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Trump Makes First Ninth Circuit Pick Setting Up Senate Fight

Ross Todd, The Recorder

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SAN FRANCISCO — As the [debate about splitting](#) the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit continues to gather steam, President Donald Trump announced his first nominee to the court, which has been something of a thorn in his side.

Trump nominated [Ryan Bounds](#), an assistant U.S. attorney in Portland, Oregon, and former clerk for Judge [Diarmuid O'Scannlain](#) of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, Thursday morning to fill the seat left open when O'Scannlain took senior status at the end of last year.

Bounds, whose [name had surfaced](#) in association with the Ninth Circuit opening this spring, has a sterling resume. Prior to joining the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Oregon, Bounds served at the White House as special assistant to President George W. Bush for justice and immigration policy and at the Justice Department as chief of staff and deputy assistant attorney general for the Office of Legal Policy. Bounds also practiced commercial law at Stoel Rives in Portland.

Bounds holds an undergraduate degree from Stanford University and a J.D. from Yale Law School, where he was an editor on The Yale Law Journal and editor-in-chief of the Yale Law & Policy Review. He was also reportedly on [the shortlist](#) of potential U.S. attorney candidates in Portland.

Bounds was among the [three circuit court nominees](#) on a list of 16 judicial nominations announced by the White House Thursday morning in the seventh wave of candidates Trump has passed on to the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Bounds' nomination seems poised for a partisan showdown in the U.S. Senate. Oregon's Democratic Senators, Ron Wyden and Jeffrey Merkley, fired off a letter to the White House Thursday afternoon saying they do not intend to return blue slips to the Senate Judiciary Committee indicating they've signed off on Bounds.

The Oregon senators wrote in [a letter addressed](#) to White House Counsel Donald McGahn II that the administration opted not to work with their bipartisan judicial selection committee. The letter noted that they were willing to give expedited treatment to U.S. District Judge Marco Hernandez of

the District of Oregon, who was originally nominated by President George W. Bush towards the end of his eight-year term, then renominated by President Barack Obama.

“The judicial selection process is not a rubber stamp, and the insinuation that our offices were purposefully delaying the process is an indication of the partisanship with which you are pursuing this nomination,” the senators wrote.

The letter comes just two days after Sen. Al Franken, D-Minnesota, indicated he would refuse to return a blue slip for the nomination of Minnesota Supreme Court Judge David Stras to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit. Trump nominated Stras for the Eighth Circuit in March.

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