

'Brilliant,' 'Dynamic,' 'Fair': Jackson's SCOTUS Nomination Is Heralded by Legal Community

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[Marcia Coyle](#) 

What You Need to Know

- President Biden will nominate Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson to the U.S. Supreme Court.
- Jackson was praised widely Friday for her brilliance, fairness and diverse background.

The U.S. Supreme Court nomination of Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson on Friday drew wide acclaim for the diversity Jackson will bring to the bench as well as her “brilliant,” “dynamic,” “fair” and “dedicated” approach to judging.

Senate Democratic leaders promised a swift, yet thorough confirmation hearing with a possible confirmation vote before the Senate's Easter recess. However, some groups on the right signaled their potential opposition by challenging any portrayals of Jackson as "in the mainstream."

Here are some reactions to the nomination:

Larren Nashelsky, chair, Morrison & Foerster: "We extend our warmest congratulations to Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson on her nomination to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court. At MoFo, she was a key contributor to our Appellate and Supreme Court practice, advising and assisting clients on complex legal matters. She also lent her keen litigation skills to the firm's pro bono program where she helped people in need in important cases."

Seth Waxman, chair of the appellate and Supreme Court litigation practice at Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr: "Ketanji is supremely qualified for this job. What I find most exciting about this nomination is we're going to have somebody on the Supreme Court, who in addition to the experience of being an appellate judge, has experience in private practice, as a public defender, on the sentencing commission, and as a district judge applying the federal rules of civil and criminal procedure. As well as being brilliant, she brings a unique contribution in so many ways. She is not just bringing intellect and collegiality to the job, she has actively participated in the adjudication process writ large. As an advocate, it's a thrill to argue in the Supreme Court, no matter what. But it will be a particular delight to argue cases involving civil and criminal

procedure, and the way that cases are investigated, in a Supreme Court that includes someone with Ketanji's background and experience."

Neal Katyal, Hogan Lovells partner and former acting U.S. solicitor general: "Ketanji Brown Jackson is an outstanding jurist and person. Brilliant, fair, and a true and real person. She will be an immense credit to the Court and our country." ([Twitter](#))

Brian Matsui, partner, Morrison & Foerster's Supreme Court and appellate practice: "It's hard to think of a more qualified or more dedicated lawyer or jurist than Judge Jackson. She will bring her keen intellect and thoughtful perspective to the Supreme Court. It was a privilege to work with her at MoFo—she always looked at the big picture, asked the right questions, and had a knack for picking up on nuances in a case that others might miss. She will be an outstanding Justice."

Darren J. Robbins, founding partner Robbins Geller Rudman & Dowd: "It's a groundbreaking nomination. The Biden administration has really focused on the fact that entire fields of practice experience have been nearly absent from the federal bench, especially experience representing indigent clients and plaintiffs. Subject to confirmation, we're going to have a Supreme Court justice who has deep experience representing indigent clients, not just large corporations or the government. This is a sea change, and I think many of us hope and expect that her elevation to the Court will bring new, critical insights and depth to its work."

David Sanford, chairman Sanford Heisler Sharp: "It makes me truly delighted to think of Justice Brown Jackson: she is most qualified and

would be the first Justice since Thurgood Marshall with experience as a criminal defense attorney. It also infuriates me, as we know that Judge Brown Jackson will be the first African American woman on the Court since the formation of the Court in 1790. 115 persons have served on the Supreme Court in our history; it is long overdue to have an African American woman serve in that role. My sincere hope is that President Biden nominates either Judge Childs or Judge Kruger should another vacancy occur on the high court. Perhaps one day we will have a second African American woman as United States Supreme Court Justice. That would be a day of true celebration.”

Senate Judiciary Committee member Chris Coons, D-Delaware: “She is an historic pick with an outstanding record of service—including her service on the D.C. Court of Appeals, the D.C. District Court, and her work as an assistant federal public defender—that makes her as qualified as any Supreme Court nominee in recent memory. President Biden has done his job, and now it is time for the Senate to do ours. I have been reading into Judge Jackson’s record and past decisions, and I look forward to meeting with her soon and working with my colleagues on the Senate Judiciary Committee to ensure a smooth, swift confirmation process.”

