



AFSCME Pres. Lee Saunders on Gorsuch Nomination

WASHINGTON — AFSCME Pres. Lee Saunders issued the following statement regarding President Trump’s nomination of Judge Neil Gorsuch to the United States Supreme Court: “Throughout his campaign, President Trump said that he would stand up for working people and their families. His appointment of a Supreme Court justice is one of the best chances he has to demonstrate the sincerity of that promise.

“We need a jurist who is open-minded and not ideological, whose respect for the Constitution leads her or him to safeguard the rights of all our people, not just the privileged and powerful.

“America is divided in a way that we haven’t seen in perhaps half a century. On the heels of a close and contentious election, we are experiencing a nearly unprecedented level of rancor. Several harsh and controversial policies of the new administration — many of which will fall under the purview of the Supreme Court in the coming years — have been met with mass demonstrations in recent weeks.

“A ninth justice will have the power to determine the direction of the law for generations, dramatically impacting millions of American lives. She or he should reflect a broad consensus, consensus that may not be achievable in the current political climate. There’s too much at stake for a controversial, divisive nominee to tilt the balance of the Court one way or the other.

“In fact, when this seat first became vacant a year ago, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell argued that since ‘the next justice could fundamentally alter the direction of the Supreme Court,’ the effect of having an eight-member court is negligible, compared to the price we’d all pay from a bitter and divisive confirmation battle.

“If Judge Gorsuch cannot provide clear answers on fundamental issues, if he cannot demonstrate that he would be an independent voice who will give a fair hearing to all, the nation would be best-served leaving this seat on the Court unfilled.”

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AFSCME’s 1.6 million members provide the vital services that make America happen. With members in hundreds of different occupations — from nurses to corrections officers, child care providers to sanitation workers — AFSCME advocates for fairness in the workplace, excellence in public services, and prosperity and opportunity for all working families.