



ACS's Fredrickson, Edelman Blast Senate Obstruction of Judicial Nominee

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Washington, D.C. -- The Senate rejected cloture this afternoon, blocking a vote on the confirmation of Caitlin Halligan to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit. The 54-45 cloture vote fell six short of the 60 needed to force an up-or-down confirmation vote on Halligan's nomination. Following the vote, the **American Constitution Society for Law & Policy** (ACS) released the following statements from ACS President **Caroline Fredrickson** and newly elected ACS Board Chair **Peter Edelman**, a law professor at Georgetown University and director of the school's Center on Poverty, Inequality and Public Policy.

ACS President Caroline Fredrickson:

"With today's vote to block the nomination of Caitlin Halligan, some senators have signaled that they will abrogate their duty to advise and consent on judicial nominees for the sake of pure petty partisanship. Halligan was nominated more than a year ago with broad bipartisan support. For more than a year, senators have let this seat and countless others sit empty, choosing to hold our justice system hostage. Majority Leader Harry Reid challenged these senators to, at long last, make their opposition known by casting an up-or-down vote and moving the confirmation process forward. Those senators who voted against cloture are ushering in an unfortunate era of unprecedented obstructionism, threatening our courts' very capacity to dispense justice. Nothing short of an immediate vote on every pending nominee is necessary to prevent a crisis on our courts."

ACS Board Chair Peter Edelman:

"This is a sad day for the course of justice in our country. I have known Caitlin Halligan for 20 years. She is a brilliant, decent, totally fair-minded moderate person. Yet despite her sterling credentials and the highest possible rating from the American Bar Association, some senators opposed even holding an up-or-down vote on her nomination. Many of those same senators, just a few years ago, decried the use of the filibuster for judicial nominations absent 'extraordinary circumstances.' Their action today on this nominee clearly belies that argument and makes a mockery of the entire confirmation process."

To speak with Fredrickson or Edelman, please contact Nicole Flatow at (202) 393-6187 or nflatow@acslaw.org. For more information about judicial nominations and to follow developments, visit ACS's comprehensive web resource, JudicialNominations.org.

The American Constitution Society for Law and Policy (ACS), founded in 2001 and one of the nation's leading progressive legal organizations, is a rapidly growing network of lawyers, law students, scholars, judges, policymakers and other concerned individuals. For more information about the organization or to locate one of the more than 200 lawyer and law student chapters in 48 states, please visit www.acslaw.org.