Editorial: Action due on court nominees (Commercial Appeal [TN], 10/07/15)
"Edward Stanton III ... has the support of Tennessee's U.S. Senate delegation — both members of the Republican majority — in his quest for Senate confirmation to fill a vacant judicial post on the district court. It would be a shame for Stanton to become mired in the growing logjam of judicial appointments created by senators who seem determined to delay fulfilling an important responsibility of their office until after the next president takes office in 2017. In fact, Stanton is one of three nominees from Tennessee awaiting action on their nominations by President Obama to fill vacancies on the federal bench. Nashville attorney Waverly Crenshaw Jr. and Chattanooga attorney Travis McDonough also are being kept in a holding pattern — McDonough since last November. If you're wondering if Congress has all but abandoned the business of governing in favor of engaging full time in partisan warfare, consider this: During the last two years of George W. Bush's presidency, the Democratic-controlled Senate confirmed 68 judges; during President Bill Clinton's final two years in office, the Republican Senate confirmed 73 judges. But only six judicial nominees have been confirmed since Republicans regained majority control of the Senate last January.... the indisputable fact is that the criminal justice system needs judges. ... The Senate could score some much-needed credibility points with the public if it buckles down and gives Stanton and other nominees to the federal bench a fair and impartial decision about their future."

Tennessee judicial nominees caught in Senate logjam (Commercial Appeal [TN], 10/04/15)
Michael Collins column: "the number of vacancies on the courts has increased from 43 to 67 since January. The number of “judicial emergencies,” meaning the remaining judges can’t keep up with the caseload, has more than doubled, jumping from 12 to 31 since January. By comparison, during the last two years of George W. Bush’s presidency, the Democratic-controlled Senate confirmed 68 judges. Similarly, the Republican Senate confirmed 73 judges during President Bill Clinton’s final two years in office."

Editorial: Sheryl Lipman is a solid choice for U.S. District Court judge (Commercial Appeal [TN], 11/14/13)
"It’s so far, so good for Sheryl Lipman’s chances to become a U.S. District Court judge for West Tennessee."

Otis Sanford: Fowlkes' credentials sweep Senate (Commercial Appeal [TN], 07/15/12)
Columnist: "The U.S. Senate on Tuesday easily confirmed the appointment of Criminal Court Judge John Fowlkes Jr. to a vacancy on the federal court bench. Hooray. ... Fowlkes now becomes only the third African-American judge in the 210-year history of the West Tennessee federal district court. Fowlkes replaces the court’s second black jurist, Bernice B. Donald, who last year was elevated to a seat on the U.S. Sixth Court of Appeals. ... During Tuesday’s debate, Tennessee’s Republican senators Bob Corker and Lamar Alexander spoke enthusiastically in favor of Fowlkes, with Corker calling him "well prepared" for the lifetime appointment."
Editorial: John Fowlkes Jr. (Commercial Appeal [TN], 07/11/12)
"Case backlogs in the federal Western District, like other districts across the country, are increasing. Partisan rancor over judicial nominations is exacerbating the problem. Fowlkes' appointment comes at an opportune time on that score. Plus, he'll be an excellent addition to the federal bench."

Letter: Senate delays Fowlkes nomination (Commercial Appeal [TN], 03/29/12)
George E. Barrett: "With nearly 10 percent of the federal bench empty, the need to fill judicial vacancies is crucial. Senate parliamentary obstruction prevents the nominating and confirming of the next generation of judges from going forward in the Senate in fulfillment of their constitutional duties. ... Now it appears it probably will be as late as after May before the Senate will even give Fowlkes an up-or-down vote. This waste of precious time and resources erodes the integrity of our federal court system."

Editorial: Fowlkes' nomination (Commercial Appeal [TN], 02/13/12)
"When the Senate Judiciary Committee hears testimony Wednesday afternoon on Criminal Court Judge John Fowlkes Jr.'s nomination to fill a judge's seat on the U.S. District Court in Memphis, we hope they act expeditiously to move the nomination to a vote by the full Senate. ... The confirmation process for judges can be slow -- and sometimes is made even slower because of partisan politics.... With caseloads growing in the U.S. District Court's Western Tennessee District, the vacant seat left by Donald needs to be filled as quickly as possible. To help with the heavy caseload, three federal judges from Michigan are hearing district cases under a Special Visiting Judges program. We encourage the state's two U.S. senators -- Lamar Alexander and Bob Corker, both Republicans -- to do what they can to move Fowlkes' nomination along."

