

The Pittsburgh Tribune

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Letter to the Editor

Misjudging Leslie

By Glenn Sugameli

Your editorial "The Southwick fight" (July 16 and PghTrib.com) ignores the scope and nature of the problems with Leslie Southwick's nomination to a lifetime seat on the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. You state that "Basically, the inquisition found two decisions -- which he did not author but voted for -- and they were sufficient to slather him as a bigot."

In fact, many groups have focused exclusively or in large part on other aspects of Southwick's record when he was on the Mississippi Court of Appeals.

For example, neither labor nor environmental groups mentioned the cases you cite. The AFL-CIO's letter of opposition described "Judge Southwick's record of consistently ruling against workers seeking compensation for injuries suffered on the job, often in dissent when his colleagues ruled otherwise."

A letter raising serious concerns from Earthjustice and other environmental groups detailed how "His record as a judge, combined with Judge Southwick's own words, raise questions about his ability to be a fair and neutral arbiter of environmental and other cases that involve the interests of corporate defendants."

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