

Senate Confirms Nominations Of Four Illinois District Judges

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WASHINGTON—U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL), a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, today released the following statement after the Senate confirmed the nominations of Franklin Valderrama and Iain Johnston to serve as Judges on the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois. Valderrama and Johnston were part of a package of four Illinois nominees selected pursuant to Illinois' longstanding bipartisan judicial selection process, along with David Dugan and Stephen McGlynn who were confirmed yesterday to serve as Judges on the United States District Court for the Southern District of Illinois:

“Under the longstanding bipartisan judicial selection system we have in Illinois, the President's party selects the candidates for three out of four district court vacancies and the other party selects the candidate for the fourth. Then the parties negotiate until they reach an agreement on packages of nominees that can move forward to confirmation. Under this system, neither side gets everything their way. For several decades, this bipartisan process has kept both parties at the table and has served Illinois well.

“Through it all, we have insisted that every nominee be approved by a non-partisan screening committee chaired by retired federal judges.

“Four Illinois district court judgeships became vacant in 2019. The first three of these vacancies were Republican picks and the fourth was a Democratic pick. In December 2019, after negotiations with Congressman John Shimkus, the senior Republican in the delegation, and the White House, we reached an agreement on this package of nominees, each of whom has significant judicial experience and was rated well-qualified by the American Bar Association.

“The Democratic pick in this package, Judge Franklin Valderrama of the Circuit Court of Cook County, has outstanding qualifications and extensive experience both as a judge and as a practitioner. When this Chicago-based district court seat became vacant last year, we put out a public call for applications and an extraordinary group of 50 candidates applied. We had a screening committee vet them all, and Judge Valderrama was at the top of the list. He will be an outstanding addition to the federal bench.

“I also supported the nominations of Federal Magistrate Judge Iain Johnston, 3rd Judicial Circuit Judge David Dugan, and 20th Judicial Circuit Judge Stephen McGlynn, as part of this bipartisan package. I recognize and respect the opposition that was expressed to two of the Republican picks in this package, Judges Dugan and McGlynn. These nominees have made statements and expressed views with which I disagree, particularly on matters involving reproductive rights. But as part of our bipartisan state process, I supported all four nominees in the package.”

Each of the nominees in this package was also reviewed by screening committees established by the Illinois Senators to assist them in evaluating candidates for vacant federal judicial, U.S. Attorney, and U.S. Marshal positions in Illinois. The task of the screening committees is to review and vet candidates for the vacancies and advise the Senators regarding the candidates’ qualifications and fitness for the position. Each nominee received screening committee approval based on their qualifications and record as judges.

Bios of the nominees from the White House are included below:

Franklin U. Valderrama will serve as Judge on the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois. Franklin Valderrama currently serves as an Associate Judge in the Circuit Court of Cook County. Judge Valderrama serves on the Illinois Supreme Court Rule Committee and the Supreme Court Committee on Illinois Evidence. Before taking the bench in 2007, Judge Valderrama was a partner at Sanchez, Daniels & Hoffman LLP, where his practice focused on trial litigation. Judge Valderrama has also

served as an adjunct professor at UIC John Marshall Law School where he taught Pre-Trial Civil Litigation. Judge Valderrama earned his B.A. from the University of Illinois at Chicago, and his J.D. from The DePaul University College of Law.

Iain D. Johnston will serve as Judge on the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois, Western Division (Rockford). Iain Johnston currently serves as a United States Magistrate Judge on the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois. Before taking the bench in 2013, Judge Johnston was a unit supervisor for the Office of the Illinois Attorney General and in private practice at Altheimer & Gray, Holland & Knight LLP, and Johnston Greene LLC. Judge Johnston also serves as an adjunct professor at UIC John Marshall Law School. Upon graduation from law school, Judge Johnston served as a law clerk to Judge Philip Godfrey Reinhard of the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois. Judge Johnston earned his B.S., cum laude, from Rockford College and his J.D., cum laude, from UIC John Marshall Law School.

David W. Dugan will serve as Judge on the United States District Court for the Southern District of Illinois. David Dugan currently serves as a Circuit Judge for the 3rd Judicial Circuit, Madison County, Illinois. Prior to taking the bench in 2017, Judge Dugan was in private practice for more than 30 years, where his practice focused on personal injury and commercial litigation in both State and Federal Courts. Judge Dugan previously served as an Assistant States Attorney for Madison County, Illinois. Judge Dugan earned his B.A. from Eastern Illinois University and his J.D. from Valparaiso University School of Law.

Stephen McGlynn of Illinois will serve as a District Judge on the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Illinois. Stephen McGlynn currently serves as Circuit Judge on the Illinois Twentieth Judicial Circuit Court and previously served as a Justice on the Illinois Fifth District Appellate Court. Earlier in his career, Judge McGlynn was in private practice at McGlynn & McGlynn, Attorneys at Law. He has also served as a Special Assistant Attorney General of Illinois. Judge McGlynn earned his B.A. from the University of Dayton and his J.D. from St. Louis University School of Law.