

From: "Kavanaugh, Brett M."
To: "Snee, Ashley"
Subject: RE:
Received(Date): Mon, 24 Feb 2003 21:14:02 -0500
[Radio22February2003#7.doc](#)

Can someone make sure the web site has the corrected corrected version? I just checked the WH web site and it STILL does not match the final version below. Thanks!

<< [Radio22February2003#7.doc](#) >>

Radio Address
February 22, 2003
Draft #7

Good morning.

This week, Members of the House and Senate will return to Washington with a full agenda to address – from strengthening our economy to reforming health care to protecting national security. On the Senate side, there is a crucial item of business that has been delayed for too long. We face a vacancy crisis in the federal courts, made worse by Senators who block votes on qualified nominees.

These delays endanger American justice. Vacant federal benches lead to crowded court dockets, overworked judges, and longer waits for Americans who want their cases heard. Regional appeals courts have a 15 percent vacancy rate, and filings in those courts reached an all time high again last year.

Since taking office, I have sent to the Senate 34 qualified, mainstream nominees for the federal courts of appeals. To date, only half of them have received a vote in the Senate. And 12 of the remaining 17 nominees have been waiting more than a year for a floor vote.

It is my responsibility to submit judicial nominations. It is the Senate's responsibility to conduct prompt hearings and up-or-down floor votes on all judicial nominees. Yet a handful of Democratic Senators, for partisan reasons, are attempting to prevent any vote at all on highly qualified nominees.

One of these nominees is Miguel Estrada, my selection for the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals. I submitted his nomination in May of 2001, and Miguel Estrada has been waiting ever since. That's almost two years – and that's a disgrace. Miguel Estrada's credentials are impeccable. He has served in the Justice Department under Presidents of both political parties. He has argued 15 cases before the U.S. Supreme Court. And he has earned the American Bar Association's highest mark: a unanimous rating of well qualified.

Miguel Estrada is an exceptional nominee for the federal bench. He also has a remarkable personal story. He came to America from Honduras as a teenager, speaking little English. Within a few years, he had graduated with high honors from Columbia College and Harvard Law School. Miguel Estrada then served as a law clerk to Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy, as a federal prosecutor in New York, and as Assistant to the Solicitor General of the United States.

If confirmed, Miguel Estrada would be the first Hispanic American ever to serve on this court, which is often considered the second highest in the land. He would break through a barrier that has stood for too long. His nomination has strong support from citizens and leaders in both parties, and endorsements from the Hispanic National Bar Association, the League of United Latin American Citizens, and more than a dozen other distinguished groups. He is a role model for young people all across this Nation – living proof that in America, anything is possible.

I nominated Miguel Estrada for the Court of Appeals because he is a man of talent and character who will be an excellent judge. Yet after 21 months, he still cannot get an up-or-down vote from the Senate. Democrats are stalling Miguel Estrada's nomination while they search in vain for a reason to reject him.

Some Senators, who once insisted that every appeals court nominee deserves a vote, have abandoned that principle for partisan politics. Their tactics are unfair to the good man I have nominated, and unfaithful to the Senate's own obligations. I call on the Senate Democratic leadership to stop playing politics and permit a vote on Miguel Estrada's nomination. Let each Senator vote as he or she thinks best – but give the man a vote.

Thank you for listening.

Drafted by Colleen Carroll, Office of Speechwriting

Office: 202/456-0399

Cell: [P6/b6]