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Washington Conservative Christian Leaders Respond to Bush's Nominee to the Supreme Court

BOTHELL, WA – “It's refreshing, although sometimes rare, to have an elected official keep his word,” reflects Gary Randall, president of the Faith and Freedom Network, regarding President Bush's nomination of John G. Roberts, Jr., to replace Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, who retired earlier this month after 24 years on the high court.

“Conservatives and people of faith worked long and hard to elect President Bush for a second term. Part of the passion to see him re-elected was the importance of judicial nominees - especially to the Supreme Court.” He said, “Tonight, I am thankful that the President stood up and nominated John G. Roberts, Jr., a brilliant, highly qualified individual with a proven record of respect for the Constitution without the inclination to politicize it.”

Conversely, Randall notes with interest, that those who have accused the President of using a “conservative litmus test” spoke out within the hour of Robert's nomination, decrying Bush's choice because he does not meet their litmus test.

Faith and Freedom Network Chairman and CEO, Joseph Fuiten, points out that many groups, such as People for the American Way, Planned Parenthood, and the American Civil Liberties Union are politicizing the judiciary by requiring this litmus test of political viewpoints, prior to Senate approval, on issues such as abortion, same-sex marriage and the establishment of religion.

Fuiten explains, “The only ‘litmus test’ conservatives adhere to is a long standing tradition that judges are objective interpreters of the laws written by others rather than writers of law themselves. In recent years, conservatives have objected to the role of judges as quasi-legislators rather than as interpreters.”

Furthermore, Fuiten questions the value of thinking of judges as “moderate” or otherwise. He asks, “Is a moderate interpretation of the constitution halfway between what it really means and what the judge would like it to mean?” He argues that such an approach only has meaning if you take a political approach to interpreting law and if you literally want a politicized judiciary where a judge is just one more political office.

Randall expressed confidence that, “in the face of media criticism and left-wing political threats, the President has chosen a man who clearly believes in the Constitution and it's strict interpretation, rather than the ‘living document’ relativistic notion of the secularists.”

Fuiten concurs. He said, “Justice Roberts is a highly qualified and experienced jurist who I expect to faithfully interpret the Constitution. His record indicates that he respects the Constitution and will not politicize the judiciary by imposing his political views upon the Constitution.”

Both leaders expressed hope that the Senate will focus on Roberts’ qualifications and his judicial philosophy and not turn the hearings into a nasty process of personal destruction. They agree that the Senate should hold the hearings, take a vote, and do so in a timely manner.

The Faith and Freedom Network was formerly known as Washington Evangelicals for Responsible Government (WERG). It has been responsible for registering voters, maintaining a lobbyist in Olympia and holding public rallies.