

AFJ INSIDER

Dear Friend,



With your support, AFJ is busier than ever as the country heads into what will be one of the most momentous election years of our lifetimes. Thank you for being a part of the community that makes our work possible. To begin our year, I'm excited to share news and updates:

On January 9, we launched our [new website](#), the result of months of hard work by our communications team. Bringing cohesion to the AFJ brand and message, the site amplifies our critical judicial research and nonprofit advocacy resources. Please look and tell us what you think!

Second, I'm pleased to share [my most recent piece](#) in Democracy Docket. I argue for more labor movement lawyers to join the ranks of judges, such as [SEIU General Counsel Nicole G. Berner](#), whose confirmation to the Fourth Circuit has been pending for over 60 days. At AFJ, the need for equal justice for all drives our work — and that's why we lend our voices to championing judges like Nicole.

And finally, earlier today, we held our first Holding Court of 2024, featuring Joel Anderson, staff writer for Slate and host of the podcast [Slow Burn: Becoming Justice Thomas](#). We discussed Joel's tremendous reporting on Justice Thomas and the 2024 outlook for the Supreme Court given its pervasive corruption. If you didn't have time to register, please look for the recording soon.

As people who care about our democracy and our shared cause, we are so excited to link arms with you and fight for justice in 2024.

Onward together,

Rakim

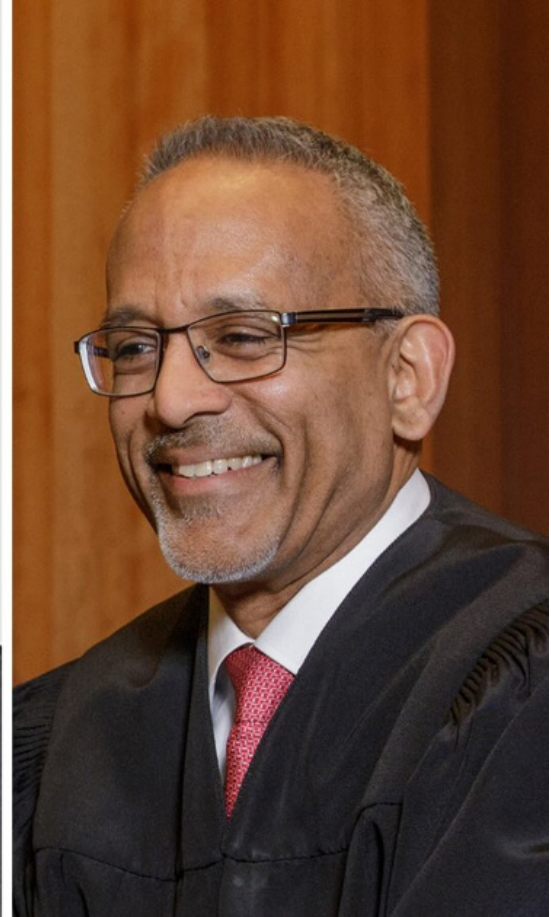
Sign our Justice Thomas Resign petition.



OUR IMPACT

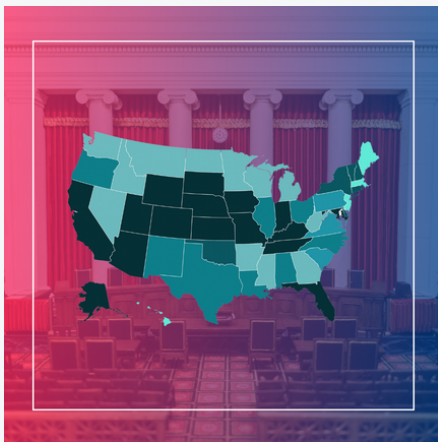
Federal Courts

As of January 10, the Biden Administration swiftly renominated 22 candidates to the federal bench and already announced six new judicial nominees, including a civil rights lawyer and two history-making picks! Alliance for Justice applauds the administration for moving quickly as they set the stage for a significant push – aiming to surpass the prior administration's record with 66 more judicial confirmations needed in 2024. Kicking off the year by backing 28 judicial nominees lays the groundwork to get us more than a third of the way to our goal.



