

Justice Sotomayor Isn't Happy With Judge Garland's Nomination

With President Obama and Senate Democrats attempting to turn up the heat on Senate Republicans over the nomination of Chief Judge Merrick Garland to the U.S. Supreme Court, there are some cracks forming—on the liberal side of the argument.

Associate Justice Sonia Sotomayor, who also was nominated by Obama, expressed what most would call a complaint last weekend. And that complaint was directed at Garland's nomination.

"I, for one, do think there is a disadvantage from having five Catholics, three Jews, and everyone from an Ivy League school," she said during a talk at Brooklyn Law School.

Sotomayor then complained about the lack of criminal law experience on the high court. Her argument for was that varied backgrounds would help justices to consider issues differently, based on their personal experiences. The late Associate Justice Antonin Scalia—whose vacancy is now the hot topic of Washington, D.C.—also made a call for "diversity" shortly before his death, although he was only seeking to break the Ivy League's grip on the court.

"A different perspective can permit you to more fully understand the arguments that are before you and help you articulate your position in a way that everyone will understand," Sotomayor said.

Although she did not specifically mention Garland, he seemed to be the target of her comments. Many liberals have complained about his selection, which they view as "insufficiently diverse" to their liking, which prompted an

awkward defense from Obama last week.

“Yeah, he’s a white guy, but he’s a really outstanding jurist,” he said during a speech at the University of Chicago prior to Sotomayor’s speech. “I’m sorry. I mean, you know, I think that’s important.

“But at no point did I say: ‘Oh, you know what? I need a black lesbian from Skokie in that slot. Can you find me one?’ I mean, that’s just not how I’ve approached it.”

As for the mounting pressure on Senate Republicans, particularly on Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa), there was a quiet meeting Tuesday morning in the Senate Dining Room that was closed off from the press. There, the senator met with Garland for a previously agreed-upon breakfast meeting.

Grassley’s committee press secretary, Taylor Foy, issued the following statement following the get together:

“Both Senator Grassley and Judge Garland arrived early so the meeting began at 7:45 a.m. in the Senate Dining Room. The meeting was cordial and pleasant. As he indicated last week, Grassley explained why the Senate won’t be moving forward during this hyper-partisan election year. Grassley thanked Judge Garland for his service. The meeting ended at 8:55 a.m.”