

coalition supporting this legislation, working with us, perhaps even convincing the Government agencies responsible for letting these contracts to think very hard about the process they are now following.

Again, I thank my colleague from Oregon and my colleague from Maine for providing such leadership. It is a pleasure to work with them. But it is also a duty. I think all of us feel a heavy responsibility to make sure the billions and billions of dollars—maybe as much as \$100 billion that will be spent on reconstructing Iraq—is spent in the most effective way. Because, while we are looking at the extraordinary costs of this kind of task awaiting us in Iraq, we are also in this body hearing from our constituents, as many of us did over the previous 2 weeks, about what is happening to their schools, what is happening to their hospitals.

So we have to be especially conscious that this money can be justified; that we can look our constituents in the eyes when they say, I don't understand, Senator. I thought we were going to get more help for our poor schools. Senator, I don't understand. Our hospital has just closed down because we can't get enough reimbursements from the Federal Government.

This is not only about all of the good government principles. It is not even only about the integrity and credibility of our government. It is about the choices that are being made. These choices are not only important with respect to contracting, but they are important with respect to our values.

I hope our colleagues will join us in moving this piece of important legislation through so that we can begin to practice what many of us preach about transparency and openness and also making sure we get the very best deal. Our dollars are limited. If there is any excess on justified dollars going to Iraq that could go to my kids and schools in New York City, or to Ron's hospital in Oregon, that is our responsibility.

Let me again thank my colleagues. I look forward to being successful with this bipartisan coalition and getting this legislation passed at the earliest possible time.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, to wrap up, I would like to reaffirm a point that the distinguished Senator from New York mentioned with respect to the feeling of our citizens at a time when there are so many schools that are underfunded and seniors can't afford their medicine and other services. When I was home over the break—perhaps the Senator from New York heard this as well—many constituents came up to me and said: We are really glad that you are pushing this bill at more competitive bidding and reconstruction contracts. But, to tell you the truth, why don't you just have Iraqi oil pay for all of the reconstruction? We don't need the taxpayer money.

There already is a sense about the Nation that we have to be careful about how these funds are being used. I

think there is a role for the United States to play. I think it is clear that is a part of an important contribution that our country can make with the conflict winding down. But it just reaffirms in my mind how critical it is to use this money wisely. With the American people hurting now with what one might say is the highest unemployment rate of our country, you can't explain to the taxpayers of this Nation frittering away dollars on contracts that are let without competitive bids.

We look forward to colleagues of both political parties joining us in this effort. It seems to me a bill such as this should be passed unanimously with all 100 Senators onboard. We look forward to seeing the resolution of this legislation to protect the taxpayers.

Again, I want to close by expressing my thanks to the chairman of the committee where this legislation was sent. Senator COLLINS has been a critical partner in this effort to direct procurement law. Senator BYRD, who holds, of course, a longstanding interest in this matter and serves on both the Appropriations and the Armed Services Committees, has been invaluable to me in particular in providing counsel with respect to how to move this legislation forward. Together we look forward to passing this bill and protecting the taxpayers' interests as perhaps \$100 billion of taxpayer money is spent in the rebuilding of Iraq.

I yield the floor.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

##### NOMINATION OF EDWARD C. PRADO, OF TEXAS, TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE FIFTH CIRCUIT

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BUNNING). Under the previous order, the Senate will now proceed to the consideration of Executive Calendar No. 105, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Edward C. Prado, of Texas, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Fifth Circuit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio is recognized.

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to proceed for the next 15 minutes as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The remarks of Mr. DEWINE are printed in today's RECORD under "Morning Business.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

The Senator from Ohio is recognized.

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, on behalf of the majority leader FRIST, I ask unanimous consent that the vote on Executive Calendar No. 105, the nomination of Edward C. Prado, occur at 2:05 p.m. today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am pleased we are going to move to the nomination of Judge Edward Prado. While my friend, the distinguished senior Senator from Ohio, is on the floor, I want to extend early congratulations because it appears that on Monday we are going to approve a judge on which he has worked so hard. Because of his advocacy and a number of others, we have been able to move through this circuit court process a little more quickly. The Senator from Ohio told me how much he thought of Judge Cook, and being the fine lawyer the Senator is, I am certain we are going to get a good addition to the court. His recommendation goes a long way with me. I congratulate the Senator from Ohio for his advocacy on the part of someone he knows and speaks so well of.

Mr. President, I am pleased we now are on the nomination of Judge Edward Prado, a well-qualified nominee for the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. Judge Prado is being considered for the same court as Justice Priscilla Owen, a nominee we on this side find to be a divisive choice for the circuit court. The swift consideration of Judge Prado's nomination illustrates again how the nomination process can work when the President sends up fairminded and mainstream choices for lifetime seats on our Federal bench. It happens quickly.

This came about as a result of our being involved in another judicial nomination that was not going anywhere, and on this side we moved to the nomination of Judge Prado. I think that and other reasons moved us along the path very quickly.

While some have decried the confirmation process is broken, certainly the numbers belie that charge. With the two district court judges confirmed before we recessed and Mr. Sutton on Tuesday, the number of confirmations has already risen to 120. This afternoon it will be 121. These numbers dwarf the confirmations achieved by my Republican colleagues under President Clinton.

Last year alone, in an election year, the Democratic-led Senate confirmed 72 judicial nominees, more than in any of the prior 6 years of Republican control. Overall, in the 17 months of Senate Democratic control, we were able to confirm 100 judges and vastly reduce judicial vacancies. We were able to do so despite the refusal of the administration to consult with Democrats on circuit court vacancies and many district court vacancies.

