

What Blue Slips? President Trump Ignores Senate Democrats

With Democrats in the Senate abusing their “blue slip” privileges to prevent President Donald Trump’s federal judicial nominees from getting hearings, the president sent a clear message Thursday by appointing a new round of prospective judges.

The list the president submitted would have made the late Associate Justice Antonin Scalia smile from ear-to-ear. Not only is the president seeding the federal judiciary—the future pool of prospective Supreme Court nominees—with conservatives, but he’s nominating judges who come from law schools outside the Ivy League.

The prospective judges also come from states not represented by Democrats in the Senate, effectively taking the “blue slip” issue—whereby a home-state senator can block a judicial appointment by refusing to support it—off the table. Here’s the complete list:

- **Annemarie Carney Axon of Alabama to serve as a district judge on the United States District Court for the Northern District of Alabama.** Annemarie Axon is a member of the Birmingham law firm of Wallace, Jordan, Ratliff & Brandt, LLC, where she litigates trust, estate and business cases in both trial and appellate courts. Before joining the firm, Mrs. Axon served as assistant vice president of AmSouth Bank and as an associate at the law firm of Edwards and Angell, LLP in Providence, Rhode Island. Immediately upon graduation from law school, Mrs. Axon served as a law clerk to Judge Inge P. Johnson of the United States District Court for the

Northern District of Alabama. Mrs. Axon received her B.A. from the University of Alabama and J.D. from the University of Alabama School of Law.

- **Michael Lawrence Brown of Georgia to serve as a district judge on the United States District Court for the Northern District of Georgia.** Mike Brown is an equity partner and co-chair of the White Collar and Government Investigations practice group in the Atlanta office of Alston & Bird LLP. Prior to joining Alston & Bird, Mr. Brown served for six years as an assistant United States attorney in the Northern District of Georgia and in the Southern District of Florida, where he tried more than 25 cases and argued criminal appeals. Before entering government service, Mr. Brown spent four years as a litigation associate in the Atlanta office of King & Spalding LLP. Mr. Brown clerked for Judge J.L. Edmondson of the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit in Atlanta. He received his B.A. from Georgetown University, and his J.D., magna cum laude, from the University of Georgia School of Law, where he was inducted into the Order of the Coif and served on the editorial board and the managerial board of the *Georgia Law Review*.
- **Liles C. Burke of Alabama to serve as a district judge on the United States District Court for the Northern District of Alabama.** Judge Liles Burke serves as an associate judge on the Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals. Prior to his elevation to the Court of Appeals, Judge Burke served as a Marshall County district judge, as acting circuit judge and as a City of Arab municipal judge. Prior to ascending to the bench, Judge Burke practiced at the law firm of Burke & Beuoy, P.C., where he represented businesses and individuals in general practice, including domestic, criminal, civil litigation, juvenile and probate matters. He has also served as a municipal prosecutor and municipal attorney, and currently serves in the Alabama Army National Guard

Judge Advocate General's (JAG) Corps. Judge Burke received his B.A. from the University of Alabama and J.D. from the University of Alabama School of Law.

- **William L. ("Chip") Campbell, Jr., of Tennessee, to serve as a district judge on the United States District Court for the Middle District of Tennessee.** Chip Campbell is currently a member in the Nashville office of Frost Brown Todd, LLC, where he handles a wide range of civil litigation matters. Mr. Campbell previously worked as an associate and later a partner in the Nashville firm of Riley Warnock & Jacobson, PLC, and as an associate in the Birmingham, Alabama office of Maynard, Cooper & Gale, P.C. Mr. Campbell received his B.S. from the United States Naval Academy and served seven years in the United States Marine Corps, principally as a Naval Flight Officer. He received his J.D. from the University of Alabama School of Law, where he served as editor-in-chief of the *Alabama Law Review*.
- **Thomas Alvin Farr of North Carolina, to serve as a district judge on the United States District Court for the Eastern District of North Carolina.** Tom Farr is currently a shareholder in the Raleigh office of Ogletree, Deakins, Nash, Smoak & Stewart, P.C., where his practice focuses on employment matters and constitutional law. Prior to entering private practice, Mr. Farr was an attorney with the National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation and counsel to the U.S. Senate and Labor Human Resources Committee. Mr. Farr also served as a law clerk to Judge Frank W. Bullock, Jr., of the United States District Court for the Middle District of North Carolina. He received his ., *summa cum laude*, from Hillsdale College, where he was co-salutatorian. He received his J.D. from Emory University and an . in labor law from Georgetown University.
- **Charles Barnes Goodwin of Oklahoma to serve as a district judge on the United States District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma.** Judge Charles Goodwin

