



*A Union of Professionals*

## AFT on the Supreme Court Vacancy

The next Supreme Court justice will have the power to determine the direction of the United States for generations, dramatically affecting millions of American lives. The Supreme Court is tasked with upholding the Constitution, protecting American values, and serving as an important check and balance against abuse of power or overreach by the president or Congress.

We are deeply concerned that President Trump will nominate someone who will limit and trample the rights of all rather than protect and promote them. As the Senate considers the next Supreme Court justice, here are some issues at stake for AFT members:

**Worker Rights:** As we saw in the *Janus v. AFSCME* decision, the Supreme Court has enormous power to interfere in the lives of working Americans. In *Janus v. AFSCME*, the Supreme Court limited the power of millions of hard-working Americans to come together in strong unions to bargain over fair wages, decent benefits, and a voice on the job. The next Supreme Court nominee should not be someone who will further erode worker rights.

**Education:** The Supreme Court has recently ruled on school integration plans, access to services for students with disabilities, affirmative action in higher education, and on the Constitutionality of private school vouchers. We can expect all of these to be in play over the course of any nominee's lifetime appointment to the Court.

**Healthcare:** The Trump Administration has already gone to court to overturn protections for Americans with pre-existing conditions like asthma. The next Supreme Court justice will likely decide whether to drag America backwards to a time before the 130 million Americans with pre-existing conditions could affordably access health care, and to a time when women could be prosecuted as criminals for exercising reproductive rights.

**Voter rights:** The next Supreme Court could further erode our fundamental right to vote. This last term, the Supreme Court validated an Ohio law that allows voters who chose not to vote to be purged from the rolls if they don't return a postcard asking them to confirm their residence. This decision allows states to obstruct countless eligible voters from participating in our country's electoral system and will encourage other states to create restrictive voting practices.

**Immigration:** The Court recently ruled that the Trump administration's xenophobic Muslim ban is lawful. The next justice will decide cases that could continue this dangerous path—cases involving immigrant children's right to attend public school, or not be separated from their families at the border.

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The **American Federation of Teachers** is a union of professionals that champions fairness; democracy; economic opportunity; and high-quality public education, healthcare and public services for our students, their families and our communities. We are committed to advancing these principles through community engagement, organizing, collective bargaining and political activism, and especially through the work our members do.

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Freedom from Discrimination: This past term, the Supreme Court considered whether discrimination by businesses against LGBT individuals is lawful. The Court issued a narrow ruling on the specifics of the case. Importantly, the Court did not rule that the Constitution creates a right to discriminate. But the next justice will likely have an opportunity to decide a similar case that could produce a different outcome.

The Supreme Court touches the lives of every American. AFT members stand ready to fight for American values of equality and justice for all.