

Strong Opposition to Obama Nomination of Kagan to Supreme Court

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President Barack Obama formally announced yesterday the selection of Solicitor General Elena Kagan as his nominee for the United States Supreme Court. From the East Room of the White House, Obama described his choice as "one of the nation's foremost legal minds," and an "acclaimed legal scholar with a rich understanding of constitutional law."

If confirmed to replace the seat held by retiring Justice John Paul Stevens, Kagan would become youngest serving member of the High Court and, for the first time in history, its third woman. Prior to her current responsibilities as the President's Solicitor General, Kagan was a tenured Professor at the University of Chicago before going on to become the first woman to be Dean of the Harvard Law School. Unlike other nominees in recent history, she has had no previous judicial experience, a point conservative detractors are expected to criticize.

Though Kagan has called the military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" discriminatory policy on gays a "moral injustice," her nomination is hardly seen by progressive analysts as a solidly liberal one balancing out a conservative court. Attention has been drawn to her Senate confirmation hearings for Solicitor General when she agreed with Senator Lindsay Graham on the controversial War on Terror power of the Presidency to indefinitely hold detainees as "enemy combatants." Once a paid adviser for Goldman Sachs during the mortgage crisis, Kagan has also drawn progressive ire for hosting a dinner for Justice Antonin Scalia while introducing him on the occasion of his twentieth anniversary on the Supreme Court.

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