

March 14, 2016

**VIA EMAIL**

The Honorable Chuck Grassley  
Chairman  
Committee on the Judiciary  
United States Senate  
135 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy  
Ranking Member  
Committee on the Judiciary  
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: Supreme Court Justice Nomination

Dear Chairman Grassley and Ranking Member Leahy:

The Colorado Indian Bar Association, Minnesota American Indian Bar Association, Native American Bar Association of D.C., Native Hawaiian Bar Association, Northwest Indian Bar Association, Oklahoma Indian Bar Association, and the South Dakota Indian Country Bar Association have a long history of supporting judicial nominees from Democratic and Republican Presidents. Our non-partisan organizations represent the interests of hundreds of lawyers, judges, and legal professionals, with a particular focus on matters affecting American Indian, Native Hawaiian, and Alaska Native communities, lands, and individuals.

The U.S. Constitution speaks plainly regarding the President and Senate's role in selecting a Supreme Court Justice. Article II, Section 2 of the Constitution unequivocally requires that the President "shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint" U.S. Supreme Court Justices. The Senate fulfills this important obligation by giving a nominee fair consideration on the merits and a timely up or down vote. These constitutional duties apply to the President and the Senate at all times.

A full complement of Supreme Court Justices is critical to ensuring the smooth functioning of the judiciary and our legal system. The Court must be able to resolve questions of constitutional and statutory importance and resolve disagreements between the lower courts to ensure uniformity of federal law. As an institution, the Court must be complete in order to operate effectively.

Delay in the Supreme Court's ability to fulfill its duties will have a direct impact on the legal rights of Americans, individuals, and businesses of all backgrounds, across the country, and will further erode public confidence in our legal system and in the functioning of our democracy.

Senators Grassley and Leahy  
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We strongly urge the Senate to uphold its constitutional responsibility by holding a fair hearing and timely vote on any Supreme Court nominee to ensure the effective operation of our judicial system.

Sincerely,



Philip Brodeen  
President  
Minnesota American Indian Bar Association



Paul F. Nahoia Lucas  
President  
Native Hawaiian Bar Association



Seth Pearman  
President  
South Dakota Indian Country Bar Association



Joel West Williams  
President  
Native American Bar Association of D.C.



Padraic McCoy  
President  
Colorado Indian Bar Association



Lee Shannon  
President  
Northwest Indian Bar Association



Arvo Mikkanen  
President  
Oklahoma Indian Bar Association