

Seventh Circuit To Welcome First New Judge Since 2009

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The Senate yesterday confirmed the [nomination of Professor Amy Coney Barrett](#) of the Notre Dame University Law School to the vacant Indiana seat on the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit. Her appointment makes her the first judge to join the court in eight years, since Judge David F. Hamilton of Bloomington, Indiana took office in November 2009. And Judge Hamilton was the first new judge since Judge Diane S. Sykes of Milwaukee joined the court in July 2004. So this 11-judge court has had a remarkable stability in membership throughout the first 17 years of the 21st Century.

That is all about to change, and not just with the addition of Judge Barrett. The longstanding vacancy from Wisconsin created by Judge Terence T. Evans' retirement and subsequent death is likely to be filled reasonably soon, given the President's August nomination of Michael B. Brennan of Milwaukee to the position. While the two Illinois vacancies created by the retirements this summer of Judges Ann Claire Williams and Richard A. Posner will likely take a bit longer to fill, there is a reasonable prospect that by this time next year, four of the court's 11 active judges will have been appointed within the previous year.

What is said of the U.S. Supreme Court is undoubtedly true in some sense of all multi-member courts, that with each new judge we get a new court. Stay tuned as the new Seventh Circuit begins to emerge.

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