



THE BENCHLINE

THE SUPREME COURT

The Supreme Court concluded another deeply consequential term last week, with the conservative supermajority once again showing open contempt for the rule of law. In a series of decisions, the Court advanced a far-right agenda — attacking public education, undermining the existence of LGBTQ+ families, and giving Republican-led legislatures yet another tool to restrict access to reproductive health care.

In ***Medina v. Planned Parenthood***, the Supreme Court ruled that individuals cannot sue under Medicaid, giving Republican-led states more power to restrict reproductive health care. The case stemmed from South Carolina's decision to block Planned Parenthood from serving Medicaid patients solely because it also provides abortion services. The ruling not only strips low-income patients of accessible reproductive health care but also erases their ability to defend their right to choose their own providers — further accelerating the **politicization of health care access**.

In ***Mahmoud v. Taylor***, the Supreme Court once again targeted the dignity of LGBTQ+ people. Writing for the majority, Justice Alito misrepresented the content of children's books to rule that parents with religious objections must be allowed to opt their children out of lessons featuring LGBTQ+ topics, claiming that simply acknowledging LGBTQ+ existence threatens those with opposing religious beliefs. This decision further entrenches the Court's pattern of using religious liberty as a cover for bigotry. It sets a dangerous precedent that will be weaponized to justify **ensorship and discrimination** in public education.



In *Trump v. CASA*, the majority, in an opinion authored by Justice Barrett — often misleadingly described as a "moderate" — stripped lower courts of their ability to issue nationwide injunctions. This means that individuals must file their own lawsuits to challenge Trump's excessive and unlawful executive orders in federal court. As a result, large parts of the country will suffer the effects of harmful orders — not just the birthright citizenship policy — especially those who lack access to legal representation and cannot defend their rights.

As Justices Sotomayor and Jackson warned in dissent, this decision invites executive overreach and leaves countless people with no legal recourse when their rights are violated. By weakening the judiciary's power to check unlawful actions, the Court has cleared the path for the Trump administration to act lawlessly and without accountability.

With each ruling that favors unchecked executive power, the Court abandons its duty to uphold justice and protect the rule of law. Every time the Court bows to Trump, it doesn't just ignore precedent — it tears down another pillar of our democracy to **build him a throne.**

THE SENATE

JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

Senate Judiciary Committee Hearings

Emil Bove, President Trump’s personal criminal defense attorney and nominee to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, raised **serious red flags** during his confirmation hearing. Instead of addressing the numerous credible concerns about his conduct and judgment, Bove dodged questions, repeatedly claiming he “could not recollect” key events and offering little more than, “I’m not perfect.”

Bove denied that his decision to drop charges against New York City Mayor Eric Adams was politically motivated but admitted “policy reasons” influenced his move — prompting concerns from senators about selective justice. He also failed to adequately explain his firing of DOJ attorneys involved in prosecuting January 6 insurrectionists, despite written evidence linking the dismissals to their work.



**NO CHECKS.
NO BALANCES.
JUST POWER.**

When asked if President Biden won the 2020 election, Bove would only say Biden was “certified,” refusing to affirm the legitimacy of the vote count. His evasive responses and clear allegiance to Trump’s agenda only reinforced how unfit he is for a lifetime seat on the federal bench.

While much of the attention focused on Emil Bove, the Senate Judiciary Committee also held hearings for the rest of Trump’s second slate of judicial nominees: **Kyle Dudek**, **Anne-Leigh Gaylord Moe**, and **Jordan Pratt** for the Middle District of Florida, and **Ed Artau** for the Southern District. Make no mistake — each of these nominees has a deeply troubling record.

Taken together, their records reflect the picture of the federal judiciary this administration hopes to paint — one that uses religious liberty to justify discrimination, prioritizes gun rights over community safety, seeks to roll back access to reproductive health care, and vilifies immigrant communities. These nominees are not outliers; they represent a coordinated effort to reshape the courts in the image of an extreme, anti-civil rights agenda.

HOLDING

THE BENCHLINE

This week, **Judge Julia Kobick (D. MA)** is holding the Benchline. Judge Kobick **blocked** the State Department from **enforcing an executive order** requiring Americans to list their gender assigned at birth on passports.

In her earlier ruling, Judge Kobick found the administration had failed to justify the policy with any “important governmental interest.” She called out the order as discriminatory, writing that the executive order “[v]iewed as a whole . . . is candid in its rejection of the identity of an entire group . . . who have always existed and have long been recognized in, among other fields, law and the medical profession.”

Judge Kobick’s ruling is a critical reminder of the role the federal judiciary must play in protecting those most vulnerable — especially when democratic processes fail them. At a time when transgender Americans face a wave of **legislative and legal attacks**, fueled by hateful rhetoric from this administration and legitimized by a Supreme Court increasingly willing to abandon equal protection, the lower courts remain one of the last lines of defense. Decisions like this affirm the dignity and existence of trans people and push back against the dangerous trend of using government power to erase their rights and identities.

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