



THE BENCHMARK

THE SENATE

JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

Confirmations

The Senate continues to push through Trump's ultra-conservative judicial nominees. On July 22, [Cristian Stevens](#) and [Joshua Divine](#) were confirmed — despite Divine's [shocking record](#), which includes advocating for the return of discriminatory literacy tests for voting and proudly describing himself as a religious “zealot.” Senate Republicans' willingness to confirm such extreme ideologues signals what's ahead for Trump's judicial agenda.

Unfortunately, the rubber-stamping isn't over. Several far-right nominees are awaiting final confirmation votes, including [Maria Lanahan](#) (Eastern District of Missouri); [Kyle Dudek](#), [Anne-Leigh Gaylord Moe](#), and [Jordan Pratt](#) (Middle District of Florida); and [Ed Artau](#) (Southern District of Florida).



Last week, the Senate — in a 50-49 vote — confirmed perhaps the most troubling nominee yet: [Emil Bove](#). Currently serving as the principal associate deputy attorney general, Bove has acted as [Trump's personal enforcer](#) — pushing for mass deportations with no regard for migrants' due process rights, dropping prosecutions of Trump's political allies, and removing FBI agents and DOJ prosecutors who held January 6 insurrectionist accountable for their assault on the Capitol. Several whistleblowers came forward to warn senators against confirming such a depraved political hack to a lifetime seat on the federal bench.

Bove's confirmation further dismantles the independence and integrity of the federal judiciary. It will ensure that Trump's most extreme and unconstitutional legal theories have a lifelong ally on the bench. Read AFJ's statement [here](#).

Hearings

Last week, the Senate held confirmation hearings for judicial nominees whose records reflect a coordinated effort to reshape the federal judiciary in service of an extreme conservative agenda. That agenda includes dismantling labor protections, eliminating reproductive freedom, shielding corporations from accountability in workplace discrimination cases, and gutting environmental regulations.

At the center of this strategy are nominees like [Joshua Dunlap](#) (nominated to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit) and [Eric Tung](#) (nominated to the Ninth Circuit), both with troubling records that align with these far-right goals.

The hearing also featured three district court nominees: [John Guard](#) for the Middle District of Florida, [Chad Meredith](#) for the Eastern District of Kentucky, and [William "Bill" Mercer](#) for the District of Montana — each with similarly concerning histories of prioritizing ideology over equal justice. AFJ sent letters to the Senate Judiciary Committee opposing all four of the nominees.

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

HOLDING

THE BENCHLINE

Ninth Circuit Judges Ronald Gould and Michael Daly Hawkins are holding the Benchline against the Trump administration's ongoing efforts to undermine the authority of federal district courts. At issue is Trump's executive order that **blatantly disregards** the plain text of the 14th Amendment.

In their decision, the Ninth Circuit panel **upheld** a universal injunction issued by the district court, rejecting the Supreme Court's recent trend of limiting nationwide relief. The judges concluded that "the district court did not abuse its discretion in issuing a universal injunction in order to give the states complete relief."

This decision highlights a stark and growing divide within the federal judiciary. While the Supreme Court continues to enable Trump's lawless agenda, lower courts — including both district and circuit courts — are consistently pushing back against his unprecedented abuses of executive power.

Not yet receiving AFJ Insider? Sign up to **join us here**.

Donate today to help us keep up The Benchline



If you believe you received this message in error or wish to no longer receive email from us, please **unsubscribe**.

Alliance for Justice
11 Dupont Circle NW
Suite 500
Washington, DC 20036
United States