

Court Pick Sets up Battle

Liberal groups in staunch opposition

BY DANNY PETERSON
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

President Donald Trump chose Brett Kavanaugh, a solidly conservative, politically connected judge, for the Supreme Court Monday, setting up a ferocious confirmation battle with Democrats as he seeks to shift the nation's highest court ever further to the right.

A favorite of the Republican legal establishment in Washington, D.C. Kavanaugh, 53, is a former law clerk for retiring Justice Anthony Kennedy, a Republican appointee. Like Trump's first nominee last year, Justice Neil Gorsuch, Kavanaugh could help remake the court for decades to come with rulings that could restrict abortion, expand gun rights and roll back key parts of Obamacare.

Kavanaugh, who serves on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit, is expected to be less receptive to abortion and gay rights than Kennedy was. He also has taken an expansive view of executive power and has favored limits on investigating the president.

Speaking at the White House, Kavanaugh pledged to preserve the Constitution and said that "a judge must be independent and must interpret the law, not make the

law. A judge must interpret the Constitution as written."

Democrats and liberal advocacy groups—including many in Oregon—have expressed their staunch opposition.

"There can be no mistaking Trump's Supreme Court nomination for anything but what it is: a direct attempt to overturn Roe v. Wade," said U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore. "American women could lose the right to chart the courses of their own lives, finding their futures are determined by the whims of fanatical state legislators and the availability of contraception."

President Trump has in the past expressed a desire to overturn Roe V Wade by picking "pro-life" justices on the court.

U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley, D-Ore., expressed similar concerns over the potential loss of abortion rights and pointed to Kavanaugh's previous support for lawsuits against the Affordable Care Act.

"Americans with pre-existing conditions could lose life-saving health care. Marriage equality could be overturned. Racial inequality and blatant voter suppression could be further embraced by the highest court in the land," said Merkley, who has also expressed interest as a 2020 presidential candidate.

In October, Kavanaugh voted to delay an abortion for a teenage immigrant who was in government custody, something that Planned Parenthood Advocates of Oregon



Supreme Court Justice nominee Brett Kavanaugh is introduced by President Trump at the White House Monday.

highlighted as a concern that he would rule in similar fashion as Supreme Court Justice.

In addition, African American congressman U.S. Rep. Elijah E. Cummings, D-Md., also expressed his concern of organized labor rights and voting rights being undermined, should Kavanaugh win the nomination.

"Confirming judge Brett Kavanaugh would put in place an enduring conservative majority for decades to come...he will continue to apply the law unfairly to protect the rights of powerful corporations and

the wealthy, but not the rights of minorities and the poor," Cummings said.

U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., said a person with Kavanaugh's political views should not be given a lifetime Supreme Court seat.

"President Trump's Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh will be a rubber-stamp for an extreme, right-wing agenda pushed by corporations and billionaires," Sanders said.

--Associated Press contributed to this article

Call to Disarm PSU Police

The family of a local black resident and U.S. veteran killed June 27 by Portland State University police while trying to break-up a fight and marking PSU's first officer-involved shooting, called on Friday for the campus police department to permanently disarm and fire the two officer involved in the shooting. The shooting is under investigation by multiple agencies.

Homeless Arrests Review

Portland's Independent Police Review panel will investigate how Portland police officers interact with homeless people, citing concerns about racial profiling from a recent investigative report by the Oregonian revealing that one in two arrests made by the Portland Police Bureau in 2017 was of a homeless person, while less than 3 percent of Portlanders are homeless. The action was taken Tuesday after a request by new Portland Police Chief Danielle Outlaw.

Major Paving Project Starts

No major traffic delays were reported on Monday morning as the first part of a major construction project got underway on the I-5 southbound ramp to I-84 eastbound. Three of the overpasses that connect the two freeways are to close for maintenance, one at a time, over the coming weeks.

The Week in Review

Anthem Policy Challenge



The NFL Players Association filed a grievance Tuesday challenging the league's new national anthem policy requiring players to stand if they are on the field during the performance of the Star-Spangled Banner. Players have been kneeling during the national anthem in an effort to raise awareness for racial and social injustice in America since Colin Kaepernick took a knee before a preseason game in 2016.

Trump Pardons Outlaw Ranchers

President Trump pardoned two ranchers Tuesday whose arson convictions inspired the armed takeover of Oregon's Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in 2016. Dwight and Steve Hammond were convicted of intentionally and maliciously setting fires on public lands. Other anti-government extremists took up the Hammonds' case as a

rallying cry and violently occupied the national wildlife refuge for 41 days.

Rescued from Thai Cave

A daring rescue mission in the treacherous confines of a flooded Thai cave ended Tuesday with all 12 boys and their soccer coach pulled to safety after being trapped deep within the labyrinth -- ending a grueling, 18-day ordeal that claimed the life of an experienced volunteer diver and riveted people around the world.



More ICE Protest Arrests

Federal agents from the Department of Homeland Security engaged with protestors again Monday outside the federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) holding facility on Southwest Macadam Avenue. Protesters from the group Occupy ICE accused the federal officers of intimidation and inflicting violence on people who were not obstructing walkways, driveways or entrances to the building.

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