As I have indicated, if we confirm Judge Prado, which I am confident we will do, he will be the 121st judge. He will also be the 11th Latino judge serving in our circuit courts. Judge Prado is supported by the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, the Mexican American Legal Defense Fund, and many others.

I ask unanimous consent that a letter from the Congressional Hispanic Caucus expressing their unanimous support be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

APRIL 29, 2003.

Hon. BILL FRIST,  
U.S. Senate Majority Leader,  
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MAJORITY LEADER FRIST: On behalf of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC), we write today regarding Edward Charles Prado's nomination to the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. Earlier this year, the CHC voted unanimously to endorse the nomination of Judge Prado. Subsequently, Judge Prado received the unanimous bipartisan support of the Senate Judiciary Committee, and it is our understanding that Senate Democratic leadership has since asked that this non-controversial nomination be immediately called up for a vote.

Unfortunately, it is now being reported that Senate Republican leadership is holding up confirmation of Judge Prado as part of a political ploy to characterize Democratic opposition to certain individual judicial nominees as a Democratic assault on women and minorities. If this in fact is the case, then it is reprehensible that the Senate Republican leadership would engage in such offensive and malicious tactics for mere political gain.

It is ironic that although Judge Prado has received bipartisan and unanimous support so far, Republican leadership has not yet allowed the full Senate a final vote on his nomination. Intentionally delaying a vote on this nomination casts doubt on the sincerity of Republican rhetoric about supporting and confirming qualified Hispanic judges.

Furthermore, it would be a travesty for Judge Prado, a qualified and respected Hispanic judicial nominee, to fall victim to a disingenuous politically motivated campaign to label Democrats as anti-minority by highlighting Democratic opposition to a select few while ignoring Democratic support for the vast majority of President Bush's Hispanic judicial nominees.

President Bush's nominations of Jose Martinez to a District Court in Florida, Jose Linares to a District Court in New Jersey, Christina Armijo to a District Court in New Mexico, James Otero to a District Court in California, as well as Alia Ludlum, Philip Martinez, and Randy Crane to District Courts in Texas all received Democratic support and all were confirmed by the U.S. Senate. In addition to Judge Prado, another pending Hispanic judicial nominee, Cecilia Altonaga of Florida, is also expected to be confirmed by the Senate with Democratic support.

Clearly, Senate Democrats have displayed a willingness to support President Bush's Hispanic nominees, and any assertions to the contrary are unnecessary and counterproductive to efforts to increase diversity on our Nation's federal courts.

As you know, the judicial nomination process is important to the CHC because we believe that our Nation's courts should reflect the diversity of thought and action that enrich America. To that extent, we established the Hispanic Judiciary Initiative to further formalize our involvement in this issue by establishing a set of evaluation criteria and an internal process for endorsing nominees. Since its inception the CHC Hispanic Judiciary Initiative has worked to improve diversity within the federal judiciary. For this effort to be hindered due to political maneuvering, absent concern for the best interest of the Hispanic community, is both irresponsible and neglectful.

Once again, we believe that Judge Prado's qualifications and distinguished career in law, as well as his dedication to the Hispanic community make him a judicial nominee de-

serving of confirmation. We respectfully urge you to schedule a vote to conform Edward Charles Prado to the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit without any further delay.

Sincerely,

CIRO D. RODRIGUEZ,  
Chair, Congressional  
Hispanic Caucus

CHARLES A. GONZALEZ,  
Chair, CHC Hispanic  
Judiciary Initiative.

Mr. REED. Judge Prado has served 19 years in the United States district court. As some of my colleagues have noted, it is sometimes more challenging to review nominees who come to us from private practice and universities. We have to extrapolate from their record in those different roles as to how they would perform as a judge. With Judge Prado, we certainly do not have that problem. We know how he has performed as a judge.

With the nomination of Priscilla Owen, the same applies. We have the Priscilla Owen and Judge Prado judicial records we can directly evaluate. In the case of Justice Owen, it is a record many on our side find troubling. If all the Members had been present today, it would have been 47 people voting against cloture.

In the case of Judge Prado, it is a record we find evinces an evenhandedness and fairness befitting a circuit court judge. Not that I would decide every case the way Judge Prado has—I would not—but overall he has won the support of all Democratic Senators, as far as I know, on the Judiciary Committee, and other Democratic Senators, because they found his record one of balance and fairness. Unlike Justice Owen and Mr. Estrada, no colleague or supervisor has questioned his ability to apply the law faithfully. Unlike Justice Owen and Mr. Estrada, no single person or organization has submitted a letter of concern or opposition to Judge Prado's nomination.

Judge Prado has generated no controversy. He is experienced. While I am sure he is conservative, it does not matter; He is an evenhanded judge.

There is something to be said for conservative judges. If conservatism means the law is followed, *stare decisis*, the precedent set, I think that is good.

Judge Prado will be confirmed today because he is a fine person and an excellent judge. As I have noted in the past, eight of the sitting Latino judges were appointed by President Clinton. Several of these judges were denied Senate consideration for years while the Republicans controlled the Senate. Judge Richard Paez, nominee for the Ninth Circuit, waited over 1,500 days. He was well qualified, had the support of his hometown Senators, and 39 Republicans voted against his nomination. There is nothing wrong with that. They had different views as to how he would serve as a judge.

Judge Sonia Sotomayor, a nominee to the Second Circuit, was similarly stalled. Her confirmation took 433

days. Then there were the Hispanic nominees who were denied hearings or votes by Republicans during the Clinton administration: Jorge Rangel, Enrique Moreno, Christine Arguello, Richard Morado, Anabelle Rodriguez.