currently serves as a United States magistrate judge in the Western District of Oklahoma. In that capacity, he has presided over approximately 500 initial proceedings in felony cases, issued approximately 350 opinions in civil cases and disposed of over 1000 misdemeanor cases. Earlier in his career, Magistrate Judge Goodwin was a partner and civil litigator at Crowe & Dunlevy, P.C., and he served as a law clerk to Judge Lee R. West of the United States District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma and to then-Magistrate Judge Claire V. Eagan in the Northern District of Oklahoma. He received his B.A. from the University of Oklahoma and his J.D. from the University of Oklahoma College of Law, where he served on the *Oklahoma Law Review*.

- **Mark S. Norris, Sr., of Tennessee, to serve as a district judge on the United States District Court for the Western District of Tennessee.** Mark Norris currently serves as special counsel in the Memphis office of Adams and Reese LLP and as the Senate majority leader of the Tennessee General Assembly. His law practice includes a wide variety of civil litigation and business matters. Prior to joining Adams and Reese, Mr. Norris was a senior member of Armstrong Allen, PLLC. Mr. Norris was first elected to represent District 32 in the Tennessee Senate in 2000 and has served as majority leader since 2007. He previously served on the Shelby County Board of Commissioners. He received his B.A. from Colorado College and his J.D. from the University of Denver Sturm College of Law.
- **Thomas Lee Robinson Parker, to serve as a district judge on the United States District Court for the Western District of Tennessee.** Tommy Parker is currently a shareholder in the Memphis office of Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz, P.C., where he represents clients in civil litigation and criminal matters. Prior to joining Baker Donelson, Mr. Parker served for nine years as an assistant United States attorney in the

Western District of Tennessee. Prior to his federal service, Mr. Parker was an associate with Waring Cox Lawyers in Memphis. Mr. Parker previously served as the president of the Memphis Bar Association and is a fellow in the American College of Trial Lawyers. He received his B.S. from the University of South Carolina and his J.D. from the Vanderbilt University School of Law.

- **William (“Billy”) McCrary Ray, II, of Georgia to serve as a district judge on the United States District Court for the Northern District of Georgia.** Judge Billy Ray currently serves as the presiding judge on the Georgia Court of Appeals. Prior to his appointment to the Court of Appeals, Judge Ray served for ten years as a Superior Court judge on the Gwinnett Judicial Circuit. Before ascending to the bench, Judge Ray served for six years in the Georgia State Senate and was a partner in the Gwinnett County law firm of Andersen, Davidson & Tate, P.C., Judge Ray received his from the University of Georgia Terry College of Business, *magna cum laude*, his ., from the University of Georgia Terry College of Business and his J.D., *cum laude*, from the University of Georgia School of Law.
- **Eli J. Richardson of Tennessee, to serve as a district judge on the United States District Court for the Middle District of Tennessee.** Eli Richardson is currently a member in the Nashville office of Bass, Berry & Sims, PLC, where he represents clients in a range of criminal and civil matters and conducts internal corporate investigations. Mr. Richardson also serves as an adjunct professor at the Vanderbilt University Law School, and previously taught trial advocacy at Belmont University College of Law. Prior to joining Bass, Berry & Sims, Mr. Richardson served for 12 years in the Department of Justice, including four years as a special agent in the Federal Bureau of Investigation; seven years as an assistant United States attorney in the District of New Jersey and the Middle District of Tennessee; and one

year on detail as resident legal adviser to Serbia. Prior to his federal service, Mr. Richardson practiced law both at law firms and in a solo practice. He received his ., *cum laude*, from Duke University, and his J.D. from Vanderbilt University Law School, where he served as a member of the *Vanderbilt Law Review*.

- **Tilman Eugene ("Tripp") Self, III, of Georgia to serve as a district judge on the United States District Court for the Middle District of Georgia.** Judge Tripp Self currently serves on the Georgia Court of Appeals. Before his appointment to the Court of Appeals, Judge Self served for ten years as a superior court judge on the Macon Judicial Circuit. Before ascending to the bench, Judge Self was an attorney with the Macon, Georgia, law firm of Sell & Melton, LLP. Before attending law school, Judge Self served as a field artillery officer in the United States Army. Judge Self received his B.S. from The Citadel, The Military College of South Carolina, and his J.D. from the University of Georgia School of Law.
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