

September 13, 2010

Dear Senators Reid and McConnell:

As retired or former federal judges, we are writing to you to express our dismay at the excessive politicization of the judicial nominations process. We are judges who were appointed by both Republican and Democratic Presidents but share the profound belief that judiciary is a critical element of our democratic system.

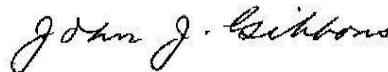
We do not attribute blame to either the Democrats or the Republicans for the judicial process becoming overly political. In order for our judiciary to fulfill its role in the administration of justice, judges must be seen by the American public as non-partisan and neutral in each case before them. But the use of secret holds and filibusters undermine the credibility of the judiciary and, by contributing to lengthy vacancies on the courts, impede the courts' ability to ensure that cases can be heard and adjudicated in a timely fashion. At this moment, our courts are overburdened and increasingly certain vacancies are being designated as "emergencies" by the Administrative Office of the Courts because of the length of time the court has been without a judge. This situation is untenable for a country that believes in rule of law.

We call on you to establish an improved process for the consideration of judicial nominations by the United States Senate. The process should be one that will eliminate the appearance of excessive partisanship, will apply to both Democratic and Republican administrations and will begin to restore the public's faith in the integrity of our judiciary under our Constitution, with its delicate system of checks and balances, a major strength of our democratic system of government.

Respectfully,



U.W. Clemon
Former Chief Judge
U. S. District Court, N.D. of Alabama



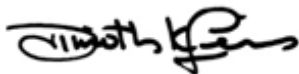
John J. Gibbons
Former Chief Judge
U. S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit



Abner Mikva
Former Chief Judge
U. S. Court of Appeals for the D. C. Circuit



William Steele Sessions
Former Chief Judge
U. S. District Court, W.D. of Texas



Timothy Lewis
Former Judge
U. S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit



Patricia Wald
Former Chief Judge
U. S. Court of Appeals for the D. C. Circuit