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-New York: “Senate Democrats spent the past year working with President Biden to shape a federal judicial system that fully represents America, and we will continue that trend by confirming Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson to the Supreme Court.” ([Twitter](#))

Sen. Lindsey Graham, R- South Carolina: “If media reports are accurate, and Judge Jackson has been chosen as the Supreme Court nominee to replace Justice Breyer, it means the radical Left has won President Biden over yet again. The attacks by the Left on Judge Childs from South Carolina apparently worked.” (Twitter) “I expect a respectful but interesting hearing in the Senate Judiciary Committee. The Harvard-Yale train to the Supreme Court continues to run unabated.” ([Twitter](#))

Carrie Severino, president, Judicial Crisis Network: “With the intended nomination of Ketanji Brown Jackson, Joe Biden has made it clear that his top priority is paying back the left-wing dark money network that spent over one billion dollars to help elect him and Senate Democrats. Expect to hear from Biden and his supporters that Judge Jackson is ‘in the mainstream.’ That’s liberal-speak for a judge who who will deviate from the text of the constitution and statutes without hesitation to ensure the Left’s preferred policy outcomes.”

Clark Neily, senior vice president, Cato Institute: “There are plenty of reasons to celebrate Judge Jackson’s nomination, and one of the most important is the professional diversity she would bring to the Supreme Court. Unlike eight of the nine sitting Justices, Judge Jackson has never served as a prosecutor or other courtroom advocate for government, and she would be the first Justice since Thurgood Marshall with criminal defense experience. As Cato’s [research has shown](#), the federal judiciary is wildly imbalanced in favor of former government lawyers versus former public defenders and public interest lawyers.”

Leah Litman, University of Michigan Law School: “This nomination is a bipartisan nomination of a superbly qualified person who will bring a new, needed perspective to the Court.”

Mike Davis, president, Article III Project: “Judge Jackson has served for only eight months on the appeals court. She has written only two opinions as an appellate judge. Unlike how Senate Democrats treated President Trump’s three Supreme Court nominees, Senate Republicans will treat Judge Jackson with respect and dignity. Senators have a constitutional duty to rigorously vet Judge Jackson’s qualifications, record, character, and fitness for elevation to the Supreme Court. With her light record as an appellate judge, her confirmation hearing will serve as a critical test.”

Stephen Vladeck, University of Texas School of Law: “Judge Jackson has 8.9 years of prior judicial experience. That’s more than four current Justices (Thomas, Roberts, Kagan, & Barrett) had *combined.* It’s also more than 4 of the last 10 Justices had at their confirmations; 9 of the last 17; and 43 of the 58 appointed since 1900.” ([Twitter](#))

Russ Feingold, president, American Constitution Society: “Our democracy is confronting a moment of truth, torn between succumbing to autocracy and forging a genuinely multiracial democracy. The Supreme Court is at the center of this inflection point, with the ability to preserve the guardrails of democracy or to continue its systemic erosion of our rights and liberties. This moment underscores the importance of this nomination, of a nominee with a proven track record of upholding constitutional rights and safeguarding the rule of law. We look forward

to heralding Judge Jackson's impact and contribution to the Court and to our country for years to come."

Elizabeth Wydra, president, Constitutional Accountability

Center: "We have long known Judge Jackson to be a superb, fair-minded jurist. She has a powerful commitment to equal justice, repeatedly demonstrating her commitment to the text, history, and values of the whole Constitution. She understands how the law affects people, drawing upon her professional as well as her lived experiences."

Sen. Alex Padilla, D-California, member of the Senate Judiciary

Committee: "Throughout her career as a public defender, a member of the U.S. Sentencing Commission, and a federal judge, Judge Jackson has consistently demonstrated a commitment to equal justice under law, respect for the Constitution, and a clear understanding of the impact that the law can have on ordinary Americans. This is precisely why I joined 52 of my colleagues, both Republican and Democrat, in supporting Judge Jackson's confirmation to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit eight months ago."

April Frazier Camara, president, National Legal Aid & Defender

Association: "One's wealth and race, unfortunately, continue to decide outcomes in too many court cases. Judge Jackson's professional experience representing people who are caught in the intersection between poverty and the criminal legal system, and her lived experience as a Black woman, make her uniquely capable of championing fairness and justice in our nation's highest court."

Avalon Zoppo, Cheryl Miller, Bruce Love and Christine Schiffner contributed to this report.

