



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0661-2003, **Version:** A

Proposed Res. No. 661-A

Resolution calling upon the City Council to strongly oppose President Bush's re-nomination of Charles Pickering to the appellate court and commend the Congressional Black Caucus, Senator Charles Schumer and Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton for their opposition to such re-nomination.

By Council Members Barron, Clarke, Comrie, Davis, Lopez, Monserrate, Perkins, Quinn, Reed, Rivera, Sanders, Seabrook, Serrano, Vann, Weprin, Yassky, Jackson and Brewer

Whereas, In a move that is both puzzling and lacks moral clarity, President Bush has re-nominated Charles Pickering, a United States district judge in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, for a position on the appellate court; and

Whereas, A friend of former Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott, Charles Pickering's nomination to the appellate court was blocked last year by the Judiciary Committee after Senate Democrats questioned his civil rights credentials and civil rights groups lobbied against him; and
Whereas, Charles Pickering has long demonstrated a history of racial insensitivity to African Americans and people of color; and

Whereas, In his handling of a 1994 cross-burning case, he sought a lighter sentence for a defendant in a case in which a cross was burned on the lawn of an interracial couple; and

Whereas, Charles Pickering was defeated 10-9 in committee last March after Civil Rights groups said he supported segregation as a young man in Mississippi and Pickering's opponents also pointed to his conservative voting record as a Mississippi state lawmaker and his decisions as a judge; and

Whereas, Senator Charles Schumer, in responding to the re-nomination, expressed outrage, stating that this is "a moral issue," that Pickering showed "glaring racial insensitivity" in handling the 1994 cross-burning case, and that he (Senator Schumer) would do everything he could to stop the nomination from going forward; and

Whereas, Senate Democrats say that Charles Pickering's re-nomination shows the GOP did not learn anything from the recent controversy surrounding former Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott; and

Whereas, At a time when the President of our country has made broad claims to racial inclusiveness, his re-nomination of an individual such as Charles Pickering is not only problematic but also troubling and short-sighted as it sends a clear message to the American people that the Bush Administration condones Charles Pickering's support of past segregation and his extreme conservative views that can only take us back to a time when "injustice" was rendered from the judicial bench; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York strongly opposes President Bush's re-nomination of Charles Pickering to the appellate court and commends the Congressional Black Caucus, Senator Charles Schumer and Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton for their opposition to such re-nomination.

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