

spent portions of her undergraduate years studying in England, Switzerland, and China. Following law school, she clerked on the Alaska Superior Court and then entered private practice in the Anchorage office of Preston Gates & Ellis. As a private practice attorney, she represented the State of Alaska in the litigation that followed the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill.

As a member of the superior court bench, she served as the presiding judge of the Third Judicial District there in Anchorage which, as was noted, is the busiest judicial district in the State of Alaska. She held that position for 4 years. As a supreme court justice, she is deeply engaged in community outreach. In fact, she won the Alaska Supreme Court Community Outreach Award back in 2008. She also holds the Light of Hope Award for work on behalf of Alaska's children. I think her voluntarism has been acknowledged and highlighted. Not only does she meet the demands of a busy bench practice, but also takes the time, with her family, to be very engaged in our community.

I inquired with some of my friends, former colleagues on the Alaska bar, about her reputation in anticipation of my comments today. One Alaskan stated:

Morgan is extraordinarily talented and is well respected by her peers. She constantly brings justice and fairness to her professional and personal life. Friends and colleagues across the country have savored her wild raspberry jam.

I have yet to have the opportunity to savor her wild raspberry jam. I do a pretty mean raspberry jam myself, so I think we are going to have to trade and see. But it is yet one more aspect about this pretty amazing woman I wanted to share today.

Another colleague stated, very simply, that she is a calm, thoughtful, and strong woman. Good words.

In closing, let me simply say that Morgan Christen is more than just a good judge; she is a good person. Justice will be well served by her confirmation to the Ninth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals. I urge my colleagues to support this nomination with enthusiasm, as I do.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, today the Senate is expected to confirm an additional judicial nominee. With this vote, we will have confirmed 62 article III nominees during this Congress. More than half of these have been for vacancies designated as judicial emergencies. That is real progress. Over 72 percent of President Obama's judicial nominees have been confirmed.

Morgan Christen is nominated to be U.S. circuit judge for the Ninth Circuit. Justice Christen received her B.A. from the University of Washington in 1983, and her J.D. from Golden Gate University Law School in 1986. After graduating from law school, she clerked for the Hon. Brian Shortell on the Alaska Superior Court in Anchorage.

In 1987 she was hired at Preston Gates & Ellis LLP, working as an associate until 1992. She was a partner in the firm from 1993 to 2002. At that firm she was a general civil litigator, primarily representing plaintiffs. She began by assisting with large litigation projects. One of her most notable early matters involved serving on the liability team representing the State of Alaska in its claims for compensation arising from the Exxon Valdez oil spill. After the State settled its liability claim in 1991, she defended claims brought by individuals who argued the State's response to the spill was inadequate.

By the time Justice Christen became a partner in 1993, she had developed a practice in Jones Act personal injury claims and was lead counsel in a case in the U.S. Court of Claims representing the parents of an infant who died after receiving a childhood vaccination. She also served as lead counsel on four aviation fatality cases between 1993 and 1999, representing the estate of an FAA employee who was killed in a mid-air collision, the estate of a pilot killed during a catastrophic engine failure and in-flight failure, among others. She has also served as the lead counsel in the Equal Pay Act and represented a fuel barge line in several commercial disputes. Finally, from 1999 to 2001 over half of her practice was devoted to defending two physician practice groups in a Federal Medicaid fraud investigation and related False Claims Act case, and assisting with the defense of a class action antitrust case brought against purchasers of salmon harvested in Alaska.

In 2001 she was appointed to the Alaska Superior Court, where she served from January 9, 2002, until her elevation to the supreme court in 2009. The superior court is the court of general jurisdiction in Alaska. As a superior court judge, her docket was comprised entirely of civil cases. From 2005 to 2009 she served as presiding judge of the Third Judicial District of the Superior Court. In this position she supervised approximately 40 judicial officers in 13 court locations.

Justice Christen was appointed to the Alaska Supreme Court on March 4, 2009, and has been a member of that court from April 6, 2009, to the present. She was nominated for that seat by the Alaska Judicial Council, composed by three members of the bar, three members of the public appointed by Governors, and the chief justice. She was then selected from a slate of two nominees by Governor Sarah Palin.

The American Bar Association Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary has rated Justice Christen with a unanimous "well qualified" rating.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, how much time is remaining on the judgeship?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. On the Republican side, there is 7 minutes 16 seconds; on the Democratic side, 3 minutes 52 seconds.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I want to reiterate what I said before about Senator MURKOWSKI and Senator BEGICH for their support of this woman for the Ninth Circuit. I appreciate the work they have done on this nomination. I also appreciate the personal comments the senior Senator from Alaska made, going back to her law school days. I think sometimes we forget that these judicial nominees are real people and they have a real life and are a real part of the community. So I appreciate that.

I yield back the remainder of the time on our side.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I yield back all the time on the Republican side.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. All time is yielded back.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BROWN of Ohio). Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session.

The Senator from Arizona, Senator MCCAIN, is recognized for 30 minutes.

#### THE MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL-CONGRESSIONAL COMPLEX

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, shortly we will begin debate on the conference report of the Defense authorization bill, the 50th year the Congress of the United States has authorized the equipment, the programs, and all that is necessary to defend this Nation's security.

I want to talk today about a very important aspect of our national security, and that is the problem we are having with out-of-control spending which has, in its own way, endangered our national security as almost any threat that we face. It is unsustainable, it is unacceptable, and it is a stain on our Nation's honor.

Fifty years ago, on January 17, 1961, Dwight David Eisenhower bid farewell to the Nation as the President of the United States. At the heart of his farewell address was a warning, one keenly insightful in its sense how, in a way new to the American experience, an immense military establishment and large arms industry had developed in the 20th century post-war period. While acknowledging the need for a strong national defense, President Eisenhower called for the American people to understand the grave implications of this new aggregation of political and industrial power. In particular he warned:

In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist.

The 50th anniversary of President Eisenhower's address gives us an opportunity to carefully consider have we considered President Eisenhower's admonition. Regrettably and categorically the answer is no. In fact, the