These facts and the expected confirmation of Judge Prado belie the anti-Hispanic charges some have made in the context of the Estrada debate. The extended debate Democrats have sought to have on just a handful of judicial nominees affects our constitutional advice and consent duty.

While the number of judges who have been confirmed demonstrates our good faith in working with our colleagues and the President, we will not simply rubberstamp ideologically driven individuals for lifetime seats on our Federal courts.

I am pleased that today we are moving forward on this qualified judge, Edward Prado. I believe the way Judge Prado's nomination has been received in the Senate points the way through some of the conflict that has occurred in the Senate over a very small number of judicial nominees.

If my math is correct, by today's end there will be 121 versus 2. That is a good record in anyone's book.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, as I understand it we are on the Prado nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I am pleased that we are considering the nomination of Edward C. Prado, who has been nominated by President Bush to serve on the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. He has an outstanding record of distinguished public service and will be a great addition to the Fifth Circuit, especially since the seat to which he has been nominated has been designated a judicial emergency by the Judicial Conference of the United States.

Judge Prado currently serves as a United States District Judge for the Western District of Texas, having been unanimously confirmed by the Senate in 1984. His 18 years on the bench, plus prior service as a Texas state court district judge has given him the experience and background to make an outstanding Fifth Circuit Judge.

In addition to his judicial experience, Judge Prado has had a distinguished legal career. After graduating from the University of Texas School of Law in 1972, he began his legal career as an Assistant District Attorney in the Bexar County, TX, District Attorney's Office. In 1976 he accepted a position with the Federal Public Defender's Office for the

Western District of Texas where he served as an Assistant Federal Public Defender representing indigent criminal defendants in the federal courts.

During 1980, he served as a Texas state district judge, filling the unexpired term of the incumbent. In this position, he presided over several hundred cases, including felony criminal trials. In 1981, he was unanimously confirmed by the Senate and appointed as United States Attorney for the Western District of Texas, where he managed one of the largest United States Attorney's Offices in the Nation. In 1984, President Reagan nominated and the Senate confirmed Judge Prado as a United States District Judge for the Western District of Texas. In this capacity he has handled thousands of cases and hundreds of trials.

Judge Prado is a man of exceptional character, impeccable ethics, and is well qualified to serve as a Circuit Judge. He has received many honors and awards for his work in the law, including the St. Thomas Moore Award from St. Mary's University School of Law in 2000, the LULAC State Award for Excellence in 1981, the Achievement Award from the U.S. Attorney General in 1980, and recognition as an Outstanding Federal Public Defender in 1978.

Judge Prado is a native of San Antonio, Texas and has served his community, state and nation in a variety of ways. Not only has he served in his professional capacity, but also he believes in community service and has been involved in community service organizations such as St. Mark's Catholic Church, Witte Museum Community Advisory Committee, the Philosophical Society of Texas, the Rotary Club of San Antonio, and Leadership San Antonio. Additionally, Judge Prado served in the U.S. Army Reserve as an Infantry Officer from 1972-1987.

In addition to his public and community service, Judge Prado has been actively involved in efforts to improve the legal and judicial process. He has been a leader in numerous bar associations and law-related organizations. For example, he has been a member of the Texas and San Antonio Bar Associations since 1972, including service as President, and later Director and Chairman of the Board of Trustees, of the San Antonio Bar Foundation. Judge Prado serves on the Texas State Bar Crime Victims Committee, and was appointed by Chief Justice Rehnquist to serve as the Chairman of the Criminal Justice Act Review Committee from 1991-1993.

As a District Judge, he has made efforts to reach out to youth groups to help them learn about the law and the judicial process. He gives motivational speeches and conducts events in his courtroom as an introduction to the law.

Judge Prado comes highly recommended by those with whom he serves and by those who appear in his courtroom. Let me read a few state-

ments made by Texas attorneys, as reported in the Texas Lawyer, February 10, 2003. Laurence R. Macon said of Judge Prado, "I've known him for 30 years, and he doesn't have any outrageous positions. He won't be there trying to make law." Seagal Wheatley stated, "If the Judiciary Committee looks at his qualifications, he should be a shoo-in. I'm not aware of any recent opinion that will cause him problems." A third attorney, Van Hilley, said, "Judge Prado has a varied background and an open mind about things. The reason his docket ran so smooth is he wasn't viewed as pro-government or pro-defense."

The legal bar's wide regard for Judge Prado is reflected in his evaluation by the American Bar Association. The ABA evaluates judicial nominees based on their professional qualifications, their integrity, their professional competence, and their judicial temperament. The ABA has bestowed upon Judge Prado its highest rating of Unanimously Well Qualified.

Furthermore, Judge Prado has been endorsed by his hometown newspaper, The San Antonio Express-News, which declared, "The Senate should confirm Prado's nomination without undue controversy or delay. . . . His credentials are unquestioned." Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the complete San Antonio Express-News editorial be printed in the RECORD, following my remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection it is so ordered. (See exhibit No. 1)

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, the record is clear that Judge Prado is a man of ability and character. This Senate, on two previous occasions, has found Judge Prado worthy of confirmation for positions of high responsibility in the government, and I am confident it will do so again today. I strongly support his confirmation and urge my colleagues to do likewise.

#### EXHIBIT NO. 1

U.S. District Judge Edward C. Prado has compiled an admirable record in his almost two decades on the federal trial bench.

