

Charismatic Catholic on Short List as Supreme Court Nominee

Amy Coney Barrett, a charismatic Catholic who has become somewhat of a hero to religious conservatives over the past year, has apparently been placed on the short list to replace Justice Anthony Kennedy on the U.S. Supreme Court, multiple published reports say.

Kennedy, a high court appointee of the Regan administration, announced in June he would retire.

The New York Times reported that Barrett, 46, a 7th Circuit Court of Appeals judge, is a member in a “tightly knit” Christian group called People of Praise. The group is a Christian community of families and single people whose website says seeks “to participate in the mission of the church in our time and to live our lives communally until the day when Jesus will be all in all.” The website says the charismatic, ecumenical group is a covenant community in 22 locations in the U.S., Canada and the Caribbean.

Barrett allegedly has been included on President Trump’s short list of potential Supreme Court nominees since she was confirmed as a 7th Circuit Court of Appeals justice last fall.

During her confirmation hearings in fall 2017, Barrett encountered a widely covered confrontation with liberal Democratic Senators Dianne Feinstein and Al Franken. Feinstein said during the hearings, “the dogma lives loudly within you,” referring to her Christian faith.

During the hearings, Barrett told senators she was a “faithful Catholic,” and that her religious beliefs would not affect her decisions as an appellate judge.

Trump’s choice of Barrett as his nominee to replace Kennedy is

a popular one with religious conservatives. Many speculate she could prove to be the deciding vote on reversing the historic 1973 Roe v. Wade decision that gave U.S. citizens a constitutional right to have abortions.

In a release, American Family Association President Tim Wildmon says Barrett is not a "stealth nominee."

"Her judicial philosophy is well known from her many academic writings, so she would not provoke conservative opposition," Wildmon said. "If the present Senate is unwilling to confirm the best nominee, then the seat can remain vacant during the (fall 2018) election, and the people will elect a Senate who will confirm the best nominee."

Wildmon also praised Barrett for her commitment to the Constitution.

"Judge Barrett has a Constitutionalist judicial philosophy," Wildmon said. "She has consistently held to the constitutionally essential view that judges should never legislate their personal views from the bench."

The last woman nominated to the court by a Republican president was Harriet Miers, in 2005. She withdrew her name from the process amid a backlash from conservatives. Sandra Day O'Connor, nominated by Reagan in 1981, is the first and only woman nominated by a Republican president to be confirmed, *The New York Times* reported. O'Connor, however, has been a disappointment for many religious conservatives.

This appointment will be the second for the U.S. Supreme Court for Trump less than 18 months into his presidency, and many say it would cement conservative control of the court for years to come.

Reuters reported that U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit Judge Brett Kavanaugh is also on Trump's short list of nominees. Reuters reported that the decision

will be made on Monday.

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