Editorial: Donald moves up (Commercial Appeal [TN], 09/09/11)
"U.S. Appeals Court Judge Bernice Bouie Donald has a nice ring to it. The U.S. Senate on Tuesday finally got around to confirming Donald's nomination to the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals. She is currently serving as a U.S. District Court judge. The promotion was yet another confirmation of the legal acumen and judicial temperament that have helped Donald climb the judicial ladder ... We trust that those empowered with finding her replacement will swiftly choose the best qualified candidate. Once the nomination is made, the Senate should move expeditiously to confirm it."

Editorial: Justice delayed (Commercial Appeal [TN], 07/30/11)
Nothing but the depth of the partisan divide could explain the lengthy delay that has denied U.S. District Judge Bernice Donald a confirmation vote on her nomination by President Barack Obama to the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals. As this space has argued before, U.S. Sens. Lamar Alexander and Bob Corker of Tennessee should use their influence to schedule a Senate floor vote to confirm the Memphis jurist. But that was almost eight months ago, and Judge Donald, a consensus nominee whose appointment was approved by the Judiciary Committee, continues to wait, along with 24 other nominees, including more than a dozen that have been pending since May or earlier. ... there are more than 90 vacancies on federal courts, and the backlog of cases is inflicting a hardship on countless Americans who can ill afford for their cases to languish indefinitely. The Senate surely can do a better job."

Editorial: A new judicial horizon (Commercial Appeal [TN], 12/03/10)
"Partisan gamesmanship in Washington has prevented 110 federal judicial vacancies from being filled. This is a good time to remind Tennessee's U.S. senators, Lamar Alexander and Bob Corker, of that fact and to urge them to help move the process along, including Donald's appointment."
**Tennessean**

**Fill judicial vacancies, including the one in Tennessee** *(Tennessean, 01/21/15)*

Opinion by Tommy Tobin: "With more than 40 vacant seats on the federal bench, our judicial branch is under substantial strain.... One of those vacant seats is in Chattanooga, ... Travis Randall McDonough, Mayor Andy Burke's chief of staff and counselor, has been nominated for the post.... Tennessee Senators Bob Corker and Lamar Alexander, a former mayor of Chattanooga and an attorney, respectively, should recognize the contribution that McDonough could make to the bench in East Tennessee. Even with our divided government, let's push our politicians to govern responsibly and consider judicial nominees on their merits."

**Tennessee's senators should confirm military spouse for D.C. Circuit judgeship** *(Tennessean, 11/16/13)*

Josie Beets, attorney, mom, Army wife, member of the Military Spouse JD Network: "Military spouses speak a different language, one created by 12 years of war ... Patricia Millett, nominee for the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals, speaks my language. ... Pattie is the inspiration and morale boost that military families need. ... But despite this stellar record of achievement, Sens. Lamar Alexander and Bob Corker voted to filibuster Pattie's nomination. ... Statistical debates about the court’s workload are old news; they certainly did not stop the confirmation of John Roberts to the very seat Pattie would fill. Statistics also ignore the importance of cases the D.C. Circuit hears. There is no better nominee for the court with administrative jurisdiction over the departments of Defense and of Veterans Affairs ... Sens. Alexander and Corker, give this military spouse an opportunity to continue serving our country on the D.C. Circuit. There is no better way to show support for the troops than to rise above partisan politics, stop the filibuster and gridlock"

**Filling judicial vacancies is what president is supposed to do** *(Tennessean, 06/05/13)*

Ruth Marcus, Column

**Courts languish while Senate slow-walks nominees** *(Tennessean, 07/20/11)*

Pro. Carl Tobias: "When President Barack Obama secured election, the U.S. Courts of Appeals experienced openings in 14 of the 179 judgeships. Accordingly, it was essential that the White House expeditiously fill those vacancies. The administration has instituted many measures to facilitate appointments. However, a number of the positions are still empty and more have opened, as judges have retired or assumed senior status, so the total is currently 18."