Last week, President Bush nominated the San Antonio judge for a well-deserved promotion to the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

The Senate should confirm Prado's nomination without undue controversy or delay. Prado, a graduate of Edgewood High School, was appointed to his federal district court post by President Reagan in 1984 and has performed consistently as a non-ideological moderate.

His credentials are unquestioned. Prado first became a judge in 1980 when Gov. Bill Clements named him to a state district court bench.

In addition, U.S. Sens. KAY BAILEY HUTCHISON and JOHN CORNYN of Texas swiftly recommended a solid replacement for Prado if he is elevated.

The lawmakers forwarded the name of former Texas Supreme Court Justice Xavier Rodriguez of San Antonio to the White House to fill Prado's seat.

Gov. Rick Perry appointed Rodriguez to the state's high court, but he was defeated in last year's GOP primary.

A bright lawyer with solid legal qualifications, Rodriguez was apolitical before being appointed to the Texas Supreme Court, and that is one of many factors that make him a strong candidate for a federal bench.

We urge Bush to accept the recommendation of the Texas senators and nominate Rodriguez when Prado's post is officially vacated.

Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, I rise today in support of the nomination of Judge Edward Prado to be a Circuit Court Judge for the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. Judge Prado has earned my support and that of my colleagues for his distinguished record in public service and for the integrity with which he has gone through the Senate confirmation process.

Judge Prado has been a public servant for his entire professional life. From the assistant district attorney position he took just after receiving his law degree, to his experience as a U.S. attorney for the Western District of Texas, to the 19 years he has served as a district court judge for the Western District of Texas, Judge Prado's commitment to public service is evident.

During his tenure as a Federal district court judge, Judge Prado has heard and decided hundreds of cases. This experience helps make him a well-prepared and well-qualified nominee to the Fifth Circuit. He has developed an extensive record of achievement for the Senate to consider and review in our endeavor to evaluate his nomination.

Further, Judge Prado should be commended both for his willingness to be honest and forthcoming in the questionnaire he submitted to the committee, and for his comportment at his committee confirmation hearing. Judge Prado directly and fully addressed some of his more controversial rulings in his questionnaire, and provided honest, complete answers to all questions asked of him at his hearing. I do not agree with all of Judge Prado's decisions; in fact, we may hold different views on significant issues. Yet I am convinced that he will apply the law in a capable and responsible manner.

Finally, it should be noted that I support the elevation of Judge Prado to the Court of Appeals for the same reasons that make me unable to support the nomination of Miguel Estrada to the D.C. Circuit. Where Judge Prado has 19 years of experience on the Federal bench, Mr. Estrada has no experience of any kind as a judge. And, more importantly, Judge Prado has voluntarily and directly addressed any controversial issues in his record, while Mr. Estrada has made a habit of concealing such information and refusing to submit documents which would be of substantial assistance to the committee.

Mr. Prado is the kind of experienced, well-qualified nominee that the Senate can confirm with speed and ease. I support his nomination.

Mr. LEAHY. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. HATCH. I am happy to yield.

Mr. LEAHY. I know we have set a time. I wonder if the Senator from Vermont might have a minute or so to speak about this nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Each side has 3 minutes remaining at this time.

Mr. HATCH. I will yield to the distinguished Senator from Vermont, and I yield my remaining 3 minutes to the distinguished Senator from Texas.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I begin by thanking the democratic leader and assistant leader for going to bat for Judge Edward Prado and working out this arrangement with the Republican leadership so that this consensus nomination can be considered without further delay. I appreciate that the majority leader and Senator MCCONNELL have been willing to work with us to allow this nomination to go forward today.

I was disappointed to hear on Tuesday that the Republican position was that this matter should be further delayed and I did not understand the logic or motivation behind that position.

I cannot recall a time when the Senate or either party leadership insisted on strict adherence to consideration of nominations based on their calendar number. Indeed, during the period 1995 through 2001, quite the opposite was true and Democrats had to work very hard to get the Republican leadership to take up nominations that were stalled on the Senate Executive Calendar for weeks, months and sometimes years. This year we have continued to make progress on filling judicial vacancies not by holding up all nominations reported after that of Mr. Estrada but, on the contrary, by moving to those on which there is agreement and on which we can proceed most efficiently.

In fact, all 20 judicial confirmations this year were nominations reported and considered after that of Mr. Estrada and after debate on the Estrada nomination had begun.

We still do not know who on the Republican side delayed consideration of the consensus nomination of Judge Prado for the last month. I thank the Congressional Hispanic Caucus for its support of this nomination and for working with the Senate to bring this matter forward at this time. I also want to thank the Republican leadership for changing position and working with us to move forward.

I came to the floor on Monday to make the point that the nomination of Judge Edward Prado to the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit was cleared on the Democratic side and that we were prepared to proceed. Senator DASCHLE and Senator REID came before the Senate on Tuesday to urge that the Prado nomination be considered rather than be held captive on the Senate calendar. All Democratic Senators serving on the Judiciary Committee voted to report this nomination favorably. All Democratic

Senators had indicated that they were eager to proceed to this nomination and, after a reasonable period of debate, voting on the nomination. I am confident this nomination will be confirmed by an extraordinary majority—maybe unanimously.

It is most unfortunate that so many partisans in this administration and on the other side of the aisle insist on bogging down consensus matters and consensus nominees in order to focus exclusively on the most divisive and controversial of this President's nominees as he continues his efforts to pack the courts. Democratic Senators have worked very hard to cooperate with this administration in order to fill judicial vacancies. What the other side seeks to obscure is that effort, that fairness and the progress we have been able to achieve without much help from the other side or the administration.

