

Our proposals would not favor Democrats or Republicans. The plan would be fair and would apply to—regardless of who the President is. It doesn't matter who the President is. What matters is a system which works.

For the first time in years, the judicial confirmation process would work as it was intended to work. All Senators would have a chance to make their voices heard and their views known, and that's important. All nominees would have the certainty of an up-or-down Senate floor vote within a reasonable period of time, and that is important. All Presidents would know that their judicial nominations would be addressed promptly. All Americans would see a more dignified process and have their Federal courts fully staffed to protect their rights and their liberties. And the vacancy crisis would be resolved once and for all.

I urge every Member of the Senate, in particular those serving on the Judiciary

Committee, to carefully consider this new beginning for the judicial nomination process, to weigh their responsibilities, to look at the vacancy problem we have, to act in a responsible fashion.

The failure of the judicial confirmation process is harming the administration of justice in America. That is a fact. The current state of affairs is not merely another round of political wrangling. It is a disturbing failure to meet our responsibilities under the Constitution. The Constitution has given us a shared duty, and we must meet that duty together.

Thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:40 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Attorney General Ashcroft's wife, Janet Ashcroft, and sister-in-law, Anne Giddings; and former Solicitor General Seth P. Waxman.

Statement on Signing the Niagara Falls National Heritage Area Study Act *October 30, 2002*

I have signed into law S. 1227, the Niagara Falls National Heritage Area Study Act. The Act requires the Secretary of the Interior to study the suitability and feasibility of establishing the Niagara Falls National Heritage Area in the State of New York, along and in the vicinity of the Niagara River.

Section 3(d) purports to require the Secretary of the Interior to submit to the Congress recommendations related to legislation. The executive branch shall construe

this provision in a manner consistent with the President's constitutional authority to submit for consideration to the Congress legislative proposals as the President judges are necessary and expedient.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
October 30, 2002.

NOTE: S. 1227, approved October 30, was assigned Public Law No. 107-256.