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# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

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April 11, 2005

The Honorable George W. Bush  
President  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

There are currently 28 vacancies on the federal courts of appeals and district courts for which you have not forwarded nominees to the Senate. We write to offer to help you obtain consultation and advice from the Senate on these vacancies so that you may select nominees who will generate strong, bipartisan support.

This evening the Senate is scheduled to consider your nomination of Paul Crotty to become a federal judge in New York. We expect Mr. Crotty to be confirmed with the support of his home-state Senators and an overwhelming vote. We have each been urging you for some time to work with the Senate to fill federal judicial vacancies with qualified, consensus nominees. It is now imperative that we do so.

When you met with Russian President Putin earlier this year, you noted that checks and balances and an independent judiciary are among the fundamental requirements of democracy. We agree. We therefore urge you to make clear to Senate Republican leaders that you do not favor the so-called "nuclear option" which would remove an important check on executive power. Instead, let us work together to identify consensus judicial candidates. Let us preserve our independent judiciary, which is the envy of the world.

Respectfully,

  
HARRY REID  
Democratic Leader

  
PATRICK LEAHY  
Ranking Member

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