This week, again, despite Democratic willingness to proceed to a vote on the controversial nomination of Jeffrey Sutton to the Sixth Circuit, the other side then insisted we proceed to the unprecedented renomination of Priscilla Owen. Mr. Sutton was confirmed with the fewest votes in favor of any judicial nominee in the last 20 years and with more than enough negative votes to have sustained a filibuster. Rather than proceed to a consensus nominee and fill a judicial emergency vacancy on the Fifth Circuit with an experienced and respected Hispanic federal judge, Judge Prado, Republicans insisted on pressing forward with another of the President's most controversial and divisive nominations.

The fact is that when Democrats became the Senate majority in the summer of 2001 we inherited 110 judicial vacancies. Over the next 17 months, despite constant criticism from the administration, the Senate proceeded to confirm 100 of President Bush's nominees, including several who were divisive and controversial, several who had mixed peer review ratings from the ABA and at least one who had been rated not qualified. Despite the additional 40 vacancies that arose, we reduced judicial vacancies to 60, a level below that termed "full employment" by Senator HATCH. Since the beginning of this year, in spite of the fixation of the Republican majority on the President's most controversial nominations, we have worked hard to reduce judicial vacancies even further.

As of today, the Senate Judiciary Committee website lists the number of judicial vacancies at 48. That is the lowest it has been in 13 years. That is lower than at any time during the entire eight years of the Clinton administration. We have already reduced judicial vacancies from 110 to 48, in less than two years. We have reduced the vacancy rate from 12.8 percent to 5.6 percent, the lowest it has been in the last two decades. With some cooperation from the administration think of the additional progress we could be making.

Even after the consideration of Judge Prado, for example, there is another distinguished Hispanic nominee who was reported unanimously by the Judiciary Committee last month on which the Senate will not yet have acted: on the Senate executive calendar is the nomination of Cecilia Altonaga to be a Federal judge in Florida. We expedited consideration of this nominee at the request of Senator GRAHAM of Florida. She will be the first Cuban-American woman to be confirmed to the Federal bench when Republicans choose to proceed to that nomination. Indeed, Democrats in the Senate have worked to expedite fair consideration of every Latino nominee this President has made to the Federal trial courts in addition to the nomination of Judge Prado.

Another example may be the nomination of Consuelo Callahan to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. Unlike the divisive nomination of Carolyn Kuhl to the same court, both home State Senators returned their blue slips and support a hearing for Judge Consuelo Callahan. I have asked that she receive a hearing in the near future and look forward to learning more about her record as an appellate judge for the State of California. Rather than disregarding time-honored rules and Senate practices, I urge my friends on the other side of the aisle to help us fill more judicial vacancies more quickly by bringing those nominations that have bipartisan support to the front of the line for Committee hearings and floor votes.

As I have noted throughout the last 2 years, the Senate is able to move expeditiously when we have consensus, mainstream nominees to consider. Nationally-respected columnist David Broder made this point in an April 16 column that appeared in the Washington Post. I referenced this column earlier this week and inserted it in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. In his column, Mr. Broder noted that when he asked Alberto Gonzales if there might be a lesson in Judge Prado's easy approval, Mr. Gonzales missed the point. In Mr. Broder's mind: "The lesson seems obvious. Conservatives can be confirmed for the courts when they are well known in their communities and a broad range of their constituents have reason to think them fair-minded."

To date the Senate has proceeded to confirm 120 of President Bush's nominees, 100 in the 17 months in which Democrats made up the Senate majority. The lesson that less controversial nominees are considered and confirmed more easily was the lesson of the last two years and that lesson has been lost on this White House.

Unfortunately, far too many of this President's nominees raise serious concerns about whether they will be fair judges to all parties on all issues. Those types of nominees should not be rushed through the process. I regret the administration's refusal to work

with us to end the impasse it has created in connection with the Estrada nomination.

The partisan politics of division that the administration is practicing with respect to that nomination are not helpful and not respectful of the damage done to the Hispanic community by insisting on so divisive a nominee.

I invite the President to work with us and to nominate more mainstream individuals like Judge Prado. His proven record and bipartisan support makes it easier for us to uphold our constitutional duty of advise and consent. I encourage those on the other side of the aisle to allow us to consider his nomination. I look forward to casting a vote in favor of his confirmation.

Judge Prado is an exceptional candidate for elevation to the appeals court. He has significant experience as a public servant in west Texas. Perhaps the fact that he has bipartisan support is the reason why he is not being brought forward at this time for a floor vote. That does not fit the Republican message but reveals the truth: That Democratic Senators, having already acted on 120 judges nominated by President Bush, are prepared to support even more of his nominations when they are mainstream, consensus nominees. Perhaps the fact that Democrats unanimously supported his nomination in committee is seen as a drawback for Mr. Prado in the Republican world of nomination politics. I hope that is not the case.

I also hope the fact that Judge Prado is Hispanic has not been a factor in the Republican delay. Some have suggested that Judge Prado has been delayed because Democratic Senators are likely to vote for him and thereby undercut the Republican's shameless charge that the opposition to Miguel Estrada is based on his ethnicity. Republican partisans have made lots of partisan hay attacking Democrats in connection with the Estrada nomination. We all know that the White House could have cooperated with the Senate by producing his work papers and the Senate could have proceeded to a vote on the Estrada nomination months ago. The request for his work papers was sent last May.

