



D I S T R I C T O F C O L U M B I A B A R  
*Sections*

Public Statement of the Litigation Section of the District of Columbia Bar Regarding the  
Appointment of Judges to the D.C. Federal Bench

The members of the Steering Committee of the Litigation Section of the District of Columbia Bar<sup>1</sup> voted without opposition on April 23, 2009 to issue the following Public Statement on behalf of the Section regarding the appointment of judges to vacancies on the D.C. Federal Bench. The views expressed herein represent only those of the Litigation Section of the D.C. Bar and not those of the D.C. Bar or of its Board of Governors.

The D.C. Bar is the second largest bar association in the country. Its members include many accomplished attorneys and jurists who would make qualified and capable candidates for the vacancies on the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit and the United States District Court for the District of Columbia. In the past, in recommending or nominating candidates to fill those prestigious judicial vacancies, particularly those on the District of Columbia Circuit Court, presidential administrations and Senators in Congress have often overlooked deserving members of the D.C. Bar who have long-standing ties to this area in favor of judges and lawyers from across the country who, while they may be qualified candidates, have no significant connection to the D.C. community or to the many issues of local and regional interest that come before the D.C. Federal courts.

Although the D.C. Federal courts address administrative matters and issues of national import, the same can be said of most, if not all, Federal courts. The presence of certain cases before the Federal courts addressing issues of national import does not justify disregarding the need for citizens of the District of Columbia to have judges that understand their community and have a significant connection to the locality, including, among other things, membership in the local bar association. District citizens facing criminal prosecution in federal court or otherwise seeking redress through the federal judicial system deserve federal judges with a connection to the District of Columbia. As members of the D.C. legal community and residents of D.C. and the surrounding metropolitan area, we urge the Obama Administration to appoint judges to these very important courts from among the many distinguished and qualified members of the D.C. Bar and our courts in the District of Columbia who have long-standing connections to the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area.

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<sup>1</sup> Members of the Steering Committee of the Litigation Section of the D.C. Bar are: Eric S. Angel, Theresa A. Coetzee, David D. Favre, Charles C. Lemley, Lorelie S. Masters, David T. Ralston, Mary L. Smith, Bruce V. Spiva, and Moxila A. Upadhyaya. Mary L. Smith recused herself from all matters relating to this Public Statement. Lorelie S. Masters recused herself from voting on the Public Statement.