

# JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS



**Courts matter. Federal and lower court decisions impact every aspect of our lives. The composition of the courts defines how justice is delivered in our nation.**

**NCJW defends the Missouri Court Plan for appointing judges, rather than choosing by election, and believes that judges confirmed to lifetime seats on the bench must have a commitment to constitutional rights, including reproductive rights.**

***There are over 100 judicial vacancies in the US Supreme Court and lower courts. Over 50 nominees are pending.***

With 104 vacancies on the US Supreme Court, US Court of Federal Claims, US Court of International Trade, US District Court, US Court of Appeals, and others; this significantly impacts the average citizen's ability to have her day in court. Vacancies on the courts lead to backups on the court docket and many other potential problems.

***Support the Missouri Plan for judicial appointments.***

The nonpartisan court plan, often referred to as the Missouri Plan, brings independence, experience, and integrity to the courts. The role of politics in judicial selection and judicial decision-making upsets voters and weakens the court system. When Judges are plagued by outside influences of politics and an election process, dockets are often congested due to the time judges spend campaigning.

The Missouri Plan, which serves as a national model for the selection of judges, has been adopted in more than 30 other states. It provides for the selection of judges based on merit rather than political affiliation. Judicial applications are reviewed by a commission, and the commission interviews the applicants. It submits the names of three qualified candidates, called the 'panel', to the governor. After interviewing the candidates and reviewing their background, the governor selects one to fill the vacancy.

The nonpartisan court plan gives voters a chance to have a say in the retention of judges after the judge has served in office at least one year. Each judge must stand for a retention election at the general election. Placed on the ballot without political party designation, voters determine whether to retain the judge based on his or her judicial record. A majority vote retains them in office. If a judge retires or resigns, a vacancy is created and is filled according to the above process.

## What to Do Next:

Whether you believe Judge Garland is qualified or not, urge your Senator, "#DoYourJob and hold a hearing!"

Without a full Supreme Court, urgent and pressing issues could be held at a stalemate, denying justice to people who deserve it.

Join NCJW for our Courts Matter event on February 8, 2017 at 6pm at our offices.

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National Council of Jewish Women  
St. Louis Section