



Federal Bar Association

Atlanta Chapter

April 5, 2010

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The Honorable Johnny Isakson
United States Senate
120 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Isakson:

I hope that by the time you receive this letter, you are feeling better and are well on your way to recovery.

I write on behalf of the membership of this Chapter to request your assistance in urging the leadership of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary to devote prompt attention to the significant number of vacancies on the Federal bench, and to take swift action upon all pending judicial nominations. The sixteen thousand member Federal Bar Association represents the interests of practicing attorneys and Federal judges in the nation's Federal courts. We seek the fair and swift administration of justice for all litigants.

More than one-third of the current Federal Court vacancies have existed for at least 18 months, leaving considerable caseloads unattended and prompting their designation as "judicial emergencies" by the Judicial Conference, the policy-making body of the federal judiciary.

The membership of our Chapter is especially concerned by the vacancies in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia. These vacancies have a direct and negative bearing on the prompt administration of justice by the Federal Courts in which our members practice, creating costly delay for litigants and the Courts themselves.

The case for accelerated action on judicial vacancies is underscored by the need for pending legislation, supported by the Judicial Conference and the FBA, to add twelve new circuit judgeships and fifty-one new district judgeships. The case for these additional judgeships rested on the assumption that all existing judgeships were already filled and that no vacancies existed, and regrettably we are quite far from that baseline today.

Prompt and responsible action to fill the vacancies is necessary. The circumstances call for the President to promptly nominate qualified judicial candidates and the Senate to faithfully discharge its "advise and consent" powers under the U.S. Constitution. Prompt action by the President and the Senate will ultimately reduce the number of vacancies to a more acceptable level. We request your assistance in devoting attention to this pressing problem that affects the availability of justice in our Federal Courts.

Thank you for your attention to these matters.

Respectfully yours,

Kevin A. Maxim
President - Atlanta Chapter of the Federal Bar
Association, Inc.

Raising the Bar to New Heights