Code 22, Pt. I, § 341(f)(1)(a)(iii)(b).

<sup>18</sup> *Id.*

<sup>19</sup> *Id.*

<sup>20</sup> We note that the court did not cite this alleged rule, nor can it be found in the Louisiana Administrative Code. It is difficult to imagine a purpose to such a rule except to hamper any efforts by a counsel substitute to assist other incarcerated people.

<sup>21</sup> We note also that Justice Crain has a long history of breaking with his colleagues to side against criminal defendants. *See, e.g., State v. Thomas*, 2024-KP-00267 (La. Jun 27, 2025); *State v. Allen*, No. 2022-KP-00508 (La. Nov. 2, 2022) (J. Crain dissented to oppose relief to defendants who has established that they received ineffective assistance of counsel).

sexual assault. His partisan, anti-abortion political views have motivated his judicial decision making in the past, which raises serious concerns about his ability to treat every case and every litigant that comes before him fairly. Additionally, his punitive attitude against incarcerated women seeking to address sexual assault reveals a chilling disregard for the wellbeing of and legal protections for women. Justice Crain's record of leading with his political views and disregard for pregnant people and women reporting sexual assault instill no confidence in his commitment to being a fair-minded and impartial federal judge.

For these reasons, the National Women's Law Center strongly opposes the confirmation of Justice William Crain to the U.S District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana and urges the U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary to reject his nomination. If you have questions about the Law Center's opposition to Justice Crain's nomination, please contact me, or Alison Gill, Director of Nominations & Democracy, at [agill@nwlc.org](mailto:agill@nwlc.org).

Sincerely,



Fatima Goss Graves  
President and CEO

October 20, 2025

Senator Chuck Grassley  
Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee

Senator Dick Durbin  
Ranking Member, Senate Judiciary Committee

Dear Senator Grassley and Senator Durbin:

On behalf of our hundreds of thousands of supporters and activists nationwide, People For the American Way opposes the nomination of William Crain to be a judge in the Eastern District of Louisiana. He has strongly implied that his personal beliefs are the foundation of how he rules as a judge, which makes him unfit for a lifetime appointment to the bench.

### **Introduction**

The federal courts are essential to providing the checks and balances needed to prevent tyranny. At present, they are the only branch of the federal government carrying out this essential function. As we explained in detail in a May 30, 2025, letter to the Judiciary Committee<sup>i</sup>, a president who defies court orders and threatens judges should not be allowed to name anyone to the one branch of the federal government that is checking his power.

Events since then have only strengthened our case. For instance, an extensively-documented whistleblower complaint has revealed that senior Justice Department official Emil Bove suggested in March that the administration violate court orders.<sup>ii</sup> President Trump subsequently nominated Bove to a seat on the Third Circuit. The administration now routinely defies the courts. In fact, a July study revealed that the Trump administration has defied one in three judges who have ruled against him.<sup>iii</sup>

Nationwide concern over the Trump administration's deceptive filings and court defiance continues to grow. The administration even risks losing the "presumption of regularity," in which judges presume that the federal government and its lawyers are telling the truth and acting in good faith.<sup>iv</sup> Indeed, an October 2025 report revealed dozens of instances of judges expressing distrust in the government's representations, as well as growing concerns within the federal bench about noncompliance with judicial orders.<sup>v</sup>

This president is dangerously unqualified to be making lifetime appointments to the one branch of government that is providing checks and balances to his lawless actions.

Moreover, the record of this specific nominee also raises deep concerns.

## **William Crain**

William Crain was a sitting state appeals court judge when he was elected to the Louisiana Supreme Court in 2019. The campaign he ran to win that election strongly suggested that his personal ideology determined his judicial decisions and would continue to do so.

His campaign ads are important because they provide critical insight into how he approaches cases. They are not characterizations by opponents or by outside observers. To the contrary, they are his own words, chosen with great care for one purpose: to explain to those charged with filling a judicial vacancy why they should place him on the court.

One of Crain's ads said voters should place him on the Supreme Court because he was a "pro life, pro Second Amendment, never-legislate-from-the-bench jurist."

He sent a clear message that litigants arguing for abortion rights would lose, with the consequent devastating impact on women's health and freedom.

Nor was this his only way in which Crain suggested he would rule based on his personal beliefs. In fact, one of his ads said people should vote for him because he was "the only proven conservative to protect our beliefs."

Judges are not supposed to protect "beliefs." It is hard to imagine a federal judicial nominee assuring members of the Judiciary Committee that they should confirm him so that he could "protect our beliefs."

Had Justice Crain ruled in favor of abortion rights after winning the election, the impression he created might have been dispelled. But that didn't happen.

After the U.S. Supreme Court's *Dobbs* decision ending the constitutional right to abortion, Crain had the issue of abortion before him. Louisiana had a "trigger" law to reinstate its old abortion restrictions in the event *Roe v. Wade* was overturned. Individuals sued to have the trigger law struck down, and a trial court enjoined its enforcement pending litigation. The state appealed to the Louisiana Supreme Court, which dismissed rather than consider the governor's motion to stay the injunction. That allowed providers to continue to provide abortion care as the lawsuit continued.

Justice Crain dissented. He wrote that the justices should consider the motion to stay the injunction. He questioned the plaintiff clinic's assertion of irreparable harm should the trigger law be enforced.

As a justice, Crain has ruled against the constitutional rights of criminal defendants.<sup>vi</sup> He has ruled against citizens seeking restitution for environmental harms caused by businesses.<sup>vii</sup> While he has given legal reasons for his positions, the cloud he created with such claims as

being “tough on crime” or “the only proven conservative to protect our beliefs” raises questions about his fairness as a jurist. He has undermined the confidence that all litigants in a healthy legal system should have that every judge will consider their case fairly, under the law, regardless of personal feelings and policy preferences.

Crain should not be confirmed.

Sincerely,



Marge Baker  
Executive Vice President

<sup>i</sup> [https://www.peoplefor.org/sites/default/files/downloads/2025-06/Hermandorfer\\_and\\_4\\_MO\\_noms-opposition\\_letter.pdf](https://www.peoplefor.org/sites/default/files/downloads/2025-06/Hermandorfer_and_4_MO_noms-opposition_letter.pdf).

<sup>ii</sup> “Justice Dept. Leader Suggested Violating Court Orders, Whistle-Blower Says,” New York Times, June 24, 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/06/24/us/politics/justice-department-emil-bove-trump-deportations-reuveni.html>.

<sup>iii</sup> “Trump officials accused of defying 1 in 3 judges who ruled against him,” Washington Post, July 21, 2025, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2025/07/21/trump-court-orders-defy-noncompliance-marshals-judges>.

<sup>iv</sup> See, e.g., David French, “How a Trump Judge Exposed the Trump Con,” New York Times, Oct. 12, 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/10/12/opinion/trump-judge-immertgut-portland-national-guard.html>; “Judges Openly Doubt Government as Justice Dept. Misleads and Dodges Orders,” New York Times, Aug. 4, 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/08/04/us/politics/trump-justice-department-judges-courts.html>.

<sup>v</sup> “‘The ‘Presumption of Regularity’ in Trump Administration Litigation,” Just Security, updated Oct. 15, 2025, <https://www.justsecurity.org/120547/presumption-regularity-trump-administration-litigation>.

<sup>vi</sup> E.g., *State v. Allen*, 348 So. 3d 1274 (La. 2022).

<sup>vii</sup> E.g., *State ex rel. Tureau v. BEPCO, L.P.*, 351 So. 3d 297 (La. 2022).