

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



(R - Kansas)

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DOLE PLEASSED WITH O'CONNOR RECOMMENDATION

WASHINGTON -- The Senate Judiciary Committee unanimously recommended Sandra O'Connor, by a vote of 17-0, be confirmed the first woman Justice on the Supreme Court. Senator Bob Dole (R.-Kan.) submitted the following statement on her nomination:

"We of the Judiciary Committee are participating in a uniquely historic occasion this morning. It is time for us to break with a precedent of 190 years duration and confirm the first woman Justice of the Supreme Court, Sandra Day O'Connor.

"At this point in our nation's history, women are entering the work force in greater numbers than ever before. The professions and the executive ranks of corporations which once were dominated by men now have significant numbers of talented women. This is a talent pool which should not be ignored in our search for the most qualified person to sit on the Supreme Court.

"President Reagan is to be commended for his choice of a nominee to succeed to the seat which was vacated by Justice Potter Stewart. He had promised during his campaign that one of his first Supreme Court nominees would be the most qualified woman he could find. I am satisfied that, regardless of gender, President Reagan could not have made a better selection than Sandra Day O'Connor.

"Judge O'Connor conducted herself admirably throughout the hearings last week. While it is true that she lacks experience on the federal bench, I do not feel that this will be a serious impediment to her ability to serve on the high court. Indeed, not every prior Supreme Court Justice had federal court experience before serving on the Supreme Court. Judge O'Connor's answers to the committee's questions last week revealed a good deal of knowledge of constitutional and federal case law. In addition, Judge O'Connor has a wealth of prior experience which should more than adequately compensate for her lack of federal court experience. She has excellent records as a law student, a practicing attorney and as a state legislator.

"In several instances, Judge O'Connor's responses to questions regarding her views on various social issues may not have been as specific as some of the committee members may have liked. We have inquired extensively into Judge O'Connor's views on abortion, an issue which has caused her nomination to be surrounded by considerable controversy. I am satisfied from her responses to my questions on this subject that Sandra O'Connor is pro-life, not pro-abortion as her detractors have stated. I believe that Judge O'Connor understands that decision on such social policy issues are most properly the responsibility of the Congress and that the task of the Supreme Court Justice is merely to interpret the Constitution and the laws which Congress makes.

"I am pleased to vote in favor of the nomination of Sandra O'Connor to be an Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court."