Rather than respond as every other administration has over the last 20 years and provide access to those papers, this White House has stonewalled. Rather than follow the policy of openness outlined by Attorney General Robert Jackson in the 1940's, this administration has stonewalled. And Republican Senators and other partisans could not wait to claim that the impasse created by the White House's change in policy and practice with respect to nominations was somehow attributable to Democrats being anti-Hispanic. The charge would be laughable if it were not so calculated to do political damage and to divide the Hispanic community. That is what Republican partisans hope is the result. That is wrong.

So some have come to the conclusion that Republican delay in connection with the consideration of Judge Prado's nomination may be related to the political strategy of the White House to characterize Democrats unfairly. Might the record be set straight if Democrats were seen to be supporting this Hispanic nominee to the Fifth Circuit? Might the Republicans' own record of opposing President Clinton's nominations of Judge Jorge Rangel and Enrique Moreno to that same circuit court be contrasted unfavorably with Democrats' support of Judge Prado?

Might Judge Prado, a conservative from Texas with a public record of service as a Federal district court judge, become the first Hispanic appointed by President Bush to the circuit courts with widespread support from Senate Democrats? Might this more mainstream, consensus nominee stand in stark contrast to the ideological choices intended to pack the courts on which the White House and Senate Republicans concentrate almost exclusively?

Judge Prado has 19 years of experience as a U.S. District Court judge, which provides us with a significant judicial career to evaluate. A review of Judge Prado's actions on the bench demonstrates a solid record of fairness and evenhandedness.

While I may not agree with each and every one of his rulings or with every action he has taken as a lawyer or judge, my review of his record leads me to conclude that he will be a fair judge. No supervisor or colleague of Judge Prado's has questioned his ability or willingness to interpret the law fairly. Judge Prado enjoys the full support of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus and the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund. Not a single person or organization has submitted a letter of opposition or raised concerns about Judge Prado. No controversy. No red flags. No basis for concern. No opposition. This explains why his nomination was voted out of the Judiciary Committee with a unanimous, bipartisan vote on an expedited basis.

To understand the importance of Judge Prado's nomination, we must put it in the context of prior nominations to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. Until Judge Prado's hearing, it had been more than a decade since a Latino nominee to that Court had even been allowed a hearing by the Senate Judiciary Committee, let alone a vote on the floor. I recall President Clinton's two Hispanic nominations to the Fifth Circuit and the poor treatment they received from the Republican-led Senate.

Judge Jorge Rangel was a former Texas State judge and a dedicated attorney in private practice in Corpus Christi, TX when President Clinton nominated him to the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit in 1997. Judge Rangel is a graduate of the University of Houston and the Har-

vard Law School and earned a rating of "Well Qualified" by the American Bar Association. Yet, under Republican leadership, he never received a hearing on his nomination, let alone a vote by the Committee or by the full Senate. His nomination languished without action for 15 months. Despite his treatment, this outstanding gentleman has recently written us in support of a judicial nominee of President Bush.

After Judge Rangel, disappointed with his treatment at the hands of the Republican majority, asked the President not to resubmit his nomination, President Clinton nominated Enrique Moreno, a distinguished attorney in private practice in El Paso, TX. Mr. Moreno is a graduate of Harvard University and the Harvard Law School. He was given the highest rating of unanimously "Well Qualified" by the ABA. Mr. Moreno also waited 15 months, but was never allowed a hearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee. President Clinton renominated him at the beginning of 2001, but President Bush, squandering an opportunity for bipartisanship, withdrew the nomination and refused to renominate him.

In addition, President Clinton nominated H. Alston Johnson to the Fifth Circuit in 1999. This talented Louisianan came to the Senate with the support of both of his home state Senators but he never received a hearing on his nomination or a vote by the Committee or the full Senate in 1999, 2000, or the beginning of 2001. His nomination languished without action for 23 months.

In contrast, when I served as Chair of the Judiciary Committee last Congress, we granted Edith Clement a hearing within months of her nomination. At that time there had been no hearings on Fifth Circuit nominees since 1994 and no confirmations since 1995.

We also proceeded to hearings, committee debate and committee votes on the divisive and controversial nominations of Judge Priscilla Owen and Judge Charles Pickering. We granted hearings and votes on all four of this President's nominees to the Fifth Circuit in spite of the treatment Republicans accorded President Clinton's qualified nominees to that same circuit. Under Republican leadership, none of President Clinton's nominees to this Court received a hearing during his entire second term of office.

Some of my friends on the other side of the aisle have made the outrageous claim that Democratic Senators are anti-Hispanic or anti-Latino. I think it is important to set the record straight.

Of the ten Latino appellate judges currently seated in the Federal courts, 8 were appointed by President Clinton. Three other Latino nominees of President Clinton to the appellate courts were blocked by Republicans—as well as several others for the district court. In fact, in contrast to the President's selection of only one Latino circuit

court nominee in his first 2 years in office, 3 of President Clinton's first 14 judicial nominees were Latino, and he nominated more than 30 Latino nominees to the Federal courts.

During President Clinton's tenure, 10 of his more than 30 Latino nominees, including Judge Rangel, Enrique Moreno, and Christine Arguello to the circuit courts, were delayed or blocked from receiving hearings or votes by the Republican leadership.

Republicans delayed consideration of Judge Richard Paez for over 1,500 days, and 39 Republicans voted against him. The confirmations of Latina circuit nominees Rosemary Barkett and Sonia Sotomayor were also delayed by Republicans. Judge Barkett was targeted for delay and defeat by Republicans based on claims about her judicial philosophy, but those efforts were not successful. After significant delays, 36 Republicans voted against the confirmation of this nominee who received a "Well Qualified" rating by the ABA. Additionally, Judge Sotomayor, who also received a "Well Qualified" rating and had been appointed to district court by President George H.W. Bush, was targeted by Republicans for delay or defeat when she was nominated to the Second Circuit. She was confirmed, although 29 Republicans voted against her.

