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# THE BENCHLINE

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## THE SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

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### New Judicial Nominees

Trump unveiled his fourth slate of judicial nominees on Truth Social, continuing his relentless assault on the integrity of the federal judiciary. His ongoing nominations and recent confirmations of **“battle-tested”** judges aim to dismantle the separation of powers and transform the courts into a rubber stamp for executive overreach, much like the current Congress. This latest slate includes one circuit court nominee and five district court nominees.

Among them is Jenn Mascott, nominated to the U.S. Third Circuit Court of Appeals. She is currently a White House counsel and academic. Mascott has a long history of Federalist Society engagement where she supported overturning ***Chevron*** — a decision that allowed federal agencies to exercise their expertise on vital issues like environmental protection and public health. She also defended the Supreme Court’s ruling in ***Trump v. U.S.***, signaling her likely deference to Trump’s authoritarian executive power grabs.

The district court nominees have equally concerning records. Mississippi Justice Robert “Bobby” Chamberlin nominated to the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Mississippi is a former state senator with a disgraceful record on civil rights. Chamberlin has relentlessly championed policies that undermine fundamental freedoms.

He sponsored **strict voter ID laws** following the Supreme Court's gutting of the Voting Rights Act in **Shelby County**, sought to **constitutionally ban** marriage equality in Mississippi, and introduced a resolution **barring** LGBTQ+ couples from adopting. His lifetime appointment to the federal bench threatens to cement these regressive policies into law, with no regard for the constitutional guarantees of equal protection.

Mississippi Justice James Maxwell also nominated to the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Mississippi already has a record undermining civil rights from the bench. He authored **an opinion denying** a transgender 16-year-old the right to legally change their name, despite parental support, and upheld an **excessive prison sentence** for an incarcerated individual despite clear evidence of law enforcement misconduct — an outcome another judge described as a “failure of our criminal justice system on multiple levels.”



**Edmund LaCour**, nominated for the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Alabama, has shown — despite a relatively brief career (after failing confirmation during Trump's first term) — his dedication to undermining equal protection under the law. He has actively worked to suppress Black voters in Alabama, opposed the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment, and defended Alabama's harsh abortion ban, which sought to criminalize both abortions and attempted abortions as felonies.

Rounding out the slate are Harold Mooty, a longtime corporate attorney nominated to the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Alabama, and Alabama Supreme Court Justice Bill Lewis, both nominated to the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Alabama. AFJ will have more to come on them soon

This slate is a continuation of Trump's court-packing strategy aimed at undermining civil rights, voting rights, reproductive freedom, and environmental protections and a contemptable assault on a fair, just, and independent judiciary.

## **Loyalist Judges Protect Trump**

Last week, in a deeply **troubling decision**, two Trump-appointed judges on the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals shielded Trump administration officials from accountability for defying a federal judge's orders. Judges **Gregory Katsas** and **Neomi Rao** voted to overturn U.S. District Judge James Boasberg's attempt to pursue criminal contempt charges against officials who, in March, transferred Venezuelan men to a notorious prison in El Salvador despite his explicit instructions to stop.

This case is a stark reminder of how Trump’s handpicked judges are shaping the federal judiciary to serve his political aims. By siding with his administration’s blatant disregard for the rule of law, these judges have signaled a willingness to turn the courts into a rubber stamp for executive overreach. With lifetime appointments, Trump’s judicial picks will continue to protect his administration, shield unlawful conduct from consequences, and weaken the checks and balances designed to hold our leaders accountable.

The decision underscores a dangerous reality: Trump’s influence over the courts is not only enduring — it is actively working to erode the separation of powers and the constitutional rights of those most vulnerable to abuse.

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HOLDING

## THE BENCHLINE

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This week, D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals Judges Karen Henderson, **Robert Wilkins**, and **Brad Garcia** held the Benchline in a unanimous rebuke of the Trump administration’s lawless attempt to hide federal spending from the public. The three-judge panel **ordered** that the administration’s public database — created to track and expose how taxpayer dollars are spent — must be restored and made accessible again. Researchers have long relied on this database to ensure the executive branch is not infringing on Congress’ constitutional “power of the purse.”

In a scathing opinion, Judges Henderson and Wilkins condemned the administration’s efforts to conceal this information as a direct assault on Congress’s authority over government spending. Like so many recent rulings from federal courts standing up to the Trump administration’s disregard for the law, this decision underscores the urgent threat these actions pose to our separation of powers and the rule of law.

*Defending and Expanding the ADA 35 Years Later*

Alliance for Justice is inviting you to join us on Tuesday, August 26 at 1pm ET for Holding Court: Defending and Expanding the ADA 35 Years Later. Moderated by AFJ President Rachel Rossi, this panel will explore the state of disability justice 35 years after the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) became law. The discussion will examine how court decisions, state and federal legislation, and shifting political landscapes — including under the second Trump administration — have impacted disability rights and access.

# HOLDING COURT:

Defending and Expanding the ADA 35 Years Later



**Rachel Rossi**  
AFJ President



**Erin Prangley**  
Director of Public Policy at the  
National Association of Councils  
on Developmental Disabilities



**Michelle Uzeta**  
Interim Executive Director of the  
Disability Rights Education &  
Defense Fund

WHEN:  
**Tuesday,  
August 26  
1:00 pm ET**



Panelists include Michelle Uzeta, Interim Executive Director of the Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund, and Erin Prangley, Director of Public Policy at the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities. Additional panelists will be announced soon.

Together, they'll reflect on the ADA's legacy and what's needed from the disability justice and broader progressive movements to protect and expand accessibility and civil rights.

Register [HERE!](#)

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