Notable renominations include Nicole Berner, the first openly LGBTQ+ judge for the Fourth Circuit; Adeel Mangi, the first Muslim federal appellate court judge; and Judge Mustafa T. Kashubhai, potentially the first Muslim judge on Oregon's federal district court. Both Professor Berner and Judge Kasubhai bring crucial expertise in labor law to address its underrepresentation in the federal judiciary.

State Courts



AFJ's state courts team is ready for the new year. Thirty-three states will hold elections for at least one seat on their state's highest court. Over the past year, these courts defined rights for their states such as **voting rights**, **reproductive freedom**, **environmental protections**, **LGBTQ+ protections**, and more. AFJ is monitoring a number of these state courts. Additionally, there are several upcoming vacancies waiting to be filled by appointment in **Maine**, **Minnesota**, **Tennessee**, and **Wyoming**.

As they did in past years, state supreme courts are demonstrating the outsized impact they have on our elections, [our rights](#), and [our democracy](#). In a 4-3 vote, the Colorado Supreme Court [disqualified former president Trump](#) from appearing on the state's presidential ballot due to the insurrection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, making it the first state supreme court in the country to do so. The Trump campaign has since appealed the decision to the United States Supreme Court. Similar litigation is currently pending in [Florida, Illinois, Louisiana, Massachusetts, North Carolina](#), and [Oregon](#); and the supreme courts of [Minnesota](#) and [Michigan](#) have already rejected efforts to block the campaign from the ballots in those states.

Latest Resources from Bolder Advocacy



Alliance for Justice's [Bolder Advocacy](#) program, in partnership with [The Democracy Capacity Project](#), rounded out 2023 by putting the finishing touches on our [Practical Guidance – Nonprofit Lobbying series](#). This one-of-a-kind resource ensures that advocates in all 50 states and the District of Columbia can easily navigate state and local policies as they lobby lawmakers, governors, and other government actors.

Lobbying is such an essential opportunity for nonprofits to improve the lives of their communities, and with states becoming bigger battlegrounds for so many issues as election season approaches, this resource comes at a crucial time. It's free, and publicly available on both the Bolder Advocacy and Democracy Capacity Project websites, and organizations are already putting it to use!

In 2023, BA held over 300 workshops, answered nearly 800 Technical Assistance hotline questions, supported over 2,000 nonprofit organizations and emboldened the work of over 6,500 nonprofit advocates. Earlier in 2023, Bolder Advocacy launched the [Project Grant Rule Hub](#) to help foundations learn how to support advocacy (up to and including lobbying) in their grantmaking. Funders that want to support advocacy, now have the resources and understanding to do so.



TEXAS WATCH

Texas Watch is a nonpartisan citizen advocacy organization dedicated to ensuring that insurance companies and other corporations are accountable to their customers.

Our spotlighted member for December and January is [Texas Watch](#). In case you missed it, our Member Spotlight for October and November was [Gender Justice](#).



OUR SUPPORTERS



DAVID GOTTLIEB

Professor Emeritus of Law

"AFJ's work promoting the rule of law in general, and its focus on the quality of the judiciary and the nomination process in particular, is so very important."

When did you first start supporting AFJ, and why?

Nan Aron and I met in college and are long-time friends, so I have been aware of AFJ's work for more than a generation. AFJ's work promoting the rule of law in general, and its focus on the quality of the judiciary and the nomination process in particular, is so very important. AFJ has been an incredibly important voice for decades, and I've been pleased to support them, both financially and by working with them on a couple of written projects.

Is there a part of AFJ's work that you feel most strongly about? If you had to tell someone to support AFJ, what would you say?

The counter-revolution engineered by the Federalist Society and its allies has had such a pervasive effect on so many areas of our lives—reproductive rights, equal protection of minority communities, worker's rights to organize, environmental regulation, immigration—that it's hard to prioritize any individual area that moves me the most.

[Read more.](#)

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