

ED ARTAU

Ed Artau has been nominated to serve as a United States District Judge for the Middle District of Florida. Artau, currently a judge on Florida's Fourth District Court of Appeals, has revealed a judicial philosophy that shows significant bias against the LGBTQ+ community, gun safety measures, environmental protections, and free speech. Even more troubling, however, are the ethics concerns surrounding Artau's nomination to the federal bench. Artau has demonstrated a pattern of questionable judgment, and his record raises serious concerns on how he would approach key issues if confirmed to a lifetime position on the federal bench.

LGBTQ+ RIGHTS

Artau has supported legal efforts that jeopardize the safety of LGBTQ+ children. In *H.S. v. Department of Children and Families*, Artau ruled that a trial court judge had demonstrated bias against a father by using a transgender child's preferred pronouns in an interview to determine whether the father should regain custody of the child. Artau ruled that it was the father's right to oppose gender transition treatment even to the point of being emotionally abusive and that the judge's remarks were "antagonistic." Artau's ruling reveals his personal disdain for transgender youth and bias against the LGBTQ+ community. His stance aligns with far-right ideology that seeks to delegitimize the transgender youth community's struggles and further anti-trans rhetoric under the guise of parental rights.

GUN SAFETY

Artau has a demonstrated record of overturning gun safety measures. In *Broward County v. Florida Carry Inc.*, Artau concurred with a decision to allow the carrying of guns at airports in areas that do not "include passage through security checkpoints." Artau argued that the regulation restricted the individual's right to bear arms, illustrating a judicial philosophy that supports an expansive interpretation of the Second Amendment, one that undercuts public safety measures to combat gun violence.

PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

Artau challenged the scope of the Clean Water Act's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permitting program, an attempt by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to control and alleviate water pollution. In this case, Artau, advocating for facilities to discharge pollutants without permits or regulatory restrictions, was fighting against affected communities in the area near the Everglades, including the Miccosukee Tribe.

Artau's appointment to the federal bench could lead to serious consequences for water quality, public health, and the environment.

ETHICS

Artau has a history of decisions that call into question his ethics. In 1995, Artau was found to have acted improperly by recommending the wife of the individual who arranged his appointment to the Judicial Nominating Commission for a circuit court bench position. The gubernatorial investigation decided that there was a clear bias and that the situation was seemingly quid-pro-quo.

After the 2024 election, Artau reached out to Florida Senator Rick Scott for a nomination to the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Florida. In February 2025, he refused to recuse himself in a defamation case between Trump and Pulitzer Prize Board members despite the clear conflict of interest and eventually ruled in favor of Trump. He cited in his opinion Trump's claim that it was "fake news", a "phony witch hunt," and "a big hoax." Artau was interviewed by the White House Counsel for a potential judicial nomination promptly thereafter. This timing raises serious ethical concerns and casts doubt on his impartiality, both in the defamation case and in his ability to uphold the integrity and independence essential to a lifetime appointment on the federal bench.

With the nomination of Ed Artau, Donald Trump is once again prioritizing loyalty over legal acumen and integrity in his nominations. If the Senate confirms Ed Artau's nomination, our nation's entire legal system and democracy would be irreparably damaged.