**Citizens lose when judicial vacancies are left in limbo** *(Tennessean, 10/10/10)*

Nashville Bar President Jonathan Cole: "President Barack Obama has had fewer judges confirmed to the bench than any president at this point in his tenure since Richard Nixon nearly 40 years ago."

**Stranch has waited a year; Senate must move to confirm her to appeals court** *(Tennessean, 07/23/10)*

Prof. Carl Tobias Guest Column: "State’s GOP senators support nomination

**Senate needs to quit procrastinating, confirm Stranch** *(Tennessean, 05/28/10)*

Prof. Carl Tobias: Tennessee Voices Op-Ed column

**Senate needs to quit procrastinating, confirm Stranch** *(Tennessean, 05/28/10)*

Prof. Carl Tobias: "Despite Stranch’s outstanding experience, the Senate has not scheduled her for a floor debate and vote. Vacancies in 11 percent of the federal appeals court judgeships show that President Obama must swiftly tap nominees for all the openings and the Senate must promptly confirm them and Jane Branstetter Stranch."
Make appeals judge confirmation a priority *(Tennessean, 12/19/09)*
Prof. Carl Tobias: "the Senate must swiftly approve Ms. Stranch, while the president should expeditiously nominate and the Senate must promptly confirm nominees for the other empty judgeships."

**Editorial** *(Tennessean, 05/11/06)*
"[T]he nation should look with complete dismay at the blatantly political angle on nominations being advocated by Senate Republicans now. . . . Republicans are girding for a fight on judicial nominees for no reason other than to be girding for a fight. They have admitted as much in public comments. . . . In other words, picking a public fight over judicial nominees is, in their minds, the right thing to do because it's the politically right thing to do. . . . Now, Republicans are advocating a brawl for openly political purposes. The appointment of judges deserves far more respect than to be an admitted election-year ploy. . . . It should be beneath the Senate to have such a serious matter subjected to nothing but a tool for political gain."

**Knoxville News Sentinel**

**Editorial: Senate should quickly confirm judicial nominees** *(Knoxville News Sentinel [TN], 10/09/15)*
"Tennessee's three federal judicial nominees are waiting for their Senate confirmation, and the slow pace of moving the nominations through that chamber has aroused suspicions that perhaps the delay is politically motivated.... All three have the support of Tennessee's Republican U.S. senators, Lamar Alexander and Bob Corker, who have called for the nominees' speedy confirmation....During the last two years of President George W. Bush's administration, the Democratic majority in the Senate confirmed 68 judges. Likewise, a Republican-controlled Senate confirmed 73 judges during President Bill Clinton's final two years.... The more intangible factor is the delay of justice, not only for defendants but also for victims of crime and their families. As [law Prof. Carl] Tobias noted, it is difficult for people to get trial dates and to get their cases heard. This is the issue the Judiciary Committee needs to address with considerable attention. Justice delayed is not justice served. The three Tennessee nominees should be confirmed so they can start to work and bolster the federal judicial system in the state. That would improve the nation's ability to administer justice effectively."

**Tennessee judicial nominees caught in Senate logjam** *(Knoxville News Sentinel [TN], 10/05/15)*
Michael Collins column: "Judicial nominee Edward Stanton III of Memphis sailed smoothly through his confirmation hearing last week, with both of Tennessee's U.S. senators extolling his qualifications for the federal bench and calling for speedy confirmation of his nomination. But the Senate has been anything but speedy when it comes to confirming judicial nominees. Nashville attorney Waverly Crenshaw Jr. has been waiting eight months for the Senate to confirm him as the newest federal judge in Tennessee's Middle District. Travis McDonough has been waiting even longer. President Barack Obama nominated the Chattanooga attorney last November for a judgeship in Tennessee's Eastern District, but the Senate has yet to put his nomination to a vote. Crenshaw and McDonough are caught in a logjam of judicial nominees awaiting a vote by the Senate. Only six judicial nominees have been confirmed since Republican

