AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO

Statement on the Selection of a Nominee for United States Supreme Court Associate Justice

March 16, 2016

Today, I will announce the person whom I believe is eminently qualified to sit on the Supreme Court.

As President, it is both my constitutional duty to nominate a Justice and one of the most important decisions that I—or any president—will make.

I've devoted a considerable amount of time and deliberation to this decision. I've consulted with legal experts and people across the political spectrum, both inside and outside government. And we've reached out to every member of the Senate, who each have a responsibility to do their job and take this nomination just as seriously.

Please join me in the Rose Garden at 11:00 am Eastern for my announcement.

This is a responsibility I do not take lightly. In considering several candidates, I held each to three principles that reflect the role the Supreme Court plays in our democracy.

First, a Justice should possess an independent mind, unimpeachable credentials, and an unquestionable mastery of law. There is no doubt this person will face complex legal questions, so it is imperative that he or she possess a rigorous intellect that will help provide clear answers.

Second, a Justice should recognize the limits of the judiciary's role. With a commitment to impartial justice rather than any particular ideology, the next Supreme Court Justice will understand that the job is to interpret the law, not make law.

However, I know there will be cases before the Supreme Court in which the law is not clear. In those cases, a Justice's analysis will necessarily be shaped by his or her own perspective, ethics, and judgment.

Therefore, the third quality I looked for in a judge is a keen understanding that justice is not about abstract legal theory, nor some footnote in a dusty casebook. It's the kind of life experience earned outside the classroom and the courtroom; experience that suggests he or she views the law not only as an intellectual exercise, but also grasps the way it affects the daily reality of people's lives in a big, complicated democracy, and in rapidly-changing times. In my view, that's an essential element for arriving at just decisions and fair outcomes.

Today at 11:00 am Eastern, I'll introduce you to the judge I believe meets all three of these standards.

I'm confident you'll share my conviction that this American is not only eminently qualified to be a Supreme Court Justice, but deserves a fair hearing, and an up-or-down vote.

In putting forward a nominee today, I am fulfilling my constitutional duty. I'm doing my job. I hope that our Senators will do their jobs, and move quickly to consider my nominee. That is what the Constitution dictates, and that's what the American people expect and deserve from their leaders.

PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA

P.S. If you're looking for the latest on my Supreme Court nominee and the confirmation process in the Senate, check out @SCOTUSnom on Twitter. You'll find all the facts and up-to-date information there.

NOTE: This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary as an e-mail message from the President.

Categories: Statements by the President : U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justice, selection of nominee.

Subjects: Congress : Bipartisanship; Judiciary : Supreme Court :: Associate Justice.

DCPD Number: DCPD201600153.