The fact is that the Latino nominations that the Senate has received from this administration have been acted upon in an expeditious manner. They have overwhelmingly enjoyed bipartisan support. Under the Democratically-led Senate, we swiftly granted hearings for and eventually confirmed Judge Christina Armijo of New Mexico, Judge Phillip Martinez and Randy Crane of Texas, Judge Jose Martinez of Florida, U.S. Magistrate Judge Alia Ludlum, and Judge Jose Linares of New Jersey to the district courts.

This year, we also confirmed Judge James Otero of California, and we would have held his confirmation hearing last year if his ABA peer rating had been delivered to us in time for the scheduling of our last hearing. As I have noted, we also have the nomination of Cecilia Altonaga to be a Federal judge in Florida already on the Senate Executive Calendar.

I, again, urge those on the other side of the aisle to help us fill more judicial vacancies more quickly by bringing those nominations that have bipartisan support to the front of the line for Committee hearings and floor votes. As I have noted throughout the last 2 years, the Senate is able to move expeditiously when we have consensus, mainstream nominees to consider.

That is the way to achieve 100 confirmations in 17 months and 120 in less than 2 years. The lesson that less controversial nominees are considered and confirmed more easily was the lesson of the last 2 years and that lesson has been lost on this White House.

Unfortunately, far too many of this President's nominees raise serious con-

cerns about whether they will be fair judges to all parties on all issues. Those types of nominees should not be rushed through the process. I invite the President to nominate more mainstream individuals like Judge Prado. His proven record and bipartisan support makes it easier for us to uphold our constitutional duty of advise and consent. I encourage those on the other side of the aisle to allow us to consider his nomination. I look forward to casting a vote in favor of his confirmation.

I, again, thank the Senate Republican leadership for working with us to proceed to this consensus nomination, to provide adequate time for debate and to proceed to a vote without further delay. Judge Prado's nomination has been delayed on the Senate executive calendar for several weeks, unnecessarily in my view. I recall all too vividly when anonymous Republican holds delayed Senate action on the nomination of Judge Sonia Sotomayor to the Second Circuit for 7 months. Let us work together. I thank all Senators, even those Republicans who have anonymously held up consideration of Judge Prado's nomination for the last month, for agreeing to proceed with this nomination at this time. I congratulate the nominee and his family on his elevation to the Fifth Circuit and look forward to his continuing judicial service.

Again, I thank the Congressional Hispanic Caucus for its support of this nomination and for working with the Senate to bring this matter forward at this time. I do thank the Republican leadership for changing its position and working with us to move forward.

I see the distinguished senior Senator from Texas in the Chamber, and if I have further time, I withhold it. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ALEXANDER). The Senator from Texas.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. I would like to be notified when I have 1 minute remaining so Senator HATCH can take that last minute of our 3 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator will be notified.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I am pleased, of course, the Senate will be voting on Judge Ed Prado to move to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. He has been a judge on the district bench for a number of years—actually, since 1984—and he has an outstanding record. He was a great choice by the President, and this is a circuit that needs these vacancies filled. There is no question it is a judicial emergency. We hope to fill this seat with Judge Prado, and then we hope Justice Priscilla Owen will also fill the other vacancy for the Fifth Circuit, that is open, from Texas.

Judge Prado has an outstanding record. He graduated from the University of Texas and the University of Texas Law School, a great university in our Nation. He also has served as U.S. Attorney for the Western District. He served as judge on the State district

court. This is a man who has made public service his career, and an outstanding one at that. He is so well regarded in San Antonio and by the people who have gone before him. They know they will get fair and impartial justice in his court. That is why I am pleased to support his nomination.

This nomination has moved very quickly. We are very pleased because of the vacancies on the Fifth Circuit. But the ABA agreed that he had the "well qualified" unanimous approval of their committee.

There is just no controversy at all with this wonderful judge. It is my pleasure as a Texan to support and urge my colleagues to support the nomination of Judge Ed Prado.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. One minute remains.

Who yields time?

The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I ask for an additional 2 minutes equally divided in addition to the 1 minute I have remaining.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I am pleased that my Democratic colleagues are willing to join us in confirming Judge Prado to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals.

I regret that there has been any discussion that somehow the Republican leadership has held up this nominee. That is not true. What is particularly troubling is the suggestion that there is some Republican delay in the consideration of Judge Prado's nomination related to the Estrada nomination.

I would point out that Democrats who support the nomination of Judge Prado to the Fifth Circuit are leading the opposition to Mr. Estrada, nominated to the D.C. Circuit. Those Democrats have characterized the D.C. Circuit as "the second most important court in the land." Senator KENNEDY stated recently that the D.C. Circuit makes decisions with national impact on the lives of all of the American people. Senator SCHUMER echoed these sentiments just yesterday. It does seem to me that there is a different standard being applied to Miguel Estrada—a nominee to the second highest court in the land—than to Judge Prado—a nominee to one of twelve other Circuit Courts—although they are important.

In any event, neither the confirmation of Judge Prado nor the confirmation of any judge justifies or excuses the continued obstruction on Miguel Estrada. I repeat that the arguments put forth by opponents of Mr. Estrada just do not hold up under scrutiny. Their repeated accusations that he failed to answer the questions has been refuted again and again. The demand for confidential memoranda he authored as a line attorney for the Department of Justice is both extraordinary and ill-advised, as I and others, including all the living former Solicitors General, have repeatedly demonstrated.