**Editorial: Senators should confirm Reeves before holidays** *(Knoxville News Sentinel [TN], 12/05/13)*
"Continued Senate inaction on other matters, however, would needlessly delay the confirmation of a U.S. District Court judge nominee for East Tennessee, Knoxville lawyer Pamela Reeves. In a meeting with News Sentinel editors and reporters this week, Sen. Lamar Alexander said all that is needed is for Majority Leader Harry Reid to schedule a vote. Alexander said he sees no reason why
Reeves would not be confirmed, noting that no district court nominee has ever been blocked by a filibuster. “It’s up to Harry Reid,” Alexander said. “All he has to do is bring her name up. I know of no problem with Pam. I’ve met with her. The way you get confirmation is, the Democratic leader makes a motion to confirm and I don’t know any reason why she wouldn’t be.” Reid should pay attention to Alexander.

**Letter: Republicans block court nominees** *(Knoxville News Sentinel [TN], 10/04/12)*

Glenn Sugameli: In 2010, Tennessee's U.S. senators finally overcame opposition to Jane Stranch's 6th Circuit Court of Appeals nomination. Now, Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky has blocked even unopposed trial court nominees. All 15 blockaded district court nominees had Judiciary Committee approval and support from their Republican and Democratic senators. Ten would fill judicial emergency vacancies declared by the courts. Sen. Patrick Leahy, D, Vt., stated: "Senate Republicans have not explained their unprecedented obstruction of President Obama's consensus nominees." In August, Sen. Patrick Toomey, R-Pa., insisted there was "no reason" not to confirm his state's nominees in September "by a voice vote. This could be done in a moment." Now, he is urging confirmations during the lame-duck session, when the Senate will decide if justice delayed will remain justice denied.

**Chattanooga Times**

**Sohn: Congratulations, Judge McDonough** *(Chattanooga Times [TN], 12/09/15)*

Pam Sohn, Times Page Editor: "Judge Travis McDonough ... was unanimously confirmed as the newest U.S. District Court Judge for the Eastern District of Tennessee by the U.S. Senate on Monday.... U.S. Rep. Jim Cooper, D-Nashville, says he "represents the best of East Tennessee." Tennessee Republican Sens. Bob Corker and Lamar Alexander spoke for him in Senate proceedings, both saying he will serve well as a fair and independent judge. The Senate's 89-0 vote for the former Miller & Martin lawyer, Vanderbilt law school and University of the South at Sewanee graduate speaks volumes. Both for McDonough and the Senate. Perhaps bipartisanship is still alive, after all."

**Sohn: Don't let politics stall justice, confirm Obama's judges** *(Chattanooga Times [TN], 11/14/15)*

Pam Sohn, Times Page Editor: "In November 2014, President Barack Obama nominated Travis Randall McDonough to a federal judgeship in the 6th Circuit's Eastern District of Tennessee. McDonough, a former chief of staff for Chattanooga Mayor Andy Berke, has the support of Tennessee's Republican senators Bob Corker and Lamar Alexander. ... Our senators also vouched for a nominee to a federal judgeship in the Middle District of Tennessee, Waverly D. Crenshaw. Up in Pennsylvania, two senators have done the same for Luis Felipe Restrepo, nominated to a judgeship on the 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. Bob Casey, a Democrat, and Pat Toomey, a Republican, have seemingly blessed that nomination, according to a New York Times editorial .... Senate Democrats should speak up and make these inexcusable delays a national issue. The Times also is urging President Obama to start selecting judges himself in states like Texas, Alabama, Wisconsin and Indiana, where senators refuse to give him any names at all. "With each day that passes without a vote" on McDonough and the other nominees, "Republicans undermine the justice system, and the biggest victims are ordinary Americans who cannot count on fully functioning courts," the Times writes. We couldn't have said it better."
Chattanooga Times Free Press

Cooper: McDonough earns federal bench OK (Chattanooga Times Free Press [TN], 12/09/15)
Clint Cooper, Free Press editor: "Although the process for his nomination for the bench began with U.S. Rep. Jim Cooper, D-Nashville, both Tennessee Republican U.S. senators, Lamar Alexander and Bob Corker, gave him glowing recommendations both for his vote by the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee and by the full Senate. "He's a well-qualified man," Alexander told his Senate colleagues Monday. "We're fortunate that he's willing to serve, and we're fortunate the president has nominated him." "I have known Travis McDonough personally for years," Corker said before the Senate vote, "and am confident he will serve the people of Tennessee honorably in this new role." We believe both senators are correct and look forward to the new jurist's honorable service."