So my Democratic colleagues have had unlimited opportunities to make their case on Mr. Estrada. Some of them oppose him; others support him. But one thing has remained clear through this debate: There is no good reason to deny Mr. Estrada an up or down vote on his nomination.

The time has come to end the debate on Mr. Estrada's nomination and give him and up or down vote, as the Senate will now do on Judge Prado. It is the fair thing to do.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in voting for Judge Prado's nomination at this time.

I yield the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. I am glad my friends on the Republican side now allow Judge Prado's nomination to go forward. I intend to vote for him.

I yield the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Edward C. Prado, of Texas, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Fifth Circuit?

Mr. HATCH. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. I announce that the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) is necessarily absent.

Mr. REID. I announce that the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. LIEBERMAN) and the Senator from Maryland (Mr. SARBANES) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 97, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 138 Ex.]

YEAS—97

Akaka	Dodd	Lott
Alexander	Dole	Lugar
Allard	Domenici	McCain
Allen	Dorgan	McConnell
Baucus	Durbin	Mikulski
Bayh	Edwards	Miller
Bennett	Ensign	Murkowski
Biden	Enzi	Murray
Bingaman	Feingold	Nelson (FL)
Bond	Feinstein	Nelson (NE)
Boxer	Fitzgerald	Nickles
Breaux	Frist	Pryor
Brownback	Graham (FL)	Reed
Bunning	Graham (SC)	Reid
Burns	Grassley	Roberts
Byrd	Gregg	Rockefeller
Campbell	Hagel	Santorum
Cantwell	Harkin	Schumer
Carper	Hatch	Sessions
Chafee	Hollings	Shelby
Chambliss	Hutchison	Smith
Clinton	Inouye	Snowe
Cochran	Jeffords	Specter
Coleman	Johnson	Stabenow
Collins	Kennedy	Stevens
Conrad	Kerry	Sununu
Cornyn	Kohl	Talent
Corzine	Kyl	Thomas
Craig	Landrieu	Voinovich
Crapo	Lautenberg	Warner
Daschle	Leahy	Wyden
Dayton	Levin	
DeWine	Lincoln	

NOT VOTING—3

Inhofe Lieberman Sarbanes

The nomination was confirmed.  
The PRESIDING OFFICER. The President will be notified of this action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will return to legislative session.

The Senator from Illinois.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. FITZGERALD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. FITZGERALD. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CORNYN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

HONORING THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL POLICE ON THE DEPARTMENT'S 175TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, tomorrow marks a special milestone in the history of the Capitol: The 175th anniversary of the U.S. Capitol Police Department.

Those of us who are privileged to work in the Capitol know, perhaps better than anyone, what a difficult and demanding job it is to protect the Capitol, and how extraordinarily well the men and women of the Capitol Police perform that job.

We also know how dedicated they are to their duty.

After September 11 and the anthrax attack on the Capitol itself, no one showed more courage, no one was showed more determination, and no one was more critical to ensuring that the "People's House" remained open to the people, than the members of the Capitol Police force.

We, and all Americans, owe them an enormous debt of gratitude.

Today, on the eve of the 175th anniversary of the department, we say "thank you" to Chief Gainer and all of the men and women of the Capitol Police.

When we look at the highly trained, highly skilled professionals who protect the Capitol today, it is hard to imagine sometimes that the department is descended from such humble beginnings.

The Capitol Police department traces its origins to 1801, when Congress

moved from Philadelphia to Washington. At the time, the department had exactly one member, a watchman named John Goldin, who was not armed, had no power of arrest, and was paid an annual salary of \$371.75.

In 1827, the force was expanded for the first time, to four watchmen; two to work the day shift, one to work the night shift, and one to fill in as needed.

One-hundred and seventy-five years ago tomorrow, on May 2, 1828, Congress passed a milestone piece of legislation titled, appropriately, "the Act of May 2, 1828," bringing responsibility for policing the Capitol, for the first time, under the direction of the presiding officers of the House and Senate.

This same law also empowered the Capitol watchmen with full law enforcement authority. It transformed a corps of watchmen into a police department.

In 1854, the Capitol Police were armed for the first time with heavy hickory canes.

In 1867, responsibility of the Capitol Police was transferred to the Sergeant of Arms in the House and Senate, where it remains today.

In 1873, the U.S. Capitol Police Board was formed to oversee the department.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the department had grown to 67 members.

In 1909, the department expanded to just over 100 members; a move necessitated by the construction of the Russell Senate Office Building and the Cannon House Office building. This also marked the first time the authority of the Capitol Police stretched outside the Capitol building itself.

In 1935, the Capitol Police Board, for the first time, set qualification standards for Capitol Police officers.

In 1974, the first women officers joined the force.

In 1981, the Capitol Police were authorized to protect Members and officers of Congress, and their families, anywhere in the United States.

Since September 11, all Members of the House and Senate leadership have been required to have Capitol police protection whenever we travel, and throughout the day as we go outside the Capitol building. One happy result of that, for me, is that I have been able to show off my home State to a number of officers.

And I am proud to say that a few of them now consider themselves almost honorary South Dakotans.

From the beginning, protecting the Capitol has always carried the risk of personal injury, or worse.

On 1814, during the War of 1812, the British set fire to the Capitol building.

During the Civil War, the Capitol Police kept the "People's House" open to the public from sunrise to sunset, despite the fact that military troops were stationed around, and at times even in this building.

Three times in the last century—in 1915, 1917, and 1983—bombs were exploded in the Capitol by groups seeking to advance political agendas.