Nashville City Paper

Judge not (Nashville City Paper [TN], 07/25/10)
Ken Whitehouse column: Jane "Stranch is now the longest-serving Circuit Court nominee in limbo, despite an overwhelming majority of the Senate Judiciary Committee having voted for her confirmation, as well as the support of her home state delegation. ... There is a backlog of cases in both the 6th Circuit and the District Court. What that means is that real victims of real crimes are waiting and waiting to see justice done on cases ranging from Ponzi schemes to child pornography. There are people who need to be locked up and people who need vindication, but the wheels of justice are grinding because there are not enough judges to carry the caseload. ... We need judges — right now."

Bourbon and Stranch (Nashville City Paper [TN], 07/21/10)
JR Lind: "Mitch McConnell holds up Jane Stranch's appointment, on hold for eight months."

Memphis Flyer

Tis the Season for Memphis Politics (Memphis Flyer [TN], 12/17/15)
Jackson Baker: "Ed Stanton III, who is U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Tennessee. ... is involved in a stealth situation of sorts, too. He was appointed last April by President Obama to be a U.S. District Judge at the urging of 9th District congressman Steve Cohen, a Democrat, has been backed for the appointment by U.S. Senators Lamar Alexander and Bob Corker, both Republicans, and easily sailed through a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing in October. But his final confirmation vote by the full Senate, along with those of many other judicial nominees, has been snarled in a delay that stems from the continuing partisan gridlock in Congress.)"

Nashville Scene

With confirmation hearings running far behind, Tennessee's federal judicial nominees are left to cool their heels: Judicial Logjam (Nashville Scene [TN], 10/15/15)
Alex Hubbard: "If Tennessee, with three nominees yet to be confirmed, is a major part of the crisis, Nashville is near the center. ... the administrative office of the U.S. Judicial Conference declared a judicial emergency in the district.... Of the 30 declared emergencies in the country, this ranks Nashville sixth in the nation.... Corker and Alexander have made their support clear for all three of Tennessee's judicial nominees, unlike in some other states where Republican senators have blocked Democratic nominees from the same state. But senators from the Volunteer State remain reluctant to raise public outrage toward the leadership of their own party. Neither Corker nor Alexander was available for interview, and although both provided unequivocal statements of support, neither
responded to emailed questions from the Scene about whether they had applied any pressure on Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell to speed a vote on Crenshaw and McDonough."

**Leaf Chronicle**

**GUEST EDITORIAL: Solution to stalemate on judges** *(Leaf Chronicle [TN], 04/18/12)*

"Sometimes the deadlock has no serious consequences. But sometimes it has big negative consequences. A major case in point: The ongoing failure of Congress to decide on the appointments of dozens of federal judges." [Omaha World-Herald]

**Daily Herald**

**Tenn. senators could help reduce huge court backlogs** *(Daily Herald [Columbia, TN], 01/20/11)*

"Those denied floor votes included 16 who had bipartisan support in the Judiciary Committee and 13 who would have filled judicial emergencies designated by the U.S. Courts. Tennessee's Republican senators Lamar Alexander and Bob Corker supported home-state nominee Jane Branstetter Stranch’s confirmation to the Sixth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals in September 2010. Indeed, Sen. Alexander previously urged that a long-delayed vote be held on Stranch, explaining that “It has long been my position … that a president’s judicial nominees deserve an up-or-down vote.” Both senators could help reduce massive court backlogs by insisting that the Senate schedule prompt floor votes on committee-approved judicial nominees.” Glenn Sugameli, Letter to the Editor

**Nashville Post**

**The judicial hold-up** *(Nashville Post [TN], 10/15/15)*

J.R. Lind: "With the U.S. Judicial Conference declaring a judicial emergency because of a vacancy and with the state's two senators unequivocally expressing support for the president's nominees, why can't we get judges confirmed by the Senate: 'Because Obama is so unpopular with the Republican Party, many Republican senators do not desire handing over the keys to too many courthouses. To observers, the reason for the hold-